Public Health Policy for Physical Activity
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Physical Activity Policy

• Definition
• Rationale
• Conceptual framework
• Research priorities
Background

• CDC and RWJF have been developing research agendas
• Policy research and analysis are a priority
• Policy research for physical activity remains poorly defined and is underdeveloped
Background

• Further our understanding of the determinants, process and impacts of new or existing policy on physical activity
• Provides information to help shape public policy
• Guided by practical experience of community leaders and public health practitioners
Policy Definition

- Organizing structure and guidance
- Legislative or regulatory action
- Formal and informal rules
- Explicit or implicit
Policy Definition

- Formal written codes
- Written standards that guide choices
- Unwritten social norms
Policy Research

• Identifying relevant policies
• Determinants of establishing policy
• Process of developing and implementing policy
• Outcomes of implementation of policy

**In policy research either the dependent or independent variable will be a policy or policies**
Policy Research

POLICY DETERMINANTS

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POLICY

↓

ENVIRONMENT

↓

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

→

HEALTH
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Policy Research

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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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HEALTH
Guide to Community Preventive Services

- Community wide campaigns
- “Point of decision” prompts
- School based physical education
- Non-family social support
- Individually adapted health behavior change
- Creation and/or enhanced access to places for PA combined with information outreach activities
Adult per Capita Cigarette Consumption and Major Environmental and Policy Changes in the US 1900-1990

- Fairness Doctrine messages on radio and television
- Nonsmoker’s rights movement begins
- First Medical reports linking smoking and cancer
- Great Depression
- End of WW II
- US Surgeon General’s first report
- Broadcast advertising ban
- Federal cigarette tax doubles
- Great Depression

Years:
- 1900
- 1910
- 1920
- 1930
- 1940
- 1950
- 1960
- 1970
- 1980
- 1990
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Policy Conceptualization

• Formal Written Codes
  – Formal written codes or regulations bearing legal authority

• Written Standards that guide choices
  – Implementation is usually accompanied by a written statement, explanation or decision that guides choices
Policy Conceptualization

• Unwritten social norms
  – Social and cultural norms that influence behavior
  – Much of public health interest in increasing physical activity is focused on identifying social and cultural norms and encouraging the development of written policies to increase physical activity access and availability
Physical Activity Policy Framework

Policy

Outcomes of Policy
Develop and Implement Policy
Determinants of Policy
Identify Policies

Sector

Local
Regional
State
National

Scale

Transportation
Health
Parks/Public Spaces
Worksite
School

Scale

Local
Regional
State
National
The majority of the population …of the world is either totally sedentary, or taking an amount of physical activity that is inadequate to sustain physical and mental health.

In response to this challenge, WHO setting forth a comprehensive physical activity policy …through formal Consultations with Member States, UN Agencies, NGO partners, and international experts in the domain of physical activity promotion.
Physical Activity Policy Framework

Evaluation

Make The Case
Define The Problem
Identify Solutions
Implement Programs
COMPREHENSIVE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (PA) POLICY FRAMEWORK

1. VISION
Sustainability
Credibility
Data linked with policy
Innovation
Adaptation
Equity, social justice

3. DEFINING THE PROBLEM
Prevalence of inactivity
Identified target populations
Determinants of physical inactivity
Barriers to PA policy and practice

2. MAKING THE CASE
High prevalence of inactivity
Burden of disease due to inactivity
Positive impact on physical, mental and social health
Societal benefits of PA
Links to other non-communicable disease (NCD) risk factors
Economic cost of inactivity
Thirty minutes of moderate PA per day provides substantial health benefits

4. SOLUTIONS
Effective interventions based evidence based reviews
Population, public health focus
Utilization of multiple domains
Use of multiple settings
Regulatory, legislative approaches
Good governance and accountability
Opportunistic approach
Cultural specificity and adaptation
Links to priority health issues
Links to major health, sport, educational and cultural events

5. IMPLEMENTATION:
ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS
Consultation and needs assessment
Written plan and objectives
Surveillance of PA, policy, public opinion, and environments
Stable base of support
Clear program identity and message
Coalitions, partnerships, leaders, and champions
Multiple intervention strategies, sites, populations
Integration of PA efforts with overall health promotion and policies of health related sectors
Focus on PA providing enjoyment and social interaction
Evaluation throughout the process

6. EVALUATION - Formative, Process and Impact
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**Physical Activity Policy Research Agenda**

- Schools
- Walk to School
- Worksite
- Active Commute to Work
- Recreation, parks and trails
- Health
- Public spaces
- Safety and crime
- Economics
- Neighborhood walkability
- Connectivity, land use and community design
Physical Activity Policy Research Agenda

• Research areas that need more review
  – Public spaces and parks
  – Worksite
  – Safety and crime
  – Economics
  – Liability
Future Work

- Careful review of physical activity policy areas
- Publish framework for physical activity policy
- Implement priority research projects
- Coordinate between ALR, RWJF, NIH, CDC and other organizations for physical activity policy research