

The CO-OPS Collaboration

Collaboration of Community-Based Obesity Prevention Sites

News from the CO-OPS front desk...

Well it has been a active start to 2009 for the CO-OPS Collaboration, after a well earned break over the Christmas period we have been busy developing our strategic plan, commencing production of our new website and finalising the Best Practice Principles.

The Secretariat, with contribution and guidance from the Advisory Committee, has been busy planning for the future of CO-OPS, putting together a strategic plan. The focus is on our activity periods from June 2009-June 2011 and how to extend CO-OPS past this funding period. Our vision is "To cultivate a collaborative effort to improve quality and breadth of community based obesity prevention".

In line with this vision, CO-OPS will provide leadership to achieve:

- A sustainable collaborative network
- Definition, translation and utilisation of best practice by community based obesity prevention initiatives
- Widespread coverage of diverse community based obesity prevention initiatives

The CO-OPS website has moved into the production phase and looks to be on track for a launch date in May. We are very excited about everything the website is going to offer and we look forward to our members having access to current and effective tools and resources. The website will offer users an overview of CO-OPS and its activities and access to a variety of resources, discussion forums and the Best Practice Principles.

The Secretariat has taken on board the idea of a national road show which was suggested at the National Workshop last year, and we have set the wheels in motion. To make the most of upcoming conferences in Brisbane, Perth and Darwin, CO-OPS will send representatives to the Heart Foundation, Australian Health Promotion Association and Dietitians Association of Australia conferences occurring in May this year.

Along with exhibiting CO-OPS at these conferences we will be in contact with key stakeholders with the aim being to conduct a half day workshop in each state.

The objective of the workshops is to bring CO-OPS to members, provide professional development opportunities, present case studies and provide a networking opportunity. Keep an eye out for us and stay posted for more details on our visit to your state/territory.

It is an aim of CO-OPS to conduct a half day workshop in each state and territory and we will be looking for conferences or other events the CO-OPS network can link into. If you have any ideas or information on events in your state that you think might benefit from having CO-OPS in attendance, please feel free to email: emma.smitten@deakin.edu.au. We welcome any input you may have.

The Best Practice Principles are also not far away from dissemination. They are currently in final production and we will endeavor to have them accessible via our website soon with a formal launch being held in May.

CO-OPS understands the need for ongoing professional development and is currently working on a training calendar which will offer online training once a month as well as the 'Obesity Short Course'. Our professional development sessions will be conducted over one hour with a keynote speaker presenting a topic, a presented case study from an initiative around Australia and Q & A time. Topics that will be presented include; evaluation on a budget, Best Practice Principles –their use and application, evidence analysis and the social, cultural and environmental determinants of obesity prevention. Information on the Obesity Short Course can be found at the end of this newsletter.

Please feel free to contact our dedicated CO-OPS staff with questions or queries you may have, they will be happy to help you however they can.

Upcoming Conference and Courses...

Obesity Prevention 5 day Course

When: 22-26 June 2009

Where: Deakin University, Geelong Waterfront Campus, Victoria, Australia

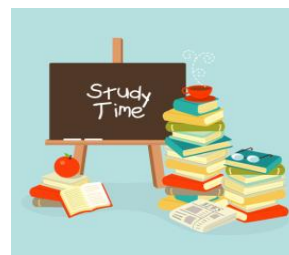
Who: The course is designed for managers and practitioners working in physical activity and/or nutrition promotion including staff from the fields of health promotion, community health and public health; and for GPs, dietitians, nurses, teachers, physical activity practitioners, government staff and others working/interested in the area of physical activity, nutrition and the promotion of healthy weight in communities.

What: The Obesity Prevention Course is a comprehensive 5 day course of lectures, activities and workshops based on adult learning principles. The focus of the course is obesity prevention in young populations i.e. birth - 18 years. It uses a population health approach.

The course provides:

- A fundamental understanding of the obesity epidemic and its impact
- The evidence base for obesity prevention
- Best practice principles and;
- Frameworks for understanding the determinants of obesity & strategies for action

Local significant childhood community-based projects will be showcased by staff working on these projects with the opportunity to discover the realities of planning, implementing and evaluating such projects including building capacity and social marketing. Tools for engaging key stakeholders and building a community-based obesity prevention program will also be demonstrated using the ANGELO (Analysis Grid of Elements Linked to Obesity) framework.



Cost: Early bird registration is \$1250 prior to 1 May 2009. Full Cost \$ 1400. The course provides all refreshments, lunch, a comprehensive manual, a copy of presentations and pre-course readings.

For any queries please contact emma.smitten@deakin.edu.au

More details can be found by visiting <http://www.deakin.edu.au/hmnbs/who-obesity/events-training/short-course.php>

CO-OPS SCHOLARSHIPS

The CO-OPS Collaboration is offering 10 scholarships to attend the Obesity short course from June 25-30 2009. These scholarships will cover full registration fees for successful candidatures. The purpose of the scholarships is to provide the opportunity for persons who, due to financial restrictions, would be unable to undertake the Obesity Prevention Short Course without scholarship support. The scholarship recipient is responsible for securing their own travel, accommodation and incidental expenses.

To apply for one of these scholarships the applicant must be: An employed public health practitioner working in or planning to work in the area of Community Based Obesity Prevention Initiatives within Australia.

To apply for one of these scholarships email submissions to emma.smitten@deakin.edu.au. Include your name, contact details, organisation, position, your planned/current involvement in community based obesity prevention and how you plan to use what you learn to influence the provisions of community based obesity prevention initiatives in your community/state. The closing date for scholarship applications is May 1st.

A focus on... South Australia

An aim of CO-OPS is to share information on different initiatives throughout Australia, aimed at Obesity Prevention. Each edition of the CO-OPS newsletter is going to highlight a different state. This edition focuses on South Australia.



The *eat well be active* Community Programs (*ewba*) aim to contribute to the healthy weight of children, young people (0-18 years) and their families through increasing healthy eating and physical activity behaviors using a whole-of-community approach.

Background

The *ewba* Programs are based in the metropolitan community of Morphett Vale (population 33,000) and the rural City of Murray Bridge (population 18,000) and are funded for five years for \$2.5 million by SA Health. The Programs recognise the importance of addressing environmental factors, working in partnership across sectors and using a community development approach when looking to produce sustainable change at the community level. Locally relevant intervention plans were developed for *ewba* following a significant community consultation process and connected with the best available evidence of effectiveness. The resultant *ewba* intervention plan (Fig 1) depicts the four key messages that are addressed by a portfolio of strategies across the range of settings in which children, young people and their families live, learn and play.

Implementation

Implementation of the *ewba* intervention plans commenced in 2006 and will continue until December 2009. Recent implementation highlights include;

77% of pre and primary schools have initiated/completed a healthy eating policy

The first physical activity policy for Family Day Care in SA has been developed, implemented and supported with training attended by 66% of Care Providers

46 workforce development sessions were delivered for early childhood, education and youth workers in 2007/08

50 primary and 66 high school students trained as *eat well be active* peer leaders

53 water facilities in 21 early childhood settings and schools were installed/upgraded.

Evaluation

The mixed methodology *ewba* evaluation is a cross-sectional pre post design with comparison groups. Co-existing with quantitative data collection is the qualitative evaluation that seeks to capture what has been done, understand what contributed to changes and provide insights into practice. The baseline data of 10-12 year old children (n=1637) indicates that 25% of children are overweight or obese, and three quarters of children eat an excessive amount of unhealthy foods and exceed the daily recommendation for screen time.

Future directions

Approximately 90% of the *ewba* intervention plans have been implemented to date, and much time is now devoted to consolidation and supporting sustainability of healthy eating and physical activity action in each community. Qualitative evaluation thus far indicates strong commitment and support for the *eat well be active* Community Programs. Final evaluation measures in late 2009 will ultimately report the extent to which these Programs have contributed to the healthy weight status of South Australians. For further information visit: www.health.sa.gov.au/pehs/branches/health-promotion/hp-eat-well-be-active.htm

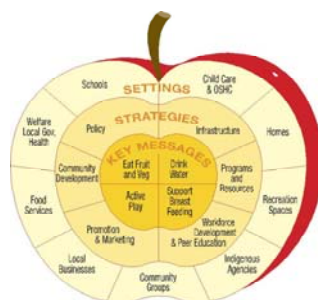


Figure 1. *ewba* Action Plan framework

Contacts:

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Implemented by Southern Primary Health, of Southern Adelaide Health Service and Murray Mallee Community Health Service, of Country Health SA

Obesity Prevention Initiatives

Refers to initiatives which seek to promote healthy eating, physical activity, and healthy body weight in a way that would be expected to influence energy balance and thus contribute to the prevention of unhealthy weight gain at the population level.



If you haven't done so...

Subscribe to The CO-OPS e-Newsletter:

The CO-OPS e-newsletter is a bi-monthly production sent to all contacts on our mailing list.

The CO-OPS newsletter provides the latest and greatest news and resources that we have to offer, case studies and up dates from current and upcoming obesity prevention initiatives throughout Australia and professional development opportunities for anyone working within the physical activity and/or nutrition sector; including health promotion, community health and public health staff; GPs, dietitians, nurses, teachers, physical activity practitioners, government staff and others working/interested in the area of physical activity, nutrition and the promotion of healthy weight in communities.

Please email emma.smitten@deakin.edu.au if you wish to register your details or if you know of someone who may be interested in receiving this service.



Are you looking for project advice and support?

CO-OPS is available to offer guidance and support and will be able to assist you with any queries relating to project planning, evaluation, data collection, management and resources. If we don't know the answer, we'll endeavour to find it or put you in contact with someone who does. We have the ability to connect you to many other individuals working on Community Based Obesity Prevention Initiatives and have access to a wide variety of resources.

For advice and support services please contact

Corinne Rice (Knowledge broker) corinne.rice@deakin.edu.au or 5227 8484; or

Melanie Nichols (Program Evaluator) melanie.nichols@deakin.edu.au or 5227 8446



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CO-OPS is directed by a collaborative partnership between

Deakin University

The University of Melbourne

The University of Sydney