

IMPACT



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Steps To A New You Improves Physical Activity Habits

The Situation

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American College of Sports Medicine recommend that adults engage in moderate-intensity physical activity for at least 30 minutes on 5 or more days of the week.

Unfortunately just 46% of US adults meet this recommendation and approximately 25% do not engage in any physical activity (CDC, US Physical Activity Status, 2003).

Our Response

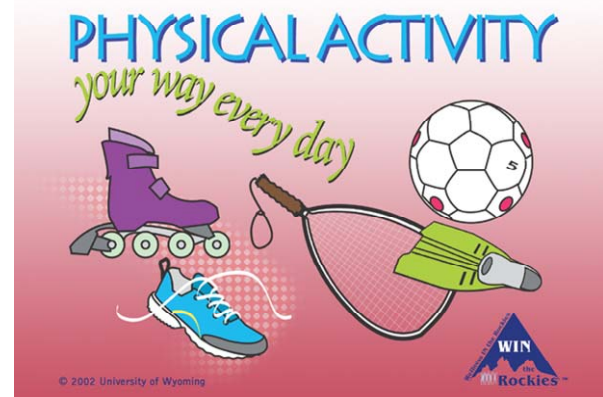
Extension faculty at the University of Idaho, University of Wyoming, and Montana State University used the nine-week *Steps To A New You* curriculum to promote physically active living.

In Idaho, the nine-week curriculum was taught by Katie Miner (Latah County), Linda Gossett (Ada County), Rhea Lanting (Twin Falls County), Marnie Spencer (Bingham County), Laura Sant (Franklin County), Marsha Lockard and Joey Peutz (Canyon County).

At the beginning of the study, participants received a pedometer and stretch band. With the pedometer, they were trained on where it should be worn, given examples of before and after walk stretches, and how to set realistic walking goals. The stretch band, was used in each class during their “physical activity” break and participants learned resistance

exercises, and received a handout so they could practice these exercises at home.

During the nine-week period, physical activity information that was covered included: benefits of physical activity, types of physical activity, identifying and overcoming barriers, keys to success, and how to become more physically active.



Data was collected over a 22 week period. The two evaluation tools included an 8-item physical activity behavior questionnaire and daily step log. Participants completed the physical activity behavior questionnaire three times: (1) Pre (before the first class), (2) Post (at the end of week 9, after the last class), and (3) Follow-up (3 months after the end of the last class or week 22). Participants completed the step logs daily for 22 weeks.

There were 160 participants who completed the pre, post, and follow-up questionnaires and 22 week step logs. Of the 160 participants, 8 or 5% were male and 152 or 95% were female. The age range was between 18-80 years-old.

Program Outcomes

Preliminary data from the three states has been analyzed (Chi-square analysis) on 160 participants.

Physical Activity Behavior Questionnaire

Results from the Physical activity behavior questionnaire showed:

There was a SIGNIFICANT INCREASE ($p < 0.001$) in the number of participants who:

- added physical activity to their daily routine.
- participated in low, moderate, and vigorous-intensity activities.
- did strength-building activities.
- enjoyed physical activity.
- felt they got as much physical activity as they needed.

There was a SIGNIFICANT DECREASE ($p < 0.001$) in the number of:

- participants who let body size or shape keep them from being physically active.
- hours they spent watching television on the weekend.

Currently, Step Log Data has been analyzed from week 2 to week 9. Listed below are the average daily steps from weeks 2 to 9. Week 1 was not included since participants were using this as a test period to become familiar with how the pedometer works.

- Week 2: 6354 steps/day
- Week 3: 6764 steps/day
- Week 4: 6909 steps/day
- Week 5: 7213 steps/day
- Week 6: 7512 steps/day
- Week 7: 7315 steps/day
- Week 8: 7515 steps/day
- Week 9: 7325 steps/day

From week 2 (6,354 steps/day) to week 9 (7,325 steps/day), the average increase in number of daily steps was approximately 1000 steps. There are

approximately 2000-2500 steps in a mile, depending on the length of the stride.

Comments by participants:

“The biggest impact on me was learning to enjoy being active. I always felt because I was overweight, it was too hard to be more active. I now enjoy walking and even look forward to it.”



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Other Contributing Faculty

Linda Gossett Rhea Lanting, Marsha Lockard, Katie Miner, Joey Peutz, Laura Sant, Marnie Spencer.

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