TARGET AUDIENCE

This program is for children in kindergarten through 6th grade and school faculty and staff.

SUMMARY

Grand Canyon Trekkers, a school-based program, is designed to increase children's physical activity by providing the opportunity to participate in a walking program during the school day.

EVIDENCE

A pre-test post-test study was conducted in 10 title 1 (i.e., based on percentage of children who are eligible for free or reduced lunch) schools in Phoenix, Arizona. Upon completion of the program, no significant differences in children's body mass index (BMI) percentiles or waist circumferences were found between baseline values and post-program values. However, children did experience a significant increase in their cardio-respiratory fitness by 37.1 percent from baseline. Obese youth experienced the smallest increases in cardio-respiratory fitness compared to their healthy weight and overweight counterparts.

COMPONENTS

The Grand Canyon Trekkers program intends to help reduce the incidence of childhood obesity by encouraging youth to engage in physical activity and encourage adults in the school environment to participate in the walking program and model positive activity patterns. This program includes several basic components.

- Prior to program implementation, each school's playground is assessed, and, if possible, a 1/4 mile walking trail is established.
- Each participant receives an index card to track his or her miles walked, and he or she receive punches in the card for each 1/4 mile lap completed. Upon completion of 5 miles, participants receive a new card.
- Incentives are provided to children at predetermined mileage intervals to encourage students to walk certain distances, such as the the equivalent mileage of well-known hiking trails in the Grand Canyon. In addition, each week a student receives a prize to honor his or her outstanding sportsmanship, and a teacher or staff member receives a gift certificate for modeling positive physical activity behaviors and logging the most miles.

At the end of the program, the top 30 students with the most miles at each school receive certificates for yogurt parfait celebrations. The top four students in 4th to 6th grade are offered the opportunity to hike the Grand Canyon with program facilitators, and the top four walkers in kindergarten through 3rd grade are provided with a summer family swim pass to a local public pool.

PREVIOUS USE

The program was developed in 2007, and no previous use information beyond the evaluation study was located.
Grand Canyon Trekkers

TRAINING

No information about training was available.

CONSIDERATIONS

Considerations for implementing this program include acquiring buy-in from school administrators, staff, and students; developing and maintaining a safe area for walking; obtaining parental volunteers to help deliver the program; and understanding incentives and gift cards will need to be purchased.

The Clearinghouse can help address these considerations. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

IMPLEMENTATION

If you are interested in implementing Grand Canyon Trekkers, the Clearinghouse is interested in helping you! Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

TIME

The program lasts 16 weeks. Walking occurs during recess 3 days a week and varies in length from 5 to 25 minutes.

COST

No information about implementation costs was available. Some expenses may occur for incentives and gift cards; these amounts will vary.

EVALUATION PLAN

To move Grand Canyon Trekkers to the Promising category on the Clearinghouse Continuum of Evidence, at least one evaluation should be performed demonstrating positive effects lasting at least six months from program completion.

The Clearinghouse can help you develop an evaluation plan to ensure the program components are meeting your goals. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

CONTACT

Contact the Clearinghouse with any questions regarding this program.

Phone: 1-877-382-9185 Email: Clearinghouse@psu.edu

You may also contact Gabriel Shaibi by phone 1-602-496-0909 or email gabriel.shaibi@asu.edu

SOURCE

Hawthorne, Shaibi, Gance-Cleveland, and McFall (2011).