

Sample Pilot Project Abstract

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Project Title: Policy and environmental supports for healthy eating & exercise on college campuses

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Abstract:

College-aged students are at considerable obesity risk due in part to poor diets, low-levels of physical activity (PA), and other negative health behaviors inherent to the college environment. The transition from high school to college has been identified as a critical period of weight gain and decline in healthy behaviors. To date, there has been little focus on the college environment for obesity prevention strategies, and almost no focus on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) campuses. The proposed project will assess environmental and policy supports for healthy eating and PA at an HBCU. We will assess a Predominantly White Institution (PWI) in the same city for comparison and to identify disparities. A mixed methods approach will be used to collect quantitative and qualitative data on the environment and student/faculty/staff knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and preferences associated with health status and health-related behaviors. Data will be used to further understand/identify strategies to improve health among college students, particularly racial/ethnic minority students who are at higher risk for developing chronic disease, and to improve supports for healthy eating and physical activity on college campuses.

Relevance:

The proposed project is relevant to reducing health disparities because of our focus on students, faculty, and staff on HBCU campuses, who are at higher risk for chronic disease. HBCU campuses have fewer supports for healthy eating and physical activity, making healthy behaviors that reduce/prevent chronic disease more difficult to adhere to.