

Promising Practice Ideas- Promoting Physical Activity through State and City Parks

OUTCOME

Increased physical activity through partnerships with State and local parks



Description

The Nebraska WISEWOMAN Program partnered with the Nebraska Games and Parks Commission's *Great Parks Pursuit* and with the Nebraska Recreation and Parks Association to encourage individuals and families to engage in ongoing physical activity. State park permits and monthly educational mailings highlighting trails, healthy picnic options, and local park opportunities, were sent to WISEWOMAN clients during the summer.

Ingredients

- Partnership agreement with state or city parks.
- Promotion plans for clients or the community.
- Evaluation plan.
- Free admission to the parks.
- Activities involving nature and physical activity. See the Nebraska Games and Parks webpage (<http://negpp.org>) for current *Great Park Pursuit* activities and prizes.
- Educational mailings promoting physical activity and park activities.

Preparation

Step 1: Meet with park personnel to develop partnership plans and agreements and to determine activities that will be promoted. Formulate agreement on providing participants with free park passes if admission is charged in the park(s) to be promoted.

Step 2: Determine how the project will be promoted. Is there a list of clients or others to send the park permit offer and educational materials, or will the project be marketed to groups?

Step 3: Develop an evaluation plan to collect data on park usage and physical activity for participants before and after the project.

Step 4: Promote the project and collect pre-project data from participants.

Step 5: Provide participants with educational materials and information on project activities on a regular basis.

Keys to Success

- A strong partnership with local or state parks.
- Evaluation data such as how many participants are physically active four or more days per week, how many have visited a Nebraska park in the past year, how many accessed parks for physical activity, and how many were physically active most or all of the time when visiting parks.
- Post project data to repeat assessment of physical activity and how many participants report that the project increased physical activity in parks and in general.

Summary

To encourage ongoing physical activity in nature settings, partner with state or local parks to provide increased access, education, and fun activities for individuals and families.

Resources

- Nebraska Games and Parks *Great Park Pursuit*: Activities: <http://negpp.org/activities/>
- Nebraska Recreation and Parks Association: <http://www.nerpa.us/>
- Guide to Community Preventive Services, Campaigns and Informational Approaches to Increasing Physical Activity: Community-Wide Campaigns: <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/pa/campaigns/RRcommunity.htm>
- 2011-2016 Nebraska Physical Activity & Nutrition State Plan: http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Documents/PartnersNHealth_NE_StatePlan.pdf

Tips

Accompany free park access with education and/or incentives to encourage physical activity.

Emphasize benefits for individual and family time in nature.

Consider other partners that might help promote park activities, sponsor events, or donate incentives.

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