

Cup Stomp - An Exercise in 'Everybody Belongs' - Altona

Project Target Risk Factors:

Mental Wellbeing

Target Population:

Teens

Project Leads:

Warren Friesen, Lindsay Lawrence, and Dorothy Braun

Community:

Altona

RHA: RHA-Central

Project Partners:

W.C. Miller Collegiate and Altona Healthy Together Now Committee

Project Details:

A single event

Description:

Cup Stomp was part of a four-day Health Fair event sponsored by the W.C. Miller Peer Support Network at W.C. Miller Collegiate in Altona. Cup Stomp itself was designed to break down barriers between different groups within a school setting and work towards inclusiveness. At noon hour, for 3 days, the organizing group introduced an activity called "Cup Stomp" that had participants learn a sequence of activities including turning over a plastic cup (red Solo cups), clapping, and passing the cup to the next person while maintaining a rhythm and with everyone participating simultaneously. The activity began with peer support students teaching small groups and at the end of the noon hour moved into a larger group. The entire event took no more than 20-30 minutes of the noon hour.

Other activities for the Health Fair included a breakfast for one morning, 2 guest speakers presenting during class time on different days for the entire school. One talked about inclusiveness and good mental health and the other about the importance of physical activity. There were also noon hour quizzes on the YHS topics of nutrition, physical activity tobacco, and mental health.

Time:

It took about 6 lunch hour meetings from January - May 2010 to plan the Health Fair. It took a couple of meetings for the youth to discuss and plan the Cup Stomp.

Objectives:

We wanted to address socialization issues in the school - there are a few immigrant students and some marginalized groups that are not being integrated very well.

Planning Supports:

The Health Fair was a response to information from the Youth Health Survey (YHS) pertaining specifically to W.C. Miller Collegiate. The group who developed the Cup Stomp and the Health Fair were students from the school who saw the needs. Some of the students from the Peer Support

Network had learned the Cup Stomp routine at a summer camp and they had shared it with the other students at their peer support training.

Results:

110-120 students participated in the Cup Stomp. This is about a quarter of the student population including some teachers. Students from all social groups were participating with the encouragement of teachers and invitation by the peer leaders. In spite of some fears that the event might flop, the peer leaders were courageous and forged ahead. The students demonstrated for themselves that they can overcome barriers. Some of the teachers commented "amazing!"

What worked:

The Cup Stomp activity happened within the context of a four-day Health Fair. The organizing group did a great job and was led by students. There was great student participation in the activities and good administrative support. Speakers were accommodating with fees (they didn't charge full price). The Health Fair event partnered with the school's food services program for ordering food for the Health Fair breakfast; the students were learning about the food service industry. The students are the experts on what works in school and they were involved in all of the planning, in spite of being very busy preparing for graduation, extra curricular sports, etc. The leadership of the students demonstrated that they were willing to take a risk in an activity that had not previously occurred in this setting.

What didn't work and any changes made:

Challenges -

1. Raising money for the event
2. Students were busy with other activities that took the leadership away from planning
3. The time of the year - we may move the activity to another time
4. Busyness of the facilitators

Unexpected Outcomes:

We didn't know what to expect regarding the students' acceptance of the Cup Stomp activity. What made it acceptable was - it looked like fun; it was open to everyone; you didn't have to be perfect; you could learn this activity; the inviting attitude of participants and leadership; and it created excitement!

The leadership by the students was outstanding - a great group of Grade 10 leaders is coming up. The resource teacher was ecstatic that this activity could break down barriers. Teachers also joined in the activities.

Other notes:

The key is getting kids to take the leadership and the ownership. The school has a peer support network that is trained to be involved in the Healthy Together Now project as facilitators and leaders. The training occurs in the fall at a 2-day retreat. It was this group of students who developed the idea of the Cup Stomp after experiencing it at their training and looking at the YHS data.

Volunteers:

8 students, 4 facilitators, and 10 volunteers that helped with the events

Facilities:

School Gym

Equipment:

400 plastic cups

Other:

An idea that came from this experience is linking with other schools through technology and doing this activity simultaneously.

The Youth Health Survey is a great tool that can be used to pull schools together and talk about school cultures. It's very important to involve school administrators, guidance counselors, physical education/health teachers, and other teachers. It assists schools to find ways of overcoming barriers in identifying "lost" students and helping to integrate them.

Total Costs:

The only costs for the Cup Stomp are the plastic cups. The four-day Health Fair costs approximately \$2000. This included 100 breakfasts (fruit, yogurt, granola bars, spoons, napkins, milk), prizes - \$500 (e.g. gift card for sports shop; itunes gift cards, etc.) and speaker fees.

Contact Information:

Community: Altona

Region: RHA-Central

Contact person: Cheryl Pearson

Email address: cpearson@rha-central.mb.ca