

A University System-Wide Qualitative Investigation into Student Physical Activity Promotion Conducted on College Campuses

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Abstract:

Purpose. This study aimed to examine college student physical activity promotion.

Design. A cross-sectional approach to qualitative research was used. Setting. Southeastern state university system. Participants. Fourteen of 15 (93%) universities recruited were included in this study; 22 university employees participated in a semistructured interview.

Method. Nonprobabilistic purposive and snowball sampling strategies were used to recruit individuals who were likely to be engaged in physical activity promotion efforts on their respective campuses. Thematic analyses lead to the identification of emerging themes that were coded and analyzed using NVivo software.

Results. Themes informed three main areas: key personnel responsible for promoting physical activity to students, actual physical activity promotion efforts implemented, and factors that influence student physical activity promotion. Results suggest that ecological approaches to promote physical activity on college campuses are underused, the targeting of mediators of physical activity in college students is limited, and values held by university administration influence campus physical activity promotion.

Conclusion. Findings support recommendations for future research and practice. Practitioners should attempt to implement social ecological approaches that target scientifically established mediators of physical activity in college students. Replication of this study is needed to compare these findings with other types of universities, and to investigate the relationship between promotion activities (type and exposure) and physical activity behaviors of college students.

Keywords: Physical Activity Promotion | College | Qualitative | Promotion | Prevention Research

Article:

PURPOSE

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention affirm that regular physical activity is a critical part of an individual's overall health.¹ In particular, regular physical activity is a precursor for well-being and a means to health risk reduction and disease avoidance.²⁻⁴ Benefits of regular physical activity include improved cardiovascular health; blood pressure management; the maintenance of healthy bones, muscles, and joints; and the development of lean muscle mass.⁵ Aerobic activities like brisk walking and jogging have been linked to a reduced risk of colon cancer, coronary heart disease, and/or premature death, yet many Americans still do not engage in regular physical activity.^{5,6} Not only can low levels of physical activity become dangerous at the individual level, they can potentially produce adverse affects at the population level. For example, health care expenditures in 2007 surpassed 2.2 trillion dollars. It was estimated that the costs associated with treatment of chronic conditions like those associated with physical inactivity (e.g., heart disease) accounted for over 75% of these expenditures.^{4,7}

More than ever, American college students are not engaging in sufficient amounts of regular physical activity, and these rates do not improve over time.⁸ The American College Health Association–National College Health Assessment corroborates these findings and reports that a significant number of college students report that in the past 7 days they did not engage in any moderate or vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity.^{9,10}

Efforts to promote regular physical activity among noncollege populations are great, and well documented. In contrast, documentation of strategies used to promote physical activity on a college campus is limited,¹¹ and it is unclear how physical activity promotion is actually accomplished on a college campus. Limited research in this area not only provides little support for campus practitioners who value the well-being of their students, it underscores the need for a better understanding of physical activity promotion conducted on U.S. campuses. A study of this sort could potentially lead to the establishment of best practice guidelines specifically suited for the college/university population. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore student physical activity promotion on campuses that represent one state university system, identify key personnel charged with promoting physical activity to students, and investigate factors that influence student physical activity promotion practice.

APPROACH

Methods and Settings

Institutional Review Board approval was obtained from the principal investigator's host university prior to data collection.

To explore how physical activity promotion is addressed by university administration and staff, a qualitative approach was used so that context and meaning behind physical activity promotion practices could be best understood.¹² Participants were recruited from a southeastern state university system; only 4-year traditional universities were included. Initially, nonprobabilistic purposive sampling¹² was used to identify one potential participant from each university. Individuals selected for recruitment were identified to be most likely responsible for student

physical activity promotion. Potential participants were first contacted by telephone, were provided with details of the study, and were subsequently invited to voluntarily participate in the study. Follow-up calls and e-mails were sent until the potential participant was reached. Those that declined participation were asked to recommend other individuals at their institution who might also be appropriate for the study. If the potential participant disregarded contact attempts, declined participation, or refused to suggest others on their campus, their institution was excluded from the study.

Snowball sampling¹³ followed the nonprobabilistic purposive sampling to identify additional individuals on each campus who were engaged in promoting physical activity to students. Guidelines of snowball sampling prescribe that each interview participant be asked to identify any other individuals on their campus who are also responsible for promoting physical activity to students. Using snowball sampling helps to reduce the likelihood of omitting key participants. This technique was initiated during each interview until all those responsible for student physical activity promotion on each campus were identified and interviewed. To encourage interview participation, an incentive of \$50.00 was provided to each participant.

Data Collection and Data Recording

Because of the geographical span of the state university system campuses, 30–45-minute semistructured interviews were conducted by telephone. Consent to participate was obtained orally (digitally recorded) at the commencement of each interview.

Interview Protocol Development

Interviews were conducted using a semistructured protocol that asked participants to respond to questions related to (1) key personnel on campus who promote physical activity to students, (2) how student physical activity promotion is conducted, and (3) what factors influence how physical activity promotion is accomplished (Table 1). In particular, questions related to physical activity promotion practices conducted on campus were framed around to the levels of the Social Ecological Model for Health Promotion (SEMHP).¹⁴ To ensure that questions were appropriate and presented in a way that they would elicit detailed information from participants, the interview protocol was reviewed by an expert panel and underwent multiple rounds of revisions.

Each participant was asked the same questions; however, interviews were conducted in a flexible manner and provided an opportunity for the participant to discuss issues they felt to be most relevant. In addition to recording interviews using a digital device, shorthand notes were taken during each interview.

Data Analysis

Once interviews were complete, recorded data were transcribed verbatim by the principal investigator into a Word document and then subsequently uploaded into the NVivo 8 computer software package. During phone interviews, the principal investigator took shorthand notes; once data was uploaded into NVivo 8, participant responses were cross-referenced and confirmed by comparing transcribed responses with shorthand notes taken by the interviewer. Once prepared

in NVivo 8, data were coded based on emerging themes that best represented that particular segment of data. Each step of data collection and analysis, interviews, transcription cross-referencing, and coding was completed by one person, the principal investigator. It was decided that recoding could take place at any time during data analysis to increase the likelihood of the accuracy and appropriateness of coding.¹²

Table 1
Interview Protocol

Key Issues	Questions Used During Semistructured Interviews
Key personnel	<p>What is your current title?</p> <p>Is it stated in your job description, either within human resources or your own department, that you have a charge to engage in physical activity promotion efforts on your campus?</p> <p>If not, why do you think this is?</p> <p>If so, why is it important that physical activity promotion is part of your role at your campus?</p> <p>Please name any or all other individuals on your campus whose job role it is to promote physical activity.</p> <p>Who gave these individuals the responsibility of promoting student physical activity?</p> <p>If different from or in addition to those noted above, please name any other individuals on campus whose role it is to promote student physical activity.</p> <p>Do you feel that collaboration with other individuals/departments on campus is important?</p>
Physical activity promotion activities implemented on campus	<p>Please describe any or all physical activity promotion programs/campaigns implemented on your campus in the past year with the sole purpose of promoting physical activity among students.</p> <p>Do any of these programs/campaigns target specific individual characteristics related to increased physical activity?</p> <p>Prompts will include self-efficacy, perception of physical activity outcomes, attitudes regarding physical activity, etc.</p> <p>Please describe any or all policies that were implemented in the past year with the sole purpose of promoting physical activity among students?</p> <p>These may include mandatory wellness/health classes for students with a physical activity component, or a mandatory physical activity requirement (swim test, run test, etc.)...</p> <p>Please describe all environmental changes made on campus in the past year with the sole purpose of increasing physical activity among students.</p> <p>Contrary to programs that were implemented in the past year with the sole purpose of promoting physical activity among students, name any or all programs, policies, and/or environmental changes that may have indirectly influenced physical activity.</p> <p>Please describe all physical activity promotion programs/campaigns that specifically target individual students (e.g., media campaigns).</p> <p>This may include poster campaigns, e-mail campaigns, articles or campaigns seen a campus newspaper or magazine, etc.</p> <p>Please describe all physical activity promotion programs that specifically target subpopulations/groups or social networks of students.</p> <p>This might include targeting specific ethnicities on your campus or programming specifically for females.</p> <p>This may also include fraternities, sororities, clubs and/or groups.</p> <p>Is there current documentation of physical activity information (e.g., importance of physical activity during the college years) that goes out to all students?</p>
Factors influencing the implementation of physical activity promotion activities on campus	<p>If anything, what factors have supported your efforts to promote student physical activity on campus?</p> <p>Prompts include additional funding in the past year (grant funds), support from specific individuals on campus whom carry a strong influence over campus matters, efforts from specific student groups, etc.</p> <p>If anything, what factors have impeded your efforts to promote student physical activity on campus?</p> <p>Prompts include funding, institutional support, human resources, etc.</p> <p>Are there specific community factors that promote or prevent physical activity among students at your institution (e.g., safety of campus or surrounding community, etc.)?</p> <p>In general, would you say that promoting physical activity is viewed by your institution as a primary or secondary responsibility?</p> <p>If not, why do you believe this is so? What takes precedence over promoting physical activity on your campus?</p> <p>If so, how does your institution's view on physical activity promotion among students influence the efforts made by you and your department/office? Or, why do you think your institution has made it a primary responsibility?</p>

Code Development

Because of the semistructured nature of the interview protocol, general themes that emerged fit well within the context of (1) key personnel on campus who promote physical activity to students, (2) how student physical activity promotion is conducted, and (3) what factors influence how physical activity promotion is accomplished. The principal investigator first reviewed all transcribed data; based on the general themes noted above, and via a secondary

review of the data by the same investigator, multiple subcategories of data were then coded. The subcategories (i.e., coded data) represented key issues pertinent to the main theme it fell under. In all there were 23 coded themes. It was intended that if a theme emerged that did not fall within any of the aforementioned categories, a new category would be created. However, themes that necessitated the development of an additional category were not present. Once these themes and their related codes (subcategories) were identified, they were reviewed and confirmed by a second investigator. The two reviewers agreed that there was no need to diverge from the original coding and it was suitable to proceed with subsequent analyses.

RESULTS

Fourteen of the 15 schools (93%) targeted for recruitment were included in this study. Over half of the participating schools had two individuals who represented their respective institutions. As a result, 22 individuals participated in this study: 13 directors of campus recreation, 2 physical activity/ health program coordinators (e.g., forcredit physical activity course coordinators), 2 faculty members, 1 university administrator, 2 directors of campus wellness, 1 facility manager, and 1 assistant director of fitness (Table 2).

The results are presented in three major sections: (1) key personnel responsible for promoting physical activity to students, (2) physical activity promotion activities, and (3) factors that influence the implementation of physical activity promotion programs. These sections are based on categories stemming from the data analysis plan and code development. These three sections lead to a comprehensive understanding of student physical activity promotion conducted on campus and support recommendations for future research and practice.

Table 2
Participant and School Descriptives

University	Type	Size (Enrollment)	Participant Title
1	Rural	10,000–14,999	Director of campus recreation Assistant director of fitness
2	Urban	15,000–19,999	University administrator Director of wellness
3*	Rural	0–4999	Director of campus recreation Facility manager
4*	Rural	5000–9999	Director of campus recreation
5*	Urban	5000–9999	Director of campus recreation
6*	Suburban	5000–9999	Director of campus recreation
7	Suburban	15,000–19,999	Director of campus recreation Health program director
8*	Suburban	15,000–19,999	Director of campus recreation Health program director
9	Suburban	0–4999	Director of campus recreation
10	Urban	10,000–14,999	Director of campus recreation Director of wellness
11	Rural	5000–9999	Director of campus recreation Faculty, health sciences
12	Suburban	10,000–14,999	Director of campus recreation Faculty, health sciences
13	Rural	5000–9999	Director of campus recreation
14*	Suburban	5000–9999	Director of campus recreation

* Historically black college or university.

Key Personnel

Key personnel are either the individuals or the collaborative relationships of individuals that lead to the promotion of physical activity to students. Participants were asked if their job description included specific language underlining their responsibility to promote physical activity to students. The majority of participants indicated that promoting physical activity to students was not specifically stated in their job description. Among these participants, all of them noted that this was due to additional administrative or managerial responsibilities they held and promoting physical activity was implied. In contrast, less than half of the study sample noted that promoting physical activity to students was specifically stated in their job description. These participants believed that physical activity promotion was in their job description because they were either the only unit on campus with this responsibility or because it was a part of their department's mission. In particular, one participant stated:

I think that our major purpose on our campus is to promote physical activity because we're the only unit on campus that promotes actual physical activity for the majority of the students. It's our unique mission we have....

When asked to discuss the role of interdepartmental collaboration on campus, most stated that they collaborate with at least one other department. Participants described collaborative relationships with various academic departments, multicultural affairs, the department of athletics, campus recreation, student health services, student life, and student affairs. The most common motive for collaboration described by participants was to share resources such as money, manpower, and space/facilities. In addition to resource sharing, participants also noted that collaborations facilitated positive interdepartmental relationships. Those who confirmed that collaboration was an important part of their operations also suggested that collaborating with others on campus was essential to their own department's success and was an integral part of conducting their job.

Physical Activity Promotion Activities

Depending on the environment or even the target population, physical activity promotion activities can vary in many ways. However, when asked to describe physical activity promotion activities on their campus, most participants described activities that most resembled marketing strategies (i.e., the promotion of a service) rather than the implementation of a program or intervention. Specifically, one participant said:

...we don't necessarily offer workshops, but we do promote physical activity with fliers, Listservs, and emails throughout the community [and] in this facility we have different brochures to promote different activities.

This participant and others described campaigns that promoted campus recreation services like group fitness classes and/or personal training opportunities. In particular, these services were communicated to students via paper fliers, electronic media (Listservs and e-mails), online social networking (Facebook, Myspace, and Twitter), electronic boards, posters, word of mouth, and ads seen on the department of campus recreation's Web site. One participant noted:

...the calendar that is detailed with everything that we do and offer [and] promotion tables in the lobby share information with students. Students can also find information on the [campus recreation] Web site.

Another participant stated:

Actually we don't have to [promote physical activity], because they just come and they take fitness through weight training, physical education classes and then when they learn how to exercise then they start coming in. Then we help them with their workouts.

When asked to comment on physical activity promotion efforts such as programs or interventions aimed at increasing physical activity among students, most participants responded with incentive programs, student recreation center physical activity group fitness classes, for-credit courses (e.g., freshman success classes/first year experience), or intramurals.

Participants were also asked to comment on physical activity promotion efforts that targeted specific determinants of physical activity in college students. Approximately 25% of the participants (five) stated they do target specific determinants of physical activity in college students. Of these participants, all of them stated that they target self-efficacy for physical activity. In particular one participant stated:

Sure I think that outdoor recreation targets self-efficacy...we know that because they are physically active in an outdoor sport learning how to paddle, how to climb, how to be self-reliant [and] they learn how to do it on their own.

In contrast, the majority of participants stated either that they did not target any specific determinants of physical activity in college students, or that if they did, it was done unintentionally.

During interviews, it became evident that participants agree that there are particular students on campus who would not be physically active of their own accord. When asked how they target these types of students, participants stated that they place marketing material in different places on campus, venture off campus to promote special events, or use incentive programs to entice inactive students to become more active. In particular, some participants noted that they try to create an enjoyable first experience around physical activity in an attempt to encourage future engagement. Participants also suggested that flexible recreation center hours, in addition to offering different types of programming (e.g., salsa and belly dancing classes), were done to entice these individuals.

The SEMHP¹⁴ suggests that modifications in policies that govern a population can strongly influence individual behavior. When participants were asked to comment on campus policy initiatives implemented to directly influence physical activity behaviors of students, they all stated either that there were no policies initiated on campus to directly influence physical activity behaviors of students, or that if there were, they were unaware of such policies. However, some suggested that there were other policies implemented on their campus that had potential to

indirectly influence physical activity behaviors of college students. Regulations surrounding campus parking were one policy in particular that several participants believed could have such an influence. Anecdotally, participants believed that mandating students to park on the outside border of campus forced students to walk further to class, therefore engaging in more daily physical activity. Others believed that new smoking policies on campus may even have an effect on physical activity behaviors of students. Although only a few felt this way, those who did felt as though more stringent smoking policies may be contributing to the development of norms on campus that promote healthier living, including physical activity. In particular, one participant said:

Um, they are more active, walking 100 feet away from the building (laughter). I would say that it hasn't directly affected [physical activity] but hopefully it has made them more conscious about why the policy exists and it's for the individual's improved health and [then the student thinks] oh by the way it can lead them to think about [physical activity] and health.

Finally, participants commented on for-credit courses that students are mandated to take before graduating. Over 80% of the participant sample stated that their institution has a mandatory course that incorporates components of physical activity into its curriculum. Although a few participants said that their institution did not mandate a course that covers components of physical activity, these same individuals stated that taking a course of this sort was strongly recommended. When participants were asked to describe any "health" courses that were mandatory for students to complete, some participants described courses that spent multiple classes on physical activity, whereas others described courses that spent less than half a class on the topic.

Similar to the effect policy can have on behavior, the SEMHP encourages practitioners to target attributes of the community's environment in an effort to influence behavior. When asked to comment, the majority of participants stated that environmental changes have been made on their campus in the past year and were done so to directly influence physical activity behaviors of students. Examples of environmental changes on campus included the addition of a new student recreation center, improvements to outdoor student recreation facilities, newly painted walking routes (indoors and out), signage to increase stair usage, and general improvements to increase the walkability of campus. One participant said:

Well, we actually are in the process for a new outdoor field complex; we purchased 129 acres which was awesome [and] we've been doing some inside walking maps and that's probably the newest thing within the last year that has been completed.

Participants also commented on changes to the campus environment that may indirectly influence student physical activity. Five of the 22 participants suggested that changes to campus bus routes forced students to walk greater distances to bus stop areas. Other examples include an increase in the number of bike racks on campus, as well as a school-owned bike shop. In contrast to the positive influence environmental changes may have on physical activity, some participants thought that lengthy construction jobs have negatively influenced student physical activity behaviors of students. Entrances to the recreation center have been obstructed and access to the

recreation center has become more difficult, thus making it more difficult for students to negotiate unfamiliar entrances to the recreation center.

As students progress through their college career, there may be times when they are provided with health information from the institution (outside of an academic class). Educational material related to campus alcohol policies, institutional code of conduct, and mental health are typically presented to students in the form of a student handbook given to them at the commencement of each academic year. However, the majority of interview participants stated that they were unaware of something similar that provided students with information related to the importance of physical activity during their time in university. Of the few participants that stated there may be such a resource, they indicated that it was not necessarily presented to the students in the form of a handbook. Yet they continued by stating physical activity educational material was presented through various other outlets on campus such as the school Web site, campus recreation calendars, and fliers distributed by the institution's student health services. The majority of participants affirmed that there was at least one resource on campus for students to access that informed them on the importance of physical activity during their college years; however, students would have to take the initiative to access it on their own.

Factors Influencing Physical Activity Promotion on Campus

There may be factors that support physical activity promotion, or possibly impede a department's ability to promote physical activity to students effectively. It is important to identify what factors support physical activity promotion on campus so that they can be used by practitioners in the future. Conversely, it is equally important to identify the factors that make physical activity promotion on campus challenging so they can be minimized or avoided in the future. When asked, the majority of participants said the number one factor was support from administration. In particular, two participants had this to say:

Yes, they have been the support from upper administration; mutual cooperation between the faculty, staff, and the students. There's just been overwhelming support even though um it's sometimes policy changes (very difficult) but as far as support for new programs (wellness passport program); so that's been the best support is just coming from I think collaboration in the truest sense.

Yeah, yeah basically an initiative by our chancellor; we have a new chancellor and when [they] came on board and [he/she] is kind of a fitness person and from them it's the idea that the university needs to be more fit and more focused on wellness; kind of along the lines of what I have been thinking all along which the previous admin did not focus on. [He/she] then passed it along to all the divisions to do something about wellness.

Administrative support was followed by supplementary resources like money, personnel, and space. As previously highlighted, participants affirmed that interdepartmental collaborations were essential to the success of their department's goals and objectives. This was confirmed by several participants suggesting that interdepartmental collaborations facilitate physical activity promotion on campus.

More participants commented on factors that impeded their efforts to promote physical activity on campus versus those that supported it. One of the most common supporting factors mentioned is also the number one factor that challenged the participants' ability to promote physical activity: funding. When asked to elaborate, the main reason for desiring additional funding is not necessarily for equipment or materials, but to acquire staff that would support additional programming activities. In addition, many participants indicated that having to share facilities with others hindered their ability to provide more services to students. Related to sharing facility space with other departments, participants stated that limited space and resources also generated conflict that made promoting physical activity challenging.

Most significant was that the majority of participants declared that support from the institution is critical to their ability to successfully promote physical activity to students. It was evident that institutional support was present on each of the 15 participating campuses; however, when asked if physical activity is a primary or secondary responsibility of their institution, most participants strongly stated it was not a primary responsibility. Each participant described that they were comfortable with this because they too felt as though academics should come before physical activity promotion on campuses of higher education. Other responsibilities that precede physical activity promotion included student safety, service learning, retention, and graduation. Although most agreed that student physical activity promotion is not a primary responsibility of their institution, a minority of the participants stated otherwise. Fueled by their experiences, these participants believe that recent support from upper administration suggests that physical activity is potentially shifting into a top priority on campus.

Limitations and Strengths

Physical activity promotion research among the college population is limited. In particular, little has been done to investigate the ways in which college campuses face student physical inactivity. A major strength of this study is that it takes the first step to better understand student physical activity promotion conducted on a university campus. This study specifically investigates how an entire university system attempts to promote student physical activity. Unlike a study that may try to quantify physical activity promotion practice, this study explores the intricacies of physical activity promotion using qualitative methodology. Not only did this promote in-depth conversation into important topics via semistructured interviews, it provided a way for context and explanation to emerge.

Although this study initiates the first of many steps into better understanding physical activity promotion on a college campus, it was not free from limitations. In particular, the method of snowball sampling has various limitations.¹³ The first challenge of snowball sampling is identifying an initial contact (i.e., first potential participant).¹³ It is possible that the use of a nonprobabilistic purposive selection that initiated participant recruitment may have identified individuals who were not the most appropriate individuals to begin with. However, to reduce impact of this limitation, each participant was explicitly asked if they felt as though they were an appropriate individual to be included in this study. No participants declined participation.

Amidst various qualitative strategies of inquiry there are different procedures of data collection to choose from. In this study, researchers opted to use semistructured telephone interviews. The

goals of these interviews were to elicit information regarding physical activity promotion activities conducted on southeastern university system campuses. Potential limitations of this technique include limited control of the interview environment and the inability of the interviewer to assess nonverbal cues or behavior. However, when considering the lack of sensitive questioning integrated into the interview protocol, as well as the limited influence the interview environment could have on participant responses, neither of these limitations were of concern.

Finally, the combination of available incentives for participants and the implementation of successful recruitment strategies established a sound representation of a single state university system. Yet findings from this study cannot be generalized to the rest of the country. It is possible that geographic, cultural, and/or social norms related to physical activity promotion may elicit different responses from the same types of individuals in other states. It is, however, safe to presume that this study adequately represents one entire state's university system. This study's sample represents a diverse sample of public universities that include multiple historically black universities, small as well as large institutions, and universities representing a variety of geographical locations (urban, suburban, and rural). Although generalizability outside of this southeastern state may be limited, it provides adequate evidence to continue similar research among additional college or university populations in other areas of the country.

CONCLUSION

Responses to the interview questions provided insights into the broader context of student physical activity promotion and several key findings emerged. It is evident that the lack of specific physical activity promotion language in participant job descriptions suggests that physical activity promotion could be a part of their responsibilities, but it does not imply that physical activity promotion *must* be a part of their responsibilities. This alone suggests that institutionally, more could be done to encourage staff and administration to promote student physical activity more aggressively.

The most significant findings of this study bring to light that most physical activity promotion conducted on campuses in this sample lacked either a theoretical or scientific foundation. Leaders in this field suggest that theory and evidence from prevention science should direct practice, especially as it relates to physical activity promotion.^{6,14,17} Although some participants report that they target intrapersonal and environmental factors, very few reported targeting other important factors related to the SEMHP, such as interpersonal, community, and policy factors. Effective health promotion should include ecological factors outside of the individual.¹⁴ Participants describe that great efforts are put forth to encourage individuals to attend fitness classes or join incentive programs, but these efforts hinge on the individual's choice to do so or not and are considered ineffective practice. Additionally, it has become evident that the majority of institutions are unintentionally omitting the use of scientifically established determinants of physical activity in college students. Targeting scientifically established determinants of physical activity can be an extremely effective method to promote behavior change.¹⁶

Finally, results of this study suggest that support from administration influences physical activity promotion activities conducted on a college campus. Specifically, responses from participants

suggest that institutional administration has the ability to set cultural norms by projecting physical activity promotion values across all pertinent departments as well as actively support those conducting physical activity promotion activities on campus in various ways.

SO WHAT? Implications for Health Promotion Practitioners and Researchers What is already known on this topic?

Little is known about how institutions of higher education are attempting to curb physical inactivity trends of American college students. Currently there are no other published articles that attempt to describe how physical activity promotion is actually carried out on a college campus.

What does this article add?

This study suggests that administrators located on a college campus have a significant influence on physical activity promoting efforts that are carried out. Additionally, very few schools use a social ecological approach that includes interpersonal, community, and policy level factors when promoting physical activity.

What are the implications for health promotion practice or research?

Future research should include a larger number of universities to generate a more nationally representative sample, and should employ mixed methodology that would examine the relationships between type, exposure, and dose of physical activity promotion on physical activity behaviors of students. Lastly, an exploration into the effect of interpersonal, community, and policy level factors on physical activity behaviors of college students is warranted.

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