Community Based Interventions & Community-Based Participatory Research
By Amy Green

Objectives
- Understand the need for community-based interventions
- Differentiate between different approaches to community-based interventions
- Define and describe Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR)
- Discuss the benefits of a CBPR approach

Technology and Health in the U.S.

A Shift in Focus

Models of Community-Based Interventions
- Community as Setting
- Community as Target
- Community as Resource
- Community as Agent
Community as Setting

- Community defined geographically
- Various levels of intervention employed
- Focus on changing individuals’ behavior to reduce risk of disease for the population
  - Target of change = populations
  - Population change = aggregate of individual changes

Community as Target

- Health status characteristics the target of interventions
- Community change the desired outcome
- Intervention strategies tied to selected indicators
- Success defined as improvement in indicators over time

Community as Resource

- Centers on notion that community ownership and participation is essential
- Interventions aimed at building upon community resources or assets
- Interventions involve external resources
- Work through a wide array of community institutions and resources

Community as Agent

- Emphasis on respecting and reinforcing existing capacities
- Goal is to strengthen existing units of solution
- Requires assessment and understanding of community structures and processes
- Requires addressing common issues of concern for the community – starting where people are

Outcomes of Community-Based Interventions

- Methodological issues
- Influence of secular trends
- Magnitude of effects
- Limitations of the intervention
- Limitations of theory

Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR)

- A collaborative approach to research, that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognized the unique strengths that each brings.
- CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community with the aim of combining knowledge and action for social change.
CBPR Principles
- Genuine partnership means co-learning
- Research efforts include capacity building
- Findings and knowledge should benefit all partners
- Long term commitment to effectively reduce disparity

Benefits of CBPR
- Interventions have greater contextual and cultural centeredness
- Intervention research uses appropriate recruitment and retention strategies
- Community capacity to conduct research is strengthened
- Interventions are more sustainable

Application to Obesity Intervention Research

Conclusions
- Community-based interventions necessary to address the multiple levels of influence on health
- Not all community-based interventions look the same
- CBPR is an approach to research and intervention development that reflects equal partnership
- Interventions developed and evaluated using a CBPR approach have the potential to be more acceptable, feasible, and sustainable

Looking Ahead
- Health Disparities
  - Application of concepts learned throughout the semester to the issue of health disparities
  - How combating health disparities will require addressing the issue from multiple levels

References