ClubMom

Outcomes from a non-traditional model of health education for interconceptional African American women at risk for adverse birth outcomes



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Improving Pregnancy Outcomes Program (IPOP)

One of over 100 federally-funded Healthy Start projects situated across the U.S.

- Service Area
 - Located in Oakland, Alameda County, CA
 - Targets low-income African American women and men in 9 zip codes with most adverse birth outcomes

IPOP Goals

Reduce infant mortality

- Improve birth outcomes including low birth weight and preterm births
- Empower participants to adopt healthy lifestyles and to address underlying psychosocial factors impacting perinatal health

IPOP Intervention Strategies

- Case management
- Group health education
- Fatherhood/male involvement services
- Outreach, information & referral
- Health awareness campaign
- Peer health leadership
- Provider training
- Local health systems change

Common Issues Faced by Residents

- Poverty/ income instability
- Stress & depression
- Tobacco, alcohol & substance use
- Lack of employment & job training
- Under-resourced schools
- Food insecurity and 'food deserts'
- Housing instability
- Fragile family structure
- Exposure to violence

Participant Assets

- Resiliency—"handle setbacks, persevere and adapt even when things go awry"
- 'Make-something-out-of-nothing' attitude
- Forgiving spirit
- Teachable, open-minded, hungry for information
- Value their children's education
- Hopeful—want more for the next generation
- 'Bite the bullet'—tolerate human service systems on behalf of their children/families

IPOP Challenges

Needed more robust interconceptional (IC) programming to mitigate trend of women fading away after birth of their infants (most likely due to program's overemphasis on pregnancy)

 Targeting IC period (in addition to prenatal) is the direction of MCH for improving birth outcomes

IPOP Challenges

How can we be sure that we are meeting their real health information needs?

- How should we market and publicize services? engage and retain participants?
- How can we partner with the existing natural helping system?



Needs Assessment Findings

Priority health concerns

- Self: "Having enough energy to get through the day"
- Children: "Will they do as I say, or do as I do" due to concern over their own health behaviors

Needs Assessment Findings

Other concerns

- Unstable housing & income
- Live in a "food desert" (ex. 45 blocks between grocery stores in East Oakland); low-control over food choices
- Fear for safety (at the interpersonal level with partner & at the community level)

- unsafe home + unsafe neighborhood = where can mom and baby rest, thrive and feel safe?

Needs Assessment Findings

- Desired health information
 - Do not limit health education to only the physiological aspects of incubating a fetus
 - Prepare women for motherhood psychosocially & economically in addition to medically

Needs Assessment Findings

Want a group experience

- Want to attend fun events that are educational—a respite for moms
 - i.e., Should not feel like school
- Want free food and childcare at all events
- Want events to be held often and in their neighborhoods

Needs Assessment Findings

- Do not want events to be held in churches
- Want ongoing relationships with staff—"a health education home"
- Want incentives in the form of gift cards, housewares, and items for mothers & babies

Needs Assessment Findings

- Consumers want programming implemented in a way that is nonstigmatizing
- No "stress reduction" workshop
- No "depression" support group
- No "birth control" class
- No "at-risk for poor outcome" label



Needs Assessment Findings

 Want to share their individual pregnancy and parenting experiences with younger, less experienced women

Printed materials must be

- Brief, yet interesting
- Colorful and attractive
- Provide resource and referral information so one can take action

Building a Health Education Home

- March of Dimes, CA Chapter Community Grant funding in 2009-2010 allowed IPOP to expand from 1 to 3 venues
- Capitalize on existing relationships → Case
- manager as ClubMom facilitator, peer volunteers Neutral neighborhood location near public transit
- hubs

 Food and bus tickets were provided along with highly desired participant incentives (grocery gift cards, raffle prizes, etc).

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Building a Health Education Home

- MPH-level perinatal health educator develops monthly session plans in consultation with ClubMom facilitators through team meetings
- Three monthly rotating themes
- Mental health
- Healthy eating/active living
- Relationships
- All ClubMom venues have same monthly topic; makes coordination and publicizing ClubMom more efficient





Peer Health Leaders

- Peer educators are needed to propagate staff outreach efforts
- Extend services to neighborhood niches with more trained eyes, ears, hands, and feet
- Mutual enhancement of *formal* and *informal* helping systems
- Serve as volunteer staff during ClubMom sessions
 \$50 grocery gift card per Peer Health Leader

ClubMom Components Three monthly venues 1 facilitator 2 — 3 peer health leaders Licensed MFT Guest speakers (ex. Life coach, esthetician)

- Childcare and/or play area

ClubMom Agenda

- Moments of informal, familial socializing woven throughout session
- Facilitator shares key perinatal health messages & guides discussion
- Guest speaker and/or interactive group activity
- Licensed MFT triages difficult/painful moments & provides closure on topic
- Related resource highlight





Family Health Holiday Celebration



ClubMom Objective

Positively change the CONTEXT in which young African American mothers make decisions around their health and related behaviors so that it includes:

- Social SUPPORT

– Health INFORMATION

– Knowledge of **RESOURCES**

– Health-seeking MOTIVATION

Evaluation foci

ClubMom Evaluation

- Evaluation focused on measuring the change in this context
- Shift from traditional health education which targets individual behavior change
- Pre-test at enrollment, followed by posttest at ten-months
- 143 women participated in ClubMom sessions over 10 months

Evaluation Results

- Twice as many women felt they had more health information about stress and depression (35%→ 61%)
- Almost three times as many women felt they had more information about eating healthier and exercising (26%→ 65%)
- Number of women who reported an increase in social support for relationship issues increased (70% to 91%) 28

Evaluation Results

- Participants indicated that they were more likely to seek help for:
 - − stress & depression (65% \rightarrow 78%)
 - healthier heating/exercise (58%→ 65%)
 relationship issues (57%→ 91%)
- Twice as many women could name a provider where they could get help and services about healthier eating & exercise (39%→ 78%)

ClubMom Challenges

- 'Victim of our success' → Need a larger family-friendly facility, more resources & staffing
- Stretching staff strengths to their limit
- Facilitator dynamics→ Why me? Being chosen to do the work; worthiness
- Difficult to implement within a county government bureaucracy

Lessons Learned

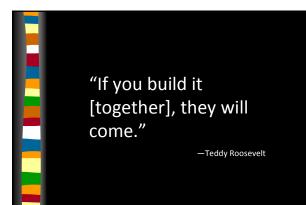
- Takes one year just to establish a stable cohort of participants for a ClubMom venue
 - Programmatically
 - Get visibility in the word of mouth network
- Interventions must be mediated through trusting and ongoing relationships with staff→ "a health education home"

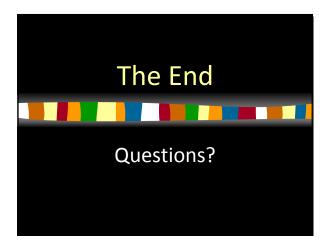
Lessons Learned

- Must blend health promotion with life skills development, for example:
 - Repairing your credit is a health issue for ClubMom participants because it is related to stress and depression
 - Knowing how to go back to school while receiving public assistance is a health issue because it is related to future opportunities and stability for mom and baby
 - Understanding ones relationships are health issues because it allows women to be aware of their intentions for having sex, which impacts intended and unintended pregnancy

Future Directions

- Current plans to expand ClubMom and launch ChefMom
- ClubMom texting campaign & social media
 - Culturally-specific positive affirmations, health promotion messages, event invitations/reminders & resource announcements
- Add a fourth venue → ClubMom Mental Health Support Group facilitated by licensed therapist





Program Contact Information

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