People have responsibility for their own health, but communities must create environments that foster good health and provide healthy options.

Philosophy of WIN the Rockies

Overview of WIN the Rockies

Wellness IN the Rockies (WIN the Rockies) was a community-based, research, intervention, and outreach project in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho that provided a unique and progressive alternative to the prevailing approach to obesity intervention. Instead of focusing on people achieving a specific body weight, our project employed a health-centered approach in which people developed healthy lifestyles and attitudes related to food, physical activity, and body image. The project was funded by the USDA (IFAFS - Initiative for Future Agriculture and Foods Systems, award #0004499). The project’s overall goals were two-fold: to enhance the well-being of individuals by improving their attitudes and behaviors related to food, physical activity, and body image; and to build a community’s capacity to foster and sustain those changes.

Synergy between education and research

WIN the Rockies fostered and capitalized on a dynamic relationship between education and research. Cooperative Extension, the WWAMI (Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho) medical education program, and other educational groups helped shape the research inquiry, and research findings have informed, enhanced, and guided project interventions and other outreach efforts.
Research components

Two communities were selected in each state. One community served as the demonstrator community and one as the comparator community, where interventions were delayed.

Quantitative research: Each community had approximately 50 adult cohorts who represented the adult segment of the community. Public classrooms of the 5th and 6th grades served as the youth cohorts for the study. A cross-sectional survey was randomly sent to households in all six communities at the beginning and conclusion of the intervention efforts in the demonstrator communities.

Qualitative research: Narratives (or life stories) in the areas of food, physical activity, and body image were collected from 103 adults in the demonstrator communities. More than 55 hours of conversations were transcribed and then analyzed to illustrate the challenges people faced, the successes they achieved, and the insights they gained. Findings from the narrative component helped guide the content of intervention tools.

Community-level data: A community portrait was completed in 2002 and 2004. The portrait captured community environmental factors related to food, physical activity, and body image (for example: square footage in local grocery stores for soft drinks, milk and bottled water; organized physical activity opportunities available in community; variety of clothing sizes available at local stores; etc.).

Educational and Promotional Materials (available at: www.uwyo.edu/wintherockies)

A project coordinator in each community worked with local community members to select, implement, and evaluate interventions. Primary intervention tools included the following:
- A New You: Health for Every Body - series of healthy living classes for adults.
- WIN Kids Lessons - series of 13 lesson plans for 5th and 6th grade students.
- WIN Kids Fun Days - 40 activities for youth ages 8-12.
- Physician forms - Healthy living prescription tool used by primary care physicians with their adult patients.
- WIN Steps - Pedometer-based community walking programs.
- Videos - Three original videos were produced to accompany the youth educational materials:
  * As If (uncovers the unrealistic perfected body-image messages promoted by the media).
  * Portion Investigators (illustrates the super-size food portion sizes readily available).
  * Choose to Move (demonstrates the variety of enjoyable daily physical activities available to youth).

In addition to the youth videos, a video called Search for the Real was produced.
Community Highlight - Powell - WIN the Rockies

highlighting the work of artist Larry Kirkwood, who promotes body size diversity by displaying body casts of real people. A video was also developed giving an overview of the WIN the Rockies project.

▲ Media campaign - Media efforts included billboards displaying key messages, local radio spots, banners, health fairs, posters, post cards, and regular newspaper ads.

▲ Community grants - $55,000 were distributed to 50 proposals in 28 communities. Of the four rounds of community grants, one round was dedicated to demonstrator communities, one round to comparator communities, and two rounds for communities throughout the three states.

▲ Tri-state workshops - Two training workshops were organized to serve as anchors for the community efforts. Community members attended workshops on: 1) lifestyle physical activity sponsored by the Cooper Clinic of Dallas, Texas and 2) positive body image for girls conducted by Lisa Sjostrom.

▲ Materials in Spanish - In order to reach the Spanish-speaking minority audience of the six communities, several intervention tools were translated into Spanish including posters, post cards, radio ads, family meal conversation cards, community walking program materials, the cross-sectional survey, and the physician healthy living prescription tool.

Posters, postcards, billboards:
Of the 50 adult cohorts who completed the first assessments in January 2001, 41 (82%) completed the third and final assessment in January 2004. In the fall of 2001, 629 cross-sectional surveys were randomly mailed to households in Powell; 298 were completed and returned for a response rate of 47%. In the fall of 2003, the second cross-sectional survey was randomly sent to 553 households, with 341 returned, for a response rate of 62%. Of the 40 5th grade students completing assessments in the Fall of 2001, 35 completed the fourth and final assessment as 6th grade students in the spring of 2003 (88% retention rate).

“I no longer super-size when I order. Actually, I’ve discovered the kid’s meals are plenty for me.”

“When it comes to healthy eating, dealing with emotional eating was the big hurdle for me.”

“I am now much more aware of how adult eating habits influence our children. Now my goal is not only to eat healthy for myself, but to model that behavior for my children.”

“The community’s challenge is to continue the program after the funding from WIN the Rockies ends. I’m concerned about human nature. Will people quickly go back to their old habits when they aren’t involved with WIN the Rockies’ activities?”

“I notice a lot more people are using the walking track at the city park.”

“The idea of having a good time while being active was a real eye-opener for me.”

“The one thing I really liked about WIN the Rockies was the fact all ages could participate from kindergarten to the elderly. The variety of information provided in different ways was what made the program effective — billboards, radio, newspaper, classes, and coupons for fruits and vegetables.”

“I think the walking programs were the most effective intervention. Everywhere you went, somebody was wearing a pedometer.”
“I did notice the community wasn’t always receptive to new ideas and some programs got a slow start.”

“A friend told me that as a result of WIN the Rockies’ educational efforts, her family no longer eats out three or four times a week.”

“The WIN the Rockies project in Powell was able to reach many people who had not participated in community wellness projects before. Several intervention efforts like the walking programs and the *A New You* classes have been integrated into the community.”

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**Notes from community coordinator’s monthly narrative reports**

Response from 5th grade student completing assessments: “I am really glad that you care that I am healthy.”

Question from participants of *A New You* program: “Can we come back next year and bring a few friends, and take the classes again?”

Comment from community member after seeing the WIN the Rockies’ billboard for the first time: “It is great to see people caring about each others health.”

Response from participant in the community walking program: “For the first time in my life, I’m not dreading the thought of going for a walk.”

Observation from the community coordinator: “After just two months of starting the community walking program, 11% of the population of Powell is already participating in a community walking program with pedometers.”

Unsolicited comment from community walking participant: “I can’t begin to tell you how good I feel since starting the walking program. I just look down at my pedometer and I get motivated to walk more.”

Observation from community recreation department employee after implementing several WIN Kids Fun Day activities: “It was amazing to see how the kids were having fun and being physically active without realizing it.”
Each adult cohort in Powell was given $50 of coupons to redeem toward the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables. Ten dollars of coupons were sent each month for five months along with educational materials promoting an increase in fruit and vegetable consumption. Local grocery stores were partners in this effort.

Summary of redemption of coupons:
94% of the adult cohorts in Powell redeemed one or more of the coupons. 
Of the 500 $5 coupons issued in Powell, 386 (78%) were redeemed.

Summary of Community Grants

In the competitive community mini grant program for WIN the Rockies, Powell was awarded two community grants totaling $3,500.

* The first community grant implemented three nutritional education programs in the community; one for middle school girls (Girl Talk), one for kindergarten through second grade students (Book Worms) and one for adults (Don’t panic - it’s in the freezer).

* The second community grant sponsored an interactive wellness fair for 4th grade students. The fair was planned and conducted by the students. The grant also purchased equipment for an after school physical activity program.

Key contacts in community

Key contacts in Powell for the WIN the Rockies project included the following; public schools including elementary schools and the middle school, the local Recreation District, local hospital, public health nurses, Cooperative Extension including local 4-H volunteer adult leaders, local newspaper, local radio station, local businesses including banks, primary care physicians, senior citizens center, local churches, local day care association, community organizations including Kiwanis and Rotary Club, public library, Chamber of Commerce, local community college, and local supermarkets.
Population of community: 5,373  
Households: 2,083  
Largest minority: Spanish/Hispanic, 6.8%

**Physical activity opportunities for general public**: Year round pool; outdoor ice-skating rink; golf course; organized team/group activities include baseball, softball, soccer, aerobics, dancing, volleyball, basketball, bowling and swimming; three city parks; local hospital open for year-round walking; and one for-profit health club available for women. In addition, four local businesses supply physical activity equipment for their employees.

**Schools**: *Grade schools* allow 45 minutes for lunch, offer PE twice a week for 30 minutes, schedule two 15 minute recesses each day; *middle school* allows 45 minutes for lunch and offers PE daily for 45 minutes; *high school* allows 40 minutes for lunch, offers PE and weight training as optional classes. **Vending machines**: One grade school has a beverage vending machine with 100% juice and water selections; there are no vending machines in the middle school, but high calorie/low nutrient dense snacks are offered as concessions after school; vending machines are available at the high school.

**Food availability**: One *local grocery store* offers 48 ft. of milk (8 ft. fat free, 5 ft. 1%, 8 ft. 2%, 7 ft. whole, and 20 ft. flavored), 168 ft. of sweetened beverages (including powdered drinks), 150 ft. soft drinks, 22 ft. 100% juices, and 42 ft. bottled water; *restaurants* in community include nine fast food restaurants and seven sit-down restaurants.

**Body image observation**: Of the four local stores offering clothing, two offered sizes above extra large. Of 100 clothing racks and shelves in one store, one rack was designated for plus sizes. In the other store, only one brand was offered in plus sizes.
## Summary of Major Interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of activity</th>
<th># participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Health Fair</td>
<td>March 2002</td>
<td>Distributed project brochures and posters. Set-up food portion display entitled <em>How Big is BIG?</em></td>
<td>100 or more adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Kids lesson plans</td>
<td>March 2002</td>
<td>Distributed complete lesson plans for WIN Kids.</td>
<td>10 adults (teachers &amp; 4-H leaders)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| *A New You* (series of classes) | Spring 2002, Spring 2003, Fall 2003 | Series of healthy living classes for adults and older teens.                                                                                              | Class 1 = 8  
Class 2 = 20  
Class 3 = 8  
**Total = 36** |
| Billboard                 | Summer 2002 through Winter 2003 | Series of five billboards in strategic location (placed just as you enter Powell from the west).                                                      | Mass media effort |
| County Fair               | August 2002              | Booth display - handout grocery pads and project brochures.                                                                                              | 275 adults     |
| Wyoming Ag Council        | August 2002              | Presentation - Eating healthy and staying active while on the road.                                                                                      | 31 adults      |
| Newspaper and radio ads   | Fall 2002 through Winter 2004 | Distributed weekly and seasonal special newspaper and radio ads promoting WIN the Rockies principles.                                                    | Mass media effort |
| Community walking programs | Summer 2002, Spring 2003, Summer 2003, Fall 2003, Winter 2004 | Programs used pedometers, log sheets, and group support to sustain daily walking routine for participants (both adults and youths). | Group 1 = 23  
Group 2 = 325  
Group 3 = 13  
Group 4 = 300  
Group 5 = 35  
**Total = 696** |
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<tr>
<td><em>Full of Ourselves</em> Training by Lisa Sjostrom</td>
<td>October 2002</td>
<td>Training for community members on positive body image program for female adolescents.</td>
<td>15 community members from Powell area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Sweetgall Walking programs</td>
<td>March 2003</td>
<td>Series of seven community programs at schools (reached 600 students), senior citizen center (45 seniors), hospital (100 employees), and public meeting (87 adults).</td>
<td>Total contacts: 832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powell Fun Days</td>
<td>Summer 2003</td>
<td>Implementation of <em>WIN Kids Fun Day</em> activities through the local community recreation program.</td>
<td>25 children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>WIN Kids Fun Day</em></td>
<td>Fall 2003</td>
<td>Program implemented in the public elementary schools.</td>
<td>100-150 (estimated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size It Up! by Betty Holmes</td>
<td>Winter 2004</td>
<td>Presentation celebrating human body size diversity.</td>
<td>22 adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Let Their Voices Be Heard</em> (book)</td>
<td>Winter 2004</td>
<td>First draft of book from narratives (life stories) shared with community members through local library and Extension offices.</td>
<td>General public marketing effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician forms</td>
<td>Fall 2003</td>
<td>Healthy living prescription tool for use with adult patients and their primary care physicians.</td>
<td>Used by four physicians in community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key messages of WIN the Rockies from a kid’s perspective (messages and designs by 5th grade students from Preston, Idaho):

- Every BODY is different
- It's fun and cool to live an active life
- Win by eating healthy
Samples of mass media efforts

Do you multi-task while eating? Do you eat while also driving, reading, or working at the computer? Are you then really enjoying the food? Eating is one of life's great pleasures and food is a gift. The community of Powell and WIN the Rockies remind you to maximize your food satisfaction by being free from distractions when you eat.

Sample radio spot

Powell Tribune - March 6, 2003

Meet Rob Sweetgall, nationally acclaimed author, speaker and fitness walker!
Nicknamed the real Forrest Gump, Sweetgall has walked across the country seven times, and is the only person to walk through all 50 states in 365 straight days. Along the way he has inspired young and old with his motivational activities focusing on walking, fitness, weight management, stress reduction and longevity.

FREE!
Sponsored by Win The Rockies and the Powell Recreation District

Tuesday, March 11 • 6:30 p.m. • NWC Nelson Auditorium
In this community seminar you will discover:
• How to start and continue your walk.
• How to break your walk up throughout the week.
• The benefits of interval training.

Physical activity
your way every day!

One of five billboards displayed in community

Remember sitting at your desk in elementary school, waiting for the recess bell? Didn't it feel great to run outside? Recapture that zest for joyful physical activity. Participate in activities for the sheer pleasure of feeling your body move. WIN the Rockies and the community of Powell encourages everyone to be active your way, every day.

Sample radio spot

Powell Tribune - April 13, 2003