

THE PEP TOOLBOX PROMISING PRACTICE

Summary

One hundred people with lack of physical activity took part in a voluntary activity programme that lasted 12 weeks. Fitness checks and interviews were performed at the start, midway and after to make fitness measurable. They were coached by a mobility and health adviser on achieving their health and motion programmes. 75% measurably improved their fitness and body fat values and 11.6 car kilometres could be shifted per person per week.

General description of the promising practice

Project title	Transfer of physical activities into everyday routine GOAL: Gesund Ohne Auto und Lärm (Healthy without Car and Noise), of which the transfer of physical activities into everyday routine is one of the work packages
Under the auspices of	Stadt Graz-Umweltamt, Verwaltung (Environmental Department of the City of Graz, Administration)
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Commission within EU-LIFE • Österreichisches Bundesministerium für Soziale Sicherheit und Generationen (Austrian Federal Ministry for Social Safety and Generations) • Österreichisches Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kunst (Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Art) • Land Steiermark (Province of Styria), • Fonds Gesundes Österreich (Fund Healthy Austria) • Cleaner Production Centre Austria
Start date	September 2001
End date	December 2001
Coordinating partner	GOAL: Stadt Graz-Umweltamt, Verwaltung (Environmental Department of the City of Graz, Administration) Work package 'Transfer of physical activities into everyday routine': ZfG – Zentrum für Gesundheitsförderung der Kinderfreunde Steiermark – Centre for Promoting Health of the Children's Friends of Styria, Graz/Austria (NGO)
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Other partners involved (optional)	<p>Merkur Insurance Company</p> <p>ZfG – Zentrum für Gesundheitsförderung der Kinderfreunde Steiermark – Centre for Promoting Health of the Children's Friends of Styria, Graz/Austria: NGO</p> <p>FGM-AMOR – Forschungsgesellschaft Mobilität – Austrian Mobility Research, Graz/Austria</p>
More details can be found	www.goal-graz.at

Intervention description

The issue	Lack of physical activity, which is a major factor in cardiovascular disease.
Aims & objectives	<p>In general for the GOAL project: To increase the well-being of the population of Graz.</p> <p>Specific to the 'Transfer of physical activities into everyday routine' project: To become aware of mobility habits, learn to understand their effects, identify an active opportunity for change and to improve the health and</p>

	increase the fitness of the participants
Type of intervention	Education: awareness, information, coaching, behaviour
Intervention	Two interventions were compared: 1. Of the 500 people that had undergone a health check and were diagnosed with 'lack of physical activity' by their insurance company, 100 took part in a voluntary activity programme that lasted 12 weeks. Fitness checks and interviews were performed at the start, midway and after to make fitness measurable. A year after the end of the programme, another evaluation was performed. Participants were divided into groups and coached by a mobility and health adviser on achieving their individual motion programmes. They kept a mobility/health diary. 2. >200 people who came to the annual check up at two GP practices and were diagnosed with a lack of physical activity were introduced to the project and the importance of physical activity in their everyday lives was explained. They received written instructions and no coaching.
Implementation level	Local
Target population/groups	General population: People who are not sufficiently physically active
Magnitude of target population	100 for intervention 1, and 200 for intervention 2
Aspects of transport, environment and health included	Physical activity, walking and cycling
Methods used	See 'Intervention' above. There were also meetings and lectures at 0, 6 and 12 weeks.
Stakeholder involvement	Doctors, health advisors and an insurance company participated in the project

Evaluation














Evaluation methods & study design	Participants of the coached group were provided with a mobility/health diary so they could define their personal objectives and targets (how many kilometres to shift and how) and document achievements. The same was done at 6 and 12 weeks. A walking test was also carried out in the first project week and again at 12 weeks and 1 year. Data were gathered by means of interviews, questionnaires and measurements. Burned calories, covered and shifted kilometres and avoided greenhouse gas emissions were calculated. A cost-benefit analysis was made, which included design and implementation costs, evaluations and materials for the walking tests and body fat measurements. This was compared with the costs of an employee missing one day of work. Of the non-coached group, 40 mobility/health dairies were evaluated
Evaluation results	Coached group: 1. 75% of the participants measurably improved their fitness values 2. 73% improved their body fat values 3. 11.6 car kilometres were shifted per person per week 4. 52% assessed themselves to be healthier and in better physical shape after the programme, 44% stabilized their state of health and physical shape at a high level and 4% did not improve their values, or showed a constantly low level 5. 57% improved their well-being, 43% stabilized at a high level 6. People who had never or rarely used a bicycle now use it every day. The whole group consumed 2,675,800 calories during the 12-week programme. 7. The participants covered >40,000 km using a non-motorised transport mode, 36.2% of which is a direct shift from the car to foot/bicycle. The rest was additional motion (taking the stairs, walking for leisure, walking to the next public transport stop etc.) 8. 68% promised to continue on their own after the programme ended.

	<p>61% of those were able to stabilize their fitness values or improve them a year later. 57% maintained or improved body fat values.</p> <p>9. 1,966 kg of CO₂ were saved in the test period</p> <p>10. The multiplier effect (participants influencing their social environment) was not achieved</p> <p>Non-coached group:</p> <p>1. 24% of the non-coached group was able to improve their fitness values and 20% their body fat values</p> <p>2. 4.8 car kilometres were shifted per person per week</p> <p>The intensive coaching approach costs €150 per participant. A sick employee costs €161 a day.</p>
Conclusions	Three out of four participants were able to improve their fitness and body fat values through the activity programme, and fewer air pollutants were released into the atmosphere. The effects are durable.
Gaps encountered	Days of absence were not evaluated, but would be useful for future projects, as strong monetary effects would be expected here

Implementation issues

Costs	The whole GOAL project cost €19,112 The intensive coaching approach costs €150 per participant. A sick employee costs €161 a day
Sustainability	The project will continue in Graz. The project is planned to be implemented in Linz (Austria), the Netherlands and Sweden. New project partnerships for knowledge transfer: Modena (Italy), Maribor (Slovenia), Pecs (Hungary), Lublin (Poland)
Intersectoral collaboration	Several institutions and NGOs worked together to achieve goals in transport, health and the environment (see Partners).
Ease of implementation: Lessons learned	<p>Cities that want to carry out a similar project should adapt the basic conditions and infrastructure to make sure they meet the requirements of cyclists/pedestrians (separate bicycle paths, reduced speed, parking facilities for bicycles within the community, opening one-way streets against the direction for cyclists, etc.).</p> <p>Cities that want to start such a program by means of a pilot should not forget to run a comprehensive campaign. This increases acceptability (early adaptor phase).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target groups: For a large-scale implementation, it is advantageous to involve representatives of insurance companies, hospitals and doctors • The same is true for companies, which can benefit from the fact that their employees become healthier and fitter (reduction in number of sick days) • Local media support and role models should be sought • The cross-over approach like that in Graz (cooperation between the different departments – Environmental Department, Health Department and Sport Department – as initiators and organizers of the campaign, communication within the city and with the external partners, which consist of mobility experts, and the mobility centre as well as with health experts) has stood the test and can be recommended for duplication without restriction.

Full assessment

HEALTH EFFECTS		INTERVENTION DESIGN		IMPLEMENTATION	
					
Measured health effects		Study design		Sustainability	
Assumed health effects		Evidence base for effectiveness		Inter-sectoral collaboration	
		Combination of measures used		Transferability	
					
no info	weak/negative	moderate/dubious	good/positive	excellent/very positive	

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