

GREAT LAKES ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

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Purpose of the Project/Study: The goals of the Great Lakes Environmental Health Project (GLEHP) were to empower women served by the West Allis Health Department (WAHD) Women, Infant, and Children Program (WIC) to reduce exposure to environmental health risks through education and risk reduction skill-building sessions and to provide a sustainable change in systems to reduce environmental risks in low-income children.

Framework: A community participative research process was used, including a focus group of WIC clients and community membership on the Steering Committee.

Design/Method: The project was designed to increase the number of health professionals and WIC clients who could identify and take action to reduce childrens' exposure to environmental health risks. A pre-post design was used to evaluate the achievement of learning objectives with health professionals and WIC clients. An evaluation of the process was also conducted.

Results: 33 health care providers and nursing students attended a four-hour workshop on environmental risk to women and children. Scores on the pre-post test increased from 73% to 87%. Examples of how they planned to use the information included "Deliver a consistent, realistic message about fish consumption" and "Distribute safe cleaning product information". Thirty WIC clients attended one or more of the 3 educational sessions, with 40% attending all 3 sessions. Significant differences were found in pre-post tests for 2 of the educational sessions (Air Quality and Toxins around Your Home).

Implications: This project involved an innovative approach to educating health providers and WIC families about environmental hazards and the reduction of exposures. It enables WIC clients to have easy access to environmental health information. Lessons learned included the importance of involving community members, providing materials in English and Spanish, and the need for a continuation plan for sustainability of the program.

This project was wholly funded by the Healthier Wisconsin Partnership Program, a component of Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin endowment at the Medical College of Wisconsin

To: Wisconsin Nurses Association
From : Elizabeth Fayram
RE: Abstract – WNA Conference
Date: July 20, 2009

It is my pleasure to submit a **research abstract** for the poster session at the WNA convention in October 2009.

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Thank you for your consideration.