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**Foursquare: A Health Education Specialist Checks-In—A Commentary**

**Melissa Haithcox-Dennis**

Haithcox-Dennis M. Foursquare: a health education specialist checks-in—a commentary. 2011, revised and accepted for publication on April 22, 2011.

**Use and Acceptance of Social Media among Health Educators**

**Carl Hanson, Joshua West, Brad Neiger, Rosemary Thackeray, Michael Barnes, and Emily McIntyre**

Background: As social media use grows in popularity, health educators are challenged to think differently about how to communicate with audiences. Purpose: The purpose of this study was to explore social media use and factors that determine acceptance of social media use among health educators. Methods: A random sample of Certified Health Education Specialists (CHES) (N = 503) completed an online survey consisting of items related to the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT). Results: Findings revealed that health educators most commonly used social networking sites (34.8%), podcasts (23.5%), and media sharing sites (18.5%) within their organizations. Social influence ( $P < 0.0001$ ) and performance expectancy ( $P < 0.0001$ ) were both positively associated with increased behavioral intentions to use social media for health promotion. Reasons for lack of use included employers monitoring or blocking social media, difficulty of use among older health educators, and the belief that social media would not enhance job performance. Discussion: Many health educators are using social media and intentions to use in practice are associated with social influence and performance expectancy. Translation to Health Education Practice: Social media use holds promise as a supporting methodology to enhance health education practice. Implementation should include attention to guidelines and best practice.

**Adolescents' Views Regarding Uses of Social Networking Websites and Text Messaging for Adolescent Sexual Health Education**

**Ellen M. Selkie, Meghan Benson, and Megan Moreno**

Background: Adolescents frequently report barriers to obtaining sexual health education. Purpose: The purpose of this study was to determine adolescents' views regarding how new technologies could be used for sexual health education. Methods: Focus group interviews were conducted with a purposeful sample of adolescents between 14 and 19 years old. Facilitators asked participants for their views regarding use of social networking web sites (SNSs) and text messaging for sexual health education. Tape-recorded data were transcribed; transcripts were manually evaluated then discussed to determine thematic consensus. Results: Twenty-nine adolescents (65.5% female) participated in five focus groups. Three themes emerged from our data. First, adolescents preferred sexual health education resources that are accessible. Second, adolescents preferred online resources that are trustworthy. Third, adolescents discussed preference for "safe" resources. Discussion: Adolescents were enthusiastic and insightful regarding technology for enhancing sexual health education. The themes that influence adolescents' preferences in sexual health education using technology are similar to barriers that exist in other aspects of adolescent health communication. Translation to Health Education

Practice: Findings suggest ways in which health organizations can understand adolescents' views and concerns about how their interactions with professionals take place regarding sexual health.

### **Benefits and Barriers of Pediatric Healthcare Providers toward Using Social Media in Asthma Care**

**Mary P. Martinasek, Anthony D. Panzera, Tali Schneider, James H. Lindenberger, Carol A. Bryant, Robert J. McDermott, and Marisa Couluris**

Background: Adolescents with asthma are the least compliant age group for asthma management. Purpose: The purpose of this study was to explore attitudes, beliefs and perceptions of two pediatric physician groups towards using social media technology (SMT) to improve asthma management in adolescents. Methods: We employed in-depth interviews and a focus group to understand pediatric attending physicians' and residents' perspectives of SMT use in asthma management. We analyzed data using the constant comparative method. Results: Physicians acknowledge the importance of health education for asthma management and the potential for SMT. Identified benefits include enhanced understanding of how adolescents perceive asthma, improved patient-provider relationships, the availability of an interactive venue and an additional way to provide accurate information to asthmatic teens. The barriers consisted of time constraints during office hours, personal commitments, work schedules, lack of comfort with the technology and perceived liability issues. Discussion: SMT is considered a valuable tool to reach this target population. The barriers of using SMT need to be overcome for voluntary adoption to occur. Translation to Health Education Practice: SMTs may provide a dynamic platform for both health education and allow physicians to better understand the needs and wants of adolescents with chronic diseases.

### **Evaluation of a Health and Fitness Social Media Experience**

**Renee E. Frimming, Myles Jay Polsgrove, and Glenna G. Bower**

Background: University health and fitness faculty members are continually striving to enhance the health knowledge of their students. Purpose: The purpose of this case study was to survey student reflections of a social media experience. Methods: Students were placed into one of two groups: Learners (N = 92) or Pre-Service Health and Fitness Professionals (N = 35). The interaction with social media began when Learners posted health and fitness questions to a Facebook group site. Survey questionnaires were given to all participants. Results: The responses of the Learner group revealed that 51.1% believed long-term use of a social media site benefit their fitness routine. A supporting Learner response, "I feel more informed and aware of proper fitness." The responses of the Pre-Service Health and Fitness Professionals group revealed that 52.9% learned from peers. A supporting PSHFP response, "I learned that some of my peers are quick to establish more ways to improve a workout..." Discussion: Both Learners and Pre-Service Health and Fitness Professionals groups gave new insights into health and fitness needs. Translation to Health Education Practice: The University is an ideal setting to share health and fitness knowledge through social media.

### **Evaluative Indices Assigned to Contraceptive Methods by University Undergraduates**

**Robert J. McDermott, Teri L. Malo, Virginia J. Dodd, Ellen M. Daley, and Alyssa B. Mayer**

**Background:** Preordinate attitudes and beliefs about contraception may influence acceptance or rejection of a particular method. **Purpose:** We examined the attitudes about contraception methods held by undergraduate students (N=792) at two large southeastern universities in the United States. **Methods:** Twelve methods were rated on 40 semantic differential scales. Means of the scale sum scores for men and women were compared using t-tests. **Results:** Among women the most favorably rated methods were: abstinence, oral contraceptive, male condom, Nuva ring, contraceptive patch, emergency contraception, male sterilization, female sterilization, diaphragm and female condom, each yielding a mean above the scale midpoint. The most negatively rated methods were withdrawal and douche. For men, the ratings in descending order were: oral contraceptive, male condom, abstinence, contraceptive patch, emergency contraception, female sterilization, Nuva ring, female condom, diaphragm, withdrawal, male sterilization and douche. There were four statistically significant ( $P < 0.05$ ) gender differences, with abstinence, male condom, male sterilization and Nuva ring all rated more favorably by women. **Discussion:** These evaluative indices suggest that contraceptive methods elicit varied responses among potential users that theoretically could manifest themselves in acceptance or rejection of a particular method. Improved understanding of the traits by which potential users judge contraception may be beneficial in fostering communication between potential users and practitioners who provide relevant advice. **Translation to Health Education Practice:** Health educators and other practitioners engaged in contraception counseling must consider that persons may already hold strong feelings about some methods before they enter the clinical setting.

**Caffeine Consumption Patterns and Beliefs of College Freshmen**

**Gary E. McIlvain, Melody P. Noland, and Robert Bickel**

**Background:** Caffeine consumption by young people has increased dramatically over the last decade through increased coffee consumption and “energy drinks.” In higher amounts, caffeine causes many adverse effects that are cause for concern. **Purpose:** Purposes of this study were to determine: (1) the amount of caffeine consumed by a sample of college students, (2) beliefs regarding caffeine consumption, (3) reported perceived benefits and adverse effects of caffeine consumption, (4) reasons for consuming caffeine, and (5) predictors of caffeine consumption. **Methods:** An anonymous survey was administered 300 freshmen attending a southeastern university. **Results:** Eighty-three percent of the students reported having at least one sign/symptom of caffeine intoxication in the past; 51% reported having at least one sign/symptom of caffeine withdrawal. Students consumed three to five times the recommended amount of caffeine. Father’s social index, participation in organized activity in college and three alertness items (concentration, keep awake, wake up) were significant predictors of caffeine consumption. **Discussion:** Students ingested caffeine at levels that could cause negative health effects and seemed unaware of the total amount of caffeine consumed. **Translation to Health Education Practice:** More information about caffeine should be incorporated into health education at all levels, so students can identify and avoid negative effects along with caffeine withdrawal and addiction.

**Bed Bug Epidemic: A Challenge to Public Health**

**Dhitinut Ratnapradipa, Dale O. Ritzel, Linn D. Haramis, and Kadi R. Bliss**

In recent years, reported cases of bed bug infestations in the U.S. and throughout the world have escalated dramatically, posing a global public health problem. Although bed bugs are not known to transmit disease to humans, they pose both direct and indirect public health challenges in terms of health effects, treatment, cost, and resource allocation and coordination. Education is an important component of prevention and treatment of infestations and health educators can play a key role in educating the public about this re-emerging problem and in organizing community-based responses. Therefore, the two goals of this paper were to: (1) provide an overview of the public health threat from bed bug infestations, and (2) provide prevention and treatment guidance for health educators to utilize in educating the public about this challenge.