Alabama In Motion: The Development Of A Web-based Program



A Peer Reviewed Journal of the Center for African American Research & Policy

Alabama in Motion: The Development of a Web-Based Program Management Application for Alabama Residents to Fight Against Obesity

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This paper introduces the problem faced by the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service (ACES) Office and their program entitled, "Alabama In Motion." The program encourages an active, healthy lifestyle for Alabama residents by providing a system which tracks the amount of exercise done and the amount of pounds lost. The program allows for individuals, teams or schools to register. There were many problems encountered by the ACES office due to having a manual paper-based system. These problems were eliminated with the construction of the database-driven, online program management tool.

Introduction

The prevalence of diabetes, asthma, and obesity are high in Alabama. This leads to premature death, illness, and lost workdays and productivity. The United States showed a steady increase of obesity from 12.0% in 1991 to 17.9% in 1998. This steady increase was observed in all states; in both sexes; across age groups, races, and educational levels; and occurred regardless of smoking status (Mokdad, Serdula, Dietz, Bowman, Marks and Koplan, 1999). As for Alabama adults, 63 percent are overweight or obese and 60 percent do not meet recommended guidelines for physical activity. In addition, between 14 and 35 percent of the children in Alabama are overweight. In addition to being unhealthy, being obese is also expensive. In the United States, the total cost attributable to obesity amounted to \$99.2 billion dollars in 1995. Approximately \$51.64 billion of those dollars were direct medical costs (Wolf and Colditz, 1998). Alabama's share of this cost came out to around \$1.32 billion. As for diabetes, Alabama leads the is amongst the leaders in the nation in the incidence of diabetes cases per year (Backalar, 2009).

The 2005 Dietary Guidelines and the newly revised food guide pyramid, MyPyramid, advise at least 60 minutes of physical activity for youth and at least 30 minutes for adults most days of the week. To achieve these goals, members of the Alabama Cooperative Extension Office (ACES) created Alabama in Motion. Alabama in Motion serves as an easy and fun way to burn fat, lose weight, ward off heart disease and diabetes, strengthen bones and muscles, reduce

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