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.
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.
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, 46 (92%) completed the third and final assessment in January 2004. In the fall of 2001, 594 cross-sectional surveys were randomly mailed to households in Torrington; 290 were completed and returned for a response rate of 49%. In the fall of 2003, the second cross-sectional survey was randomly sent to 555 households, with 312 returned, for a response rate of 56%. Of the 54 5th grade students completing assessments in the Fall of 2001, 46 completed the fourth and final assessment as 6th grade students in the spring of 2003 (85% retention rate).

Thank you from adult cohort: “I really appreciated the fruit and vegetable coupons, and I know the coupons motivated me to increase my consumption of fruits and vegetables. My goal is to continue this practice after the coupons run out.”

Radio WIN Bites: Several community members stated they had heard the WIN Bites on the radio, and really liked the idea of having community elementary school students write and deliver the radio promotions for healthy living.

Kick-off for community walking program: The public evening program presented by Robert Sweetgall on walking as a way of life was scheduled for 90 minutes. At the 90 minute mark, Robert stated he had more information to present and the audience encouraged him to continue. The program continued for an additional 30 minutes and none of the 120 participants left their seats until Robert finished.

Senior walking program: The local senior center was introduced to the pedometer-based community walking program, but enthusiasm for the program was slow at first. One senior got excited about his pedometer and told several others about the “gadget.” In no time, the senior center had distributed over 400 pedometers. The group decided to walk to Hawaii.

Sustainability of project in community: Two elementary schools used lessons from WIN Kids Fun Days for after school activities and indoor activities when weather would not allow outside recess. The teachers reported the lessons were well received by students, and the teachers stated they would continue to use the WIN Kids Fun Days activities in future years.
Newsletters for *A New You* class graduates: A series of 12 newsletters were sent to graduates of *A New You* after they completed the series of classes. One couple stated the newsletters were a great boost to maintaining their healthy lifestyle plan. Whenever the couple felt their motivation slipping, they would go the to notebook containing the newsletters for renewed enthusiasm.

Adapting community walking program: One participant of the community walking program decided to walk around certain states. Once she chose a state, she mapped out a route to take her through historic locations. Once she walked enough steps to reach a historic location, she then read about the history of the area. Since she is a history buff, this really kept her motivated with her walking program.

Ripple effect of WIN the Rockies’ educational messages: The city clerk completed the series of classes for *A New You*. She then included information from the class in monthly newsletters to all city employees.

Cancelling membership to the clean plate club: As a result of one educational program presented on revoking membership to the clean plate club, one grandmother reported a major change with the grandson living with her and her husband. Prior to the program, the grandparents were trying to force the grandson to clean his plate during every meal. After the program, the grandson was allowed to serve himself and the grandmother reported the family dining table was no longer a “battleground.”

Celebration of successful workplace walking program: Staff members of the local Extension office and university research center counted their steps on the their pedometers and decided as a group to walk to Hawaii. Once the group reached their goal, they celebrated with a Luau.

Radio public service announcements (PSAs): Local 4th grade students wrote and recorded PSAs at the local radio station on body size diversity acceptance. A few students wrote poems, and one student composed a song to a nursery rhyme and sang the song on air.

Steps at home vs. steps at work: One participant of a community walking program reported she was amazed by how few steps she recorded at home compared to when she was working. As a result of the program, she figured out ways to increase her steps while at home.
Community Highlight - Torrington - WIN the Rockies

Fruit and Vegetable Coupons

Each adult cohort 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:
96% of the adult cohorts in Torrington redeemed one or more of the coupons.
Of the 460 $5 coupons issued in Torrington, 309 (67%) were redeemed.

Summary of Community Grants

In the competitive community mini grant program for WIN the Rockies, Torrington was awarded six community grants totaling $5,300.

* One community grant purchased stretch tubing of different strengths (low, medium and high resistance) to add a stretch and conditioning component to a workplace walking program.
* One grant project added a rail system at the local senior friendship center. This allowed more seniors to participate in physical activity sessions offered at the center.
* The local middle school matched WIN the Rockies’ grant funds with $2500 in local funds to purchase a milk vending machine for the school.
* The local WIC office received a grant to implement a Movin Mammas program for new mothers. The healthy lifestyle educational program included a pedometer walking component.
* A local elementary school noted a problem with milk temperature during lunch time. The school applied for and received a grant to purchase a milk cooler so milk could stay cold throughout the lunch period.
* The senior center launched a Got Milk? campaign with grant funds. The campaign included the purchase of an inflatable Holstein cow to promote an increase in milk consumption. The center purchased a cold system barrel to keep milk cold throughout the meal serving times.
**Key contacts in community**

Key contacts in Torrington for the WIN the Rockies project included the following; elementary grade schools (PE teacher, principals, teachers, school board members, students), local hospital, local newspaper, local radio station, WIC, primary care physicians, Cooperative Extension and University of Wyoming Research center, city employees, Police Department, Lion’s Club of Torrington, St. Joseph’s Children Home, Head Start, senior center, summer school program, public health, local banks, local churches, local greenhouse, local TOPS group, local businesses including the livestock sale barn, public library, Southeast mental health, EvenStart, and local supermarkets.

**Highlights from community portrait - December 2003**

Population of community: 5,776  
Households: 2,436  
Largest minority: Spanish/Hispanic, 9.5%

**Physical activity opportunities for general public**: Three community parks, one outdoor walking path, high school running track open year-round, community college is open for people to walk from early in the morning until late in the evening, one outdoor community pool open in the summer, one community golf course, one bowling alley, one roller skating rink, one skate board park, fitness center at community college, racquetball court available at community college, organized square dancing group, and several organized team sports (baseball, softball, football, wrestling, soccer, basketball, volleyball, etc.).

**Schools**:  
- Grade school for K-2nd grades allows 35 minutes for lunch, offers PE every other day for 40 minutes, and schedules three 15 minute recesses each day. There is no access to vending machines.  
- Grade school for 3rd-5th grades allows 30 minutes for lunch, offers PE every other day for 30 minutes, and schedules 30 minutes for recesses each day. A pop vending machine in the teacher’s lounge is not available to students.  
- Middle school allows 30 minutes for lunch and offers PE an hour a day for 10 out of 15 days (health class replaces PE for 5 of the 15 days). Vending machines have timers that do not allow access to them during school hours.
Food availability: One local grocery store offers 43 ft. of milk (6 ft. fat free, 6 ft. 1%, 13 ft. 2%, 14 ft. whole, and 4 ft. flavored), 104 ft. of sweetened beverages (including powdered drinks), 238 ft. soft drinks, 131 ft. 100% juices, 30 ft. bottled water, and 1 ft. of sports drinks; restaurants in community include five fast food restaurants and 13 sit-down restaurants.

Body image observation: Of the five local stores offering clothing at the start of the grant, only three remained at the conclusion of the grant. Of the three remaining clothing stores, only one offered sizes above XXL for men (none offered small men sizes), and only one offered plus sizes for women.

Summary of Major Interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of activity</th>
<th># participant</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper and radio ads (including PSA’s)</td>
<td>January 2004 through</td>
<td>WIN Bites sponsored prior to 7 AM weather report on radio, and WIN Bites sponsored weather forecast in newspaper. Several live radio programs. Regular newspaper ads printed throughout intervention time. Public service announcements were written and recorded by local 4th grade students.</td>
<td>Radio = 5,000 listeners Local newspaper = 2,600 readers (published twice weekly) Free newspaper = 5,600 readers</td>
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<td>September 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community walking programs</td>
<td>February 2004 through</td>
<td>Programs used pedometers, log sheets, and group support to sustain daily walking routine for participants. Organized walking programs included local grade school, city employees, city police, public health staff, Cooperative Extension/Research center, seniors at senior center, church, local businesses, kitchen staff at local livestock sale barn, TOPS, Southeast mental health, Lion’s club, EvenStart, and residents at apartment complex.</td>
<td>7 programs started in Feb., 12 in March, 5 in April, 7 in May, 3 in June, 1 in August Total # of walking program started: 35 Total participants: 1,326 (23% of population)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>September 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>A New You</em> (series of classes)</td>
<td>February 2004 through May 2004</td>
<td>Series of healthy living classes for adults and older teens.</td>
<td>Class 1 = 21&lt;br&gt;Class 2 = 26&lt;br&gt;Class 3 = 24&lt;br&gt;Class 4 = 25&lt;br&gt;Total = 96</td>
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<tr>
<td>Billboard</td>
<td>February 2004 through September 2004</td>
<td>Series of five billboards in strategic location.</td>
<td>Mass media effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation to school board and school administration office staff</td>
<td>February 2004</td>
<td>Six students of local grade school explained the walking program implemented by WIN the Rockies and challenged school board members and office staff to get involved in the walking program.</td>
<td>25 adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of WIN the Rockies posters</td>
<td>Winter 2004 through Fall 2004</td>
<td>Posters were distributed to schools, Cooperative Extension, public health office, and WIC.</td>
<td>Mass media effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program on revoking membership to the Clean Plate Club</td>
<td>February 2004</td>
<td>Cent$ible Nutrition Class (Extension nutrition educational program for families with limited resources).</td>
<td>5 women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Center: Presentation on physical activity</td>
<td>February 2004</td>
<td>Overview of importance of physical activity and presented outline for pedometer-based community walking programs.</td>
<td>165 adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marque in front of school</td>
<td>March 2004</td>
<td>Elementary school put up marque promoting how many days left until Robert Sweetgall spoke a the school. Student also wore a sign around his neck marking off the days.</td>
<td>There are 274 students at the school</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Sweetgall Walking programs</td>
<td>March 2004</td>
<td>Series of five community programs at schools (reached 554 students and staff), city employees (30 adults), hospital (24 employees), and public meeting (120 adults).</td>
<td>Total contacts: 728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Fair</td>
<td>March 2004</td>
<td>Distributed promotional materials for WIN the Rockies. Ten community members signed up for <em>A New You</em> classes.</td>
<td>General public: 2,000 in attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of Wellness IN the Rockies to local TOPS group</td>
<td>March 2004</td>
<td>Group started a walking program, and several members enrolled in classes for <em>A New You</em>.</td>
<td>23 women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School awards program</td>
<td>March 2004</td>
<td>Students checked out school pedometers to earn steps to receive their own pedometer. Program was coordinated by PE teacher.</td>
<td>200 students earned their own pedometers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk taste test during Elementary School open house</td>
<td>March 2004</td>
<td>Samples were offered for 1% and skim milk. Several families indicated they would switch to a lower fat milk option.</td>
<td>103 parents, students, and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Series of 12 newsletters for <em>A New You</em> graduates</td>
<td>Starting in April 2004</td>
<td>A newsletter was sent every two weeks to each participant who completed the program.</td>
<td>58 newsletters (1 per household)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Lion’s club meeting</td>
<td>April 2004</td>
<td>Overview of Wellness IN the Rockies.</td>
<td>24 adults</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Summary of Major Interventions - continued

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</tr>
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<tr>
<td><em>Full of Ourselves</em> Training by Lisa Sjostrom</td>
<td>April 2004</td>
<td>Training attended by one community member on positive body image program for female adolescents. Notebooks on program delivered to 4 community agencies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Size It Up!</em> by Betty Holmes</td>
<td>April 2004</td>
<td>Presentation celebrating human body size diversity - 4 community programs.</td>
<td>22 adults and 8 youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Focus group discussion - Reaching Males</em></td>
<td>May 2004</td>
<td>Mary Kay Wardlaw, education specialist, conducted focus group with men who had completed <em>A New You</em> classes to receive their suggestions for adapting curriculum for male audiences.</td>
<td>6 males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>WIN Kids Fun Day</em></td>
<td>June 2004</td>
<td>Activities implemented in the summer school program for the public school district.</td>
<td>100 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results from <em>WIN the Rockies</em></td>
<td>July 2004</td>
<td>Two public meetings highlighting findings from <em>WIN the Rockies</em>. Program resulted in featured front page story in local newspaper.</td>
<td>6 adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>WIN Kids lessons</em></td>
<td>August 2004</td>
<td>Lessons were distributed to St. Joseph’s Home for Children. Program will be implemented in the fall of 2004.</td>
<td>75 students (estimated)</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
Sample of mass media efforts

12 ways in 12 weeks media campaign

Local news article from Torrington Telegram

One of four 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 Torrington encourages everyone to be active your way, every day.

Sample radio spot