St. Luke's Men's Health Coordinator Intern


BACKGROUND

St. Luke's men's health program is a program that focuses on the life expectancy and health of men. Currently on average women live longer than men by an average of 5 years. The goal of the men's health program is to help bridge that gap in life expectancy by recommending that men of every age get a check up once a year until they believe something is wrong with them. These early and frequent screenings catch potential problems before they start. The men's health program is a preventative resource in the community that believes prevention is a much more useful tool than treatment when it comes to men's health.

Overview of Intern Duties

Gateway After-School Program:
At Gateawy Elementary school I was responsible for organizing and facilitating the after school program for about 50 children grades k-5. I was responsible for picking a health related game and speaking with the kids for a short time about the importance of that specific health topic. This was great learning experience for me and gave me a chance to see if I enjoyed working with children. This was also a great way for me to manage my own project from start to finish. I was responsible for picking the games, writing up an activity/goals overview, and then put that action into action. After each activity I would poll the children on their favorite activity as well as if they didn't enjoy as much.

Men's Health Combine:
Over the semester Jeff and myself participated in a few different health fairs which gave me the opportunity to see how the community reacts to health fairs as well as what they were interested in more information or had specific health questions. I was also a resource for health information to the kids of the after-school program.

Evaluate:
We conducted evaluations a few different way over the semester. Jeff and I would talk to other health fair exhibitors or attendees on what they liked, didn't like, or maybe what input they had on improving the booth. Jeff and myself also held weekly meetings to discuss what had happened the previous week, as well as what was to come next week. During this time we discussed ways of improving from the last weeks activities to the next. Lastly I received positive feedback from the Gateway Elementary school staff about my after school program to tell me how I performed. Of that specific health topic. This was great learning experience for me and gave me a chance to see if I enjoyed working with children. This was also a great way for me to manage my own project from start to finish. I was responsible for picking the games, writing up a activity/goals overview, and then put that action into action. After each activity I would poll the children on their favorite activity as well as if they didn't enjoy as much.

What I Learned

Resource:
I served as a health educator by answering questions of both attendees about men's health. I also participated in the information dissemination while operating our men's health booth. Jeff and myself had informational reading material and offered potential resources to booth patrons that were interested in more information or had specific health questions. I was also a resource for health information to the kids of the after-school program.

Communication and Advocate:
My internship in itself was all communicating about health to the community through different outlets. During my time with St. Luke's I found myself really practicing what I preached. I started to wear sunscreen more, ate better, exercised more, and feel all around more healthy then I did before the internship. I also have noticed I have a much bigger drive to get others to follow in my healthy behaviors. I have made my friends and family participate in the same healthy behaviors that I have started to practice. Working with St. Luke's I have developed a relationship with not only them but Gateway Elementary, and BSU's peer educators. I will continue to maintain these relationships for the future.

Che's Competencies

Assess:
During my time so far with St. Luke's I have used many different CHES competencies that we have been taught in school. We used the assessment step while picking an activity for the after school program at Gateway Elementary. We also used assessments to determine what we should change from the first time visiting Gateway to my final time. We also used assessments on a few occasions during health fairs to see what people did and did not enjoy about our booth.

Plan:
We planned for our audience while attending health fairs and events. Private health fairs we brought more information material and less give away items because it seems at private health fairs patrons are more interested in the message. On the other hand for health fairs or booths open to the community we brought much more give away items because that has seemed to be the best way to get the attention of passerby's. I also had to use planning when picking the after school activity. I needed to plan for materials needed to see what all the school could provide. We also altered our original plan from the Barn Jam to the spring football game. We decided to have one person stay at each station rather then one tester who followed each patron.

Implement:
We implemented the men's health combine at Barn Jam as well as the BSU spring game. Here we facilitated each measurement station and organized volunteers. I used implementation when facilitating the after-school program I planned. Here I keep kids on task, taught them healthy habits, and can specific activities.

From all the experiences that I had at both football games, after-school programs, and health fairs I have become much more comfortable with delivering information to people of all ages and interest levels. I still need to improve in this category but I have noticed growth in the short time I have been doing these internship activities. I am concerned with how I would actually start using what I have learned so far in school. I had only ever had practical experience as a health promoter one time as a project in Sherry's class. At this point in the internship I have had to come up with educational activities for the football game, health fairs, and after-school program. In the after-school program I got to use all of the ches competencies throughout my teaching experience. I planned the activity as well as the materials needed for the program. I assessed the kids on what they liked and didn't like after my first visit to Gateway. I implemented my program by organizing, monitoring, and facilitating the children in their after-school activity. Through this internship I have also gotten a chance to network with other employees that work for St. Luke's (Alissa, Sherry, and other St. Luke's employees at health fairs) as well as other health promoter that have actively engaged in the community (Lauren Baines and other that I have met at health fairs). I was also fortunate enough to build a relationship with Gateway Elementary school for future internship opportunities.