Learning Objectives

- Understand the role that social environment plays in the Social Ecological Model
- Describe characteristics of the social environment and its impact on health
- Discuss how the social environment can influence change in physical activity
- Apply the social environment to the condition of obesity

Community Level

- Physical Environment
- Social Environment

The Social Environment

- Social areas are more than the sum of individuals living in them
- There are features of areas that strengthen or weaken social support or cohesion
- Social characteristics of an area are not simply a result of geographic location
The Social Environment & Health

- The social environment can...
  - Serve as a medium for disease transmission
  - Operate as a stressor
  - Function as a source of safety or danger
  - Serve as an enabler of health behavior

Factors that Affect Health

- Social support
- Social climate in families
- Social climate in organizations
- Cultural and religious beliefs and practices
- Health communications and media
- Political instability

Social Environments

- Social Networks
- Social Norms
- Social Capital
- Social Supports

Social environment related to physical activity and obesity

Social Networks

- Interactions
- Frequency of contacts
- Diversity
- Quality and types of support

YOUR TURN: How can social networks be used by health care organizations?
Social Networks
• How can social networks be used by health care organizations?
  – Reach stakeholders
  – Aggregate information
  – Leverage collaboration

Social networks and Health
• How can social networks be used by health care organizations?
  – Reach stakeholders
  – Aggregate information
  – Leverage collaboration

YOUR TURN: How can we utilize social networking to address obesity and promote healthy behavior choices?

Social networks and Health
• How can we utilize social networking to address obesity and promote healthy behavior choices?
  – Target
  – Strategy
  – Desired outcome

Social Norms
• Can you list a few social norms or violations of social norms?
  – Say hello to everyone
  – Face the back of the elevator
  – Raise your hand and request permission before speaking
  – Never eat soup with a fork
  – Always say hello when you answer the phone

YOUR TURN: Can you list a few social norms or violations of social norms?
Social Norms

- Perceived norm
  - What we think our peers believe and do
- Actual norm
  - Our peers’ real beliefs and actions

Social Norms

- Changing social norms
  - Shift in ideals about health
  - Exercise
  - Food choices

Social Capital

- Facilitates a flow of information
- Resides in relationships
- Mutual expectations and trust
- Shared values

Social Capital Video

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTvbf1WVYFE&list=PLFcO0E-CuF-4nAjzuhv5bnYYR40PcTnCK

Social support

- Participated and completed physical activity
- Was encouraging
- Discourage (stay and watch tv)
Interventions at the Social Environmental level

- Family at home
- Family outside the home
- Neighborhood/community
- Social network

What works?

- Universal healthy weight promotion programs
  - School-based programs
- Obesity prevention programs
  - Individual family based

References