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Reducing Parental Demand for Antibiotics by Promoting Communication Skills

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Antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria are continuing to emerge as high rates of antibiotic use persist. Children are among the highest users of antibiotics, with parents influencing physician decision-making regarding antibiotic prescription. An intervention based on Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) to reduce parents' expectations for antibiotics in favor of communication with the physicians was tested. A randomized factorial design study was conducted testing a communication skills intervention against an information-based intervention, a combined intervention and a control condition. Parents receiving the communication skills intervention reported higher efficacy to communicate with the physician ($p=0.021$). Interaction between the communication skills and information interventions were observed for specific treatment expectations prior to the visit ($p=0.049$). The communication skills intervention was protective against antibiotic prescribing ($p=0.042$). Satisfaction was positively associated with parents' efficacy to community ($p=0.002$) and when an antibiotic was not prescribed ($p=0.005$).

Interventions using information to reduce antibiotic use may be based on the false assumption that such approaches are sufficient for motivating appropriate health practices. Using demonstrated behavior changes approaches to promote communication behaviors by parents might result in the dual benefits of reducing unwarranted antibiotic use and improving satisfaction with the clinic visit.

Effects of a Classroom-based Asthma Education Curriculum on Asthma Knowledge, Attitudes, Self-efficacy, Quality of Life, and Self-management Behaviors among Adolescents

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Asthma education interventions primarily target young children and adults, and a few target adolescents. Several constructs of the social cognitive theory were used to design a classroom-based high school asthma education curriculum and to determine if the curriculum would improve asthma knowledge and attitudes among 10th grade students, as well as improve the quality of life, self-efficacy, and self-management behaviors among asthmatic students. Using a nonequivalent control group design with delayed intervention (three-week delay) in one group, we surveyed a sample of 122 10th grade health academy students. Twenty-four students (20%) reported having doctor-diagnosed asthma. Statistical data analysis determined that asthma knowledge mean scores and self-efficacy mean scores significantly improved for students who received the curriculum. Most students held favorable attitudes towards asthmatics before the intervention, with a slight decrease in positive attitudes after the intervention. There were also slight, insignificant improvements in quality of life among asthmatic students. This study demonstrated that the asthma curriculum improved knowledge among asthmatic and nonasthmatic students and self-efficacy among the asthmatic students. Asthma education, based on a theoretical framework, can be effectively incorporated into a traditional high school curriculum.

Population Density and Alcohol-related Risk Behaviors Among US High School Students

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By better understanding differences in health-risk behaviors among youth in rural, suburban and urban communities, health educators and other public health practitioners can more appropriately focus prevention and health care programs. In this study, we examined data from the national Youth Risk Behavior Study (YRBS) to determine whether alcohol-related risk behaviors among students are associated with population density. We found that in 2003, only driving after drinking alcohol varied by population density; that is, students in urban communities were significantly less likely to report this behavior than students in rural communities. Temporal trend analyses of 1993-2003 national YRBS data suggested varied patterns in alcohol-related risk behaviors among students attending urban, suburban and rural schools. Given that alcohol-related risk behaviors are high overall, these findings suggest the need to examine school and community policies and programs designed to discourage such behaviors in all population density categories.

Improving Health Education for ELL Students in the Mainstream Classroom

John Rohwer and Bob Wandberg

Culturally diverse students, as a collective group, are a sizable and growing population. Large numbers of students with language and cultural experiences different from the mainstream population will continue to enter schools in growing numbers throughout the next decades. Historically, their level of academic achievement has lagged significantly behind that of their English language-dominant peers. If schools are to meet the challenge of educating culturally diverse student populations, teachers must embrace instruction and curricula that engage and encourage all students. This article gleans from the discussed research ten strategies that all school health education teachers should utilize in their language- and learning-diverse classrooms that can increase the learning, achievement and success of English Language Learners (ELL) and other low-literacy students. Some of these strategies include: linking health concepts with the students' backgrounds, providing appropriate speech for ELL students, incorporating scaffolding techniques, using hands-on materials and/or manipulative for practice, clearly defining the language objectives, and providing multiple avenues for assessing learning. Many mainstream health education teachers who utilize these specific strategies report that all of their students experience a higher level of performance.

The Assessment of Rural African-American Churches' Capacity to Promote Health Prevention Activities

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Throughout history, the African-American church has played a vital role in social, political and educational arenas. Often viewed as the cornerstone of the African-American community, the African-American church is an excellent medium to promote health prevention and promotion interventions. This article identifies several elements for the facilitation of this process, identifies the role of culture within this concept and

explores the history of the African-American church as it relates to health promotion activities. The African-American church has become a valuable mechanism by which health professionals are able to reach underserved populations.

Human Papillomavirus: A Catalyst to a Killer

Alice Richman

Genital human papillomavirus (HPV) is the most prevalent and widespread sexually transmitted disease and is responsible for almost all cases of cervical cancer worldwide. However, HPV has received little public health attention, is not a reportable STD, and often is absent from the repertoire of STDs. In addition, there is pervasive misinformation about HPV among health care providers, professionals, patients and the public. This paper provides a comprehensive literature review of HPV by 1) addressing important epidemiological issues such as HPV prevalence, contraction, symptoms, transmission, detection, prevention, screening and treatment, 2) addressing specific gaps in the literature and 3) addressing future steps that can be taken among public health agencies, health care professionals, health educators and the general public to ensure HPV prevention, detection and treatment.