Building Youth Capacity for Policy, Systems, and Environment Change for Healthy Eating and Active Living: Development of the Healthy Young People Empowerment (HYPE) Project

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SCTR Scientific Retreat on Obesity – October 19, 2012
**Background and Significance**

- **Childhood obesity has tripled** in the last 30 years (NCHC, 2009)

- **Approximately 12.5 million children aged 2-19 currently overweight** (USDHHS, 2008)

- **34% of SC youth are obese or overweight** (SC DHEC, 2011)

- **56.6% of SC students do not meet PA recommendations** (SC DHEC, 2011)

- **92.2% of SC students do NOT meet fruit and vegetable recommendations** (SC, DHEC, 2011)

Youth who are overweight are **70% more likely to be overweight or obese as adults** (Ferraro, Thorpe, & Wilkinson, 2003)
Background and Significance

• Childhood obesity is significantly associated with an increased risk for diabetes, heart disease, depression, premature mortality, etc. (NCCDPHP, 2010a)

• Today’s younger generation may have shorter and less healthy lives than their parents for the first time in modern history (Olshansky et al., 2005)

• Prevention at early ages is a top priority for public health officials (Dietz, 2002)
Healthy Eating, Active Living, and PSE

• Modifying community policies, systems, and environments (PSE) is recognized as one of the most promising strategies for combatting obesity at the population level (Sallis et al., 2008)

• Examples of HE/AL PSE changes:
  • Creating safe parks, sidewalks and bike lanes
  • Preventing cutbacks to physical education in schools
  • Reducing traffic, crime, and pollution
  • Enhancing social cohesion and community pride (social environment)
  • Increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables
  • Limiting availability of sugar-sweetened beverages and fast food
  • Improving food and beverage choices in schools
Youth Empowerment/Advocacy

- Creating healthy communities will require the interest and participation of multiple partners (Sallis et al., 2006)

- Youth voices can be powerful in influencing the priorities and decisions of policymakers (Checkoway et al., 2005; Ribisl et al., 2004)

- Engaging youth in advocacy and community change efforts is critical
  - positive youth development
  - youth empowerment
  - civic engagement
  - future public leadership

- Youth advocacy for obesity prevention has been called the next wave of social change for health (Millstein & Sallis, 2011)
The Healthy Young People Empowerment (HYPE) Project

HYPE Partners

- CDC, Community Transformation Grants
- Healthy South Carolina Initiative
- Eat Smart Move More South Carolina
- University of South Carolina, Arnold School of Public Health
- South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
Purpose of HYPE

HYPE is designed to enhance the capacity of adolescents (12-17 years) to plan, implement, and advocate for community PSE change centered around healthy eating and active living.
Five Phases of HYPE

- Think
- Learn
- Act
- Share
- Evaluate
Youth are encouraged to THINK about what they know about stereotypes, health disparities, and HE/AL.

Youth will participate in group discussions, draw their community HE/AL environment, and interview community members to gain perspective on HE/AL issues.
LEARN

- Youth LEARN knowledge and skills around HE/AL, PSE change, and being a Champion for Change
- Youth will practice public speaking and leadership skills, learn how to work with the media, and create a project action plan
Youth are called to ACT by creating an action plan for successful PSE change for HE/AL in their community.

Youth will identify a HE/AL issue, collect and analyze data, determine SMART goals and objectives, identify key players, and create a PSE change action plan.
SHARE

- Youth will SHARE their action plan with local stakeholders/policymakers as well as present at the HYPE Summit
Youth will EVALUATE changes created by action plans, review project outcomes, and discuss sustainable strategies.
HYPE Curriculum Structure

- 60-minute sessions
- Once per week
- Evidence-based information and activities
  - Individual and group-based
  - On and off-site
- Led by adult facilitators trained by ESMMSC
- Two guides:
  - Adult Facilitators’ Guide
  - Youth Guide
Implementation of HYPE

- Pilot in 3 selected communities
  - Richland County
  - Pickens County
  - Fairfield County

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Evaluation of HYPE

- Process evaluation
  - Program delivery/implementation
  - Youth engagement/enjoyment
  - Adult/youth interaction

- Outcome evaluation
  - Youth HE/AL knowledge/awareness
  - Youth empowerment/self-efficacy
  - Individual/community PSE mobilization
  - Policymakers’ attitudes/willingness towards PSE change
HYPE — Next Steps

• Ongoing feedback from Adult Advisory Board

• Ongoing feedback from Youth Advisory Board

• Implementation of HYPE in 30+ South Carolina communities by 2015

• Emphasis on African American youth

• Comprehensive evaluation
  • control groups
  • factors affecting implementation
  • individual-level outcomes
  • community-level outcomes
https://www.facebook.com/thewhypeprojectsc

www.eatsmartmovemoreesc.org/the-hype-project

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The Healthy Young People Empowerment (HYPE) Project

**HYPE Development Process**

- Theoretical Foundations
  - MATCH model of health promotion
  - Positive Youth Development Theories
  - Social Ecological Model Framework

- Steps
  - HYPE collaboration team formed
  - ESMMSC hired Youth Empowerment coordinator
  - Literature review (theories/youth curriculum)
  - Key informant interviews
  - HYPE goals/objectives established
  - HYPE curriculum phases developed
  - Minority advisory board review