

SAVE OUR FAMILIES

**A DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM
FOR
AFRICAN AMERICANS & HISPANICS**

**BIENNIAL EVALUATION REPORT
AUGUST 2011**

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Executive Summary

The Joint Center for Policy Research (JCPR) of the Public Services Institute at Lorain County Community College was commissioned by the Lorain County Urban League to conduct an evaluation of Save Our Families, a diabetes prevention program for African American and Hispanics. With funding from the Ohio Commission on Minority Health, the Lorain County Urban League implemented the diabetes prevention program from July 2009 to June 2011 at three sites, Elyria's Southside, Central Lorain, and the Southeast quadrant of Oberlin. These areas have the highest concentration of the target population. Project activities were offered twice in the first year with Group 1 then once weekly with Groups 2 and 3 at each site. Three separate groups participated in the program for a total of 322. The overall objective of the evaluation was to determine the effectiveness of Save Our Families project on improving selected healthy behaviors including reducing risk factors for diabetes; connecting program participants with primary care providers and increasing awareness and knowledge of diabetes prevention strategies. Data collected included participant demographic information, pre and post health screening data including blood pressure, cholesterol, blood glucose, Body Mass Index (BMI), and weight. In addition, participant knowledge of diabetes prevention strategies was assessed during educational sessions. Participant perceptions and satisfaction with the project were also assessed at the conclusion of the program. Data collected for the evaluation included program records and participation surveys. In addition, data were collected through observations during site visits to program locations during the third program cycle. Highlights of the site visits are provided in Appendix B of this report.

The following is the representative of key findings resulting from the evaluation:

- Project Save Our Families ended programming as a resounding success impacting 322 adults, their families and more than 36 youth through presentations about healthy food choices, exercise, and diabetes risk factor prevention.
- Participant knowledge and awareness increased to 91% from an average score of 55% before the intervention.
- The pre and post program health screening results indicate significant changes at the $p=.05$ level in all 5 clinical measures for different groups, Body Mass Index (BMI), systolic blood pressure, diastolic blood pressure, cholesterol, and glucose.
- Fourteen (14) participants' health improved so much that they stopped taking blood pressure and cholesterol lowering medications.

- More people started exercising. For example, two thirds of participants (67%) report exercising at least 2 hours per week compared to only 29% before the program.
- The results of program participants engaging in physical activity is evident in the overall weight loss. When initial weights are compared with final weights, results indicate a significant weight reduction at $p=.05$ level. Seventy-one (71%) or 141 out of 199 for whom complete data were available lost at least two pounds. Sixty-two (62) people lost at least 10 pounds.
- More people now have a family doctor (83% compared with 69% before the program).
- Three individuals with no health insurance started receiving cancer treatments following the project's health screens.
- The Lorain County Urban League expanded capacity to address health needs of African American and Hispanic families by forging relationships with more than a dozen community organizations.
- Overall, respondents report a positive experience with Save Our Families with a majority (80%) of all participants saying their experience was *satisfying or somewhat satisfying*.
- A majority of survey respondents (92%) indicate that program experience met or exceeded their expectations.
- Nearly all respondents (97%) indicate *they learned a lot or they learned a good amount* about diabetes prevention while participating in Save Our Families.
- Similarly, all respondents (100%) indicate program participation has helped to improve their health
- Health improvements are reported with all respondents (100%) reporting that their health has *improved a lot or improved a good amount* since they started participating in Project Save Our Families..
- The outlook for Save Our Families is very positive with nearly all survey respondents (99%) saying they are *very likely or likely* to continue with wellness activities (physical exercise, healthy eating, weight management, health screenings etc).

Program Rationale

Project Save Our Families was designed to address health disparities among African Americans and Hispanics with particular emphasis on preventing diabetes and educating program participants on how to reduce risk factors for diabetes. Health disparities were among many negative factors that African American and Hispanics in Lorain County had in common.

Program Summary

Lorain County Urban League utilized a diabetes prevention and intervention model developed in 2008 with the support from Pfizer Inc, the National Urban League and Morehouse School of Medicine. The model consisted of an educational component as well as physical exercise. The educational intervention comprised of three modules: Module one was designed for African American and Hispanic men and is based on the Save Our Sons Obesity and Diabetes Prevention Curriculum. Each module contains seven sessions with obesity and diabetes prevention instructional materials for group meetings which were facilitated by community health workers. Other materials used were through health professionals, dieticians, researched materials and presentations by coordinator and the Center for Disease Control clearing house. The Children's curriculum was comprised of various children's health information websites including: Fit 4 Fun fitness activities for kids, kidshealth.org, mypyramid.gov and other materials prepared by coordinator and community health worker.

Three cohort groups cycled through the program between July 2009 June 2011. Save Our Families served a total of 322 adults (107 in Group 1, 82 in Group 2 and 133 in Group 3) and their families and over 36 youth through lessons about healthy food choices, exercise, and diabetes risk factor prevention. The project coordinator and three helpers provided hands-on coaching to participants. They were also responsible for conducting curriculum activities and individual sessions focusing on connecting participants with a medical provider. Curriculum/education was offered in six sessions with pre and post tests to measure knowledge acquisition. The educational sessions comprised the following topics: Primary care and diabetes; Small steps leading to big rewards; Physical activity get moving today; Strategies for healthy eating, Partner with your health care provider, Celebrate big rewards. Educational sessions were enhanced by presentations from dieticians, nutritionists, a natural-pathic doctor and other medical personnel pertaining to food, diet, nutrition, portion sizes, low sodium and food benefits. In addition to educational sessions, other program activities included pre and post health screenings and physical exercise which included gym exercises, tennis, walking, swimming, yoga, bowling, basketball, and weight loss competitions. The program also hosted health fairs in April at Lorain County Community College.

Description of Program Participants

Over three hundred (322) African American and Hispanic adults and their families who reside in Central and South Lorain, Elyria Southside, and Southeast Quadrant of Oberlin were recruited for program participation. These areas have the highest concentration of the target population. To recruit participants, neighborhood meetings and community groups were hosted at local churches, community centers, and area agencies with men, women, and key informants.

Gender, Race, Age, Marital Status & Income Levels

With respect to age, nearly two-thirds (63%) of participants were aged 45 years or older, implying that the program was on target regarding the age served. And according to the American Diabetes Association, this is the age most at risk for type 2 diabetes. When gender is considered, overall, proportionately more females than males (65% vs 34%) participated in the program though there were more males in the first group (64%). With respect to race/ethnicity, the program was predominantly African American (87%). Hispanics constituted 6% of participants while 4% were Caucasian.

		All participants	Group 1 (n=107)	Group 2 (n=82)	Group 3 (n=133)
Age	18 to 24	10%	21%	6%	4%
	25 to 34	11%	16%	7%	11%
	35 to 44	14%	12%	14%	17%
	45 to 54	22%	23%	19%	25%
	55 to 64	29%	20%	36%	30%
	65 or older	12%	8%	17%	12%
Gender	Female	66%	36%	81%	80%
	Male	34%	64%	19%	20%
Ethnicity	African American	87%	86%	93%	83%
	Hispanic/Latino	6%	10%	1%	6%
	Caucasian	4%	3%	4%	6%
	Other	2%	1%	2%	4%

Forty percent (40%) of participants were married while 30% were single, 17% were divorced, 5% were widowed another 5% were unmarried but living with a partner, and 3% were separated.

		All participants	Group 1 (N=107)	Group 2 (N=82)	Group 3 (N=133)
Marital Status	Single	30%	33%	33%	23%
	Married	40%	36%	33%	50%
	Divorced	17%	17%	20%	15%
	Separated	3%	1%	5%	2%
	Widowed	5%	3%	5%	8%
	Unmarried (living w/partner	5%	10%	4%	2%

Over two-thirds of program participants (68%) had household incomes of less than \$35, 000 compared to the State at \$45,000. Only 15% of participants earned incomes above \$50,000.

Income levels:	All participants	Group 1 (N=107)	Group 2 (N=82)	Group 3 (N=133)
Less than \$15,000	30%	49%	29%	13%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	19%	20%	28%	8%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	19%	15%	17%	24%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	17%	12%	15%	23%
\$50,000 to 64,999	5%	2%	5%	9%
\$65,000 to 80,000	7%	1%	4%	15%
Above \$80,000	3%	1%	1%	8%

Program Delivery

The program exceeded its goal of serving 100 individuals per year. A total of 322 adult and more than 36 children were served in two years, 158 individuals above the grant's target number. In addition, the project proposed to offer exercise sessions initially through Mount Zion Baptist Church in Oberlin, the YWCA in Elyria, and the Sacred Heart Chapel in Lorain. However, due to increased collaboration, additional exercise locations were secured from the Lorain County Metroparks (Splashzone) in Oberlin, the Powerhouse Gym located in Elyria, the Boys and Girls Clubs located in Elyria, and the Harrison Cultural Center in Lorain.

Through informational presentations by dietitians, nutritionists, a natural-pathic doctor and other medical personnel, participants had the opportunity to ask questions and address specific challenges in their daily lives, particularly regarding diet and nutrition. Participants were also afforded many opportunities to meet with medical personnel and ask questions related to their pre-program health screen results such as: what to do about elevated glucose and cholesterol levels, how to impact BMI, and how to control high blood pressure. Program results indicate participants learned a great deal. Participants were very receptive to the tips and information provided. In group discussions, several participants shared how their grocery shopping habits changed, that is, they were reading food labels, identifying harmful chemicals in foods etc, while others noticed differences in food prices when trying to eat healthy. Food quality and nutritional content have also improved for program participants. Participants learned about whole grains, fresh produce, (fruits and vegetables), leaner meats, and better fats. In collaboration with the Ohio State Extension's Garden Sock project, over 60 personal gardens (grown in socks), were provided to program participants for free. Each garden had a 13 vegetable variety including tomatoes, spinach, salad greens, peppers, cucumbers, herbs, cabbage and greens.

Following the initial medical screening, the program monitored participant weight loss. The program also made 3 emergency referrals to the Free Clinic due to abnormal PSA levels. Referred participants received medical services to include chemotherapy from the Cleveland Clinic. Another 16 participants without health insurance were referred to the Free Clinic and to date 12 of these have been accepted and now have medical homes (some for the first time in several years. To recruit participants, the Save Our Families program was presented at 8

locations including the Lorain County Community Action Agency, two foundations, United Way, and Lorain County Community College staff/instructors. Twenty participants were also tested for HIV during the two April 2010 Health Fairs.

Program Evaluation Design

Given the overall goal of reducing risk factors for diabetes, special attention was paid to clinical data (cholesterol, blood pressure, BMI, and blood glucose) which was collected from program participants by qualified medical personnel at Mercy Hospital. A pre/post test evaluation design was used to measure change in the selected clinical measures. The measurement of change provided a vehicle to assess the impact of Save Our Families. Baseline data were compared with post program data to measure change. For accurate comparison, this report is based on 47% of participants or 152 individuals for whom both pre and post clinical data were available. This number was a sufficient representative sample. Participant weights were tracked quarterly to measure progress. In addition, pre and post tests were administered during each educational session to measure knowledge acquisition about diabetes and nutrition. A participant survey was also administered to measure participant reactions and perceptions.

Program Outcomes

Goal One: Improve Selected Healthy Measures (i.e, improved clinical measures, increased physical activity, healthy eating, and weight management)

According to American Diabetes Association, risk factors for type 2 diabetes include:

- Being 45 years or older
- Having a family history of diabetes
- Being overweight- obesity
- Being a individual who does not exercise regularly – a sedentary lifestyle
- Having high cholesterol
- Having high blood pressure
- Belonging to certain racial or ethnic groups (e.g., Blacks, Hispanic/Latino Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and American Indians and Alaska Natives)
- Being a woman who had gestational diabetes, or who has had a baby weighing 9 pounds or more at birth

Save Our Families participants were screened for risk factors for diabetes at the beginning of the program. Information related to weight, Body Mass Index (BMI), activity level, blood pressure, cholesterol levels and blood glucose was collected at the start of the program and compared with final health screening results to measure progress. The following results are based on 152 participants for whom matched (both pre and post) data were available.

Clinical measures selected for the evaluation

The following clinical measures were selected for the evaluation:

Clinical Measures	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk
Body Mass Index (BMI)	Less than 22	22-30	Greater than 30
Systolic Blood Pressure	Less than 120	120-139	140 or greater
Diastolic Blood Pressure	Less than 80	80-89	90 or greater

Clinical Measures	Optimal	High Risk
Cholesterol	200 or less	Greater than 200
Glucose	70-130	Greater than 130

**Source: American Diabetes Association (ADA)*

Physical exercise was the lifestyle measure selected for evaluation.

Lifestyle Measure *	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk
Physical exercise	More than 4 hours	2 to 4 hours	Less than 2 hours

** Please note that the selection of risk levels for lifestyle measure is arbitrary*

It is considered to be at highest risk for diabetes when

- BMI is greater than 30
- Systolic blood pressure is greater than 40
- Diastolic blood pressure is greater than 90
- Total cholesterol is over 200
- Blood glucose is greater than 130
- There is low physical activity

The program has succeeded in reducing risk factors for participants. For example, 14 participants stopped taking or decreased hypertension and/or diabetic after implementing prevention strategies learned in the program.

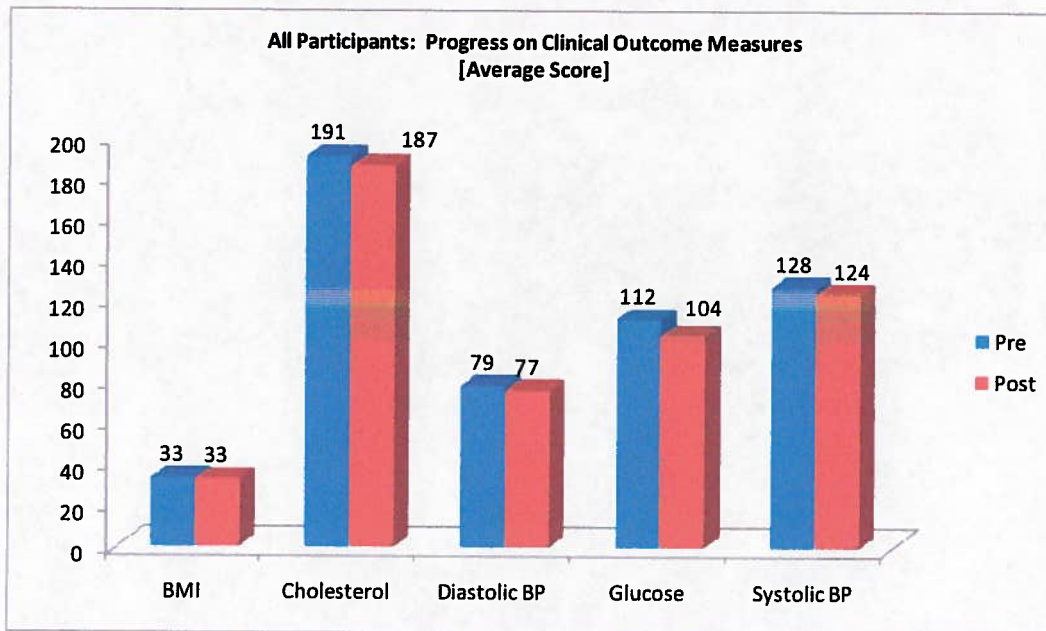
Program Save Our Families has clearly made improvements not only in its registered participants, but also in whole families as this testimony from a stroke survivor suggests. Additional comments and client testimonies are included in **Appendix A** of this report.

"I suffered a stroke on December 22, 2009. I learned a lot about eating right and importance of exercising. My doctor told me that taking exercise helped save my life. My wife and I spent a lot of time bringing our grandchildren (5) to the YWCA, letting them enjoy the activities there and being able to go swimming at the Splash Zone in Oberlin. The program has truly been a blessing to each of in the family."

At the end of the program, there were significant improvements and a reduction in risk factors for diabetes, overall. The pre and post program health screening results indicate significant changes at the $p=.05$ level in three of the 5 clinical measures. Participants in Group 1 achieved significant results as measured by the Body Mass Index (BMI), Diastolic Blood Pressure and Cholesterol levels, while Group 2 participants made significant improvements in Systolic Blood Pressure, Diastolic Blood Pressure, and Blood Glucose. And Group 3 participants made significant improvements in BMI, Cholesterol levels and Blood Glucose.

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
BMI	X	-	X
Systolic Blood Pressure	-	X	-
Diastolic Blood Pressure	X	X	-
Cholesterol levels	X	-	X
Blood Glucose	-	X	X

Overall, positive movements were achieved for all Save Our Family Participants in reducing risk factors for diabetes as can be observed in the graph below. For example, on average, there was a 4-point improvement in Cholesterol levels between the pre and post program results. There was a 2-point improvement in Diastolic Blood Pressure, an 8-point improvement in the Glucose, and a 4-point improvement in the Systolic Blood Pressure.



As the table below indicates, many individuals moved from the “high risk” category as follows:

- 8 improved with respect to BMI
- 11 individuals with respect to Systolic Blood Pressure
- 8 improved with respect to Diastolic Blood Pressure
- 10 improved with respect to Cholesterol
- 5 improved with respect to Blood Glucose

The program improved risk factors for participants as follows:

	All participants	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
BMI	8	6	2	0
Systolic Blood Pressure	11	2	4	5
Diastolic Blood Pressure	8	7	0	1
Cholesterol levels	10	7	1	2
Blood Glucose	5	2	1	2

Weight Management

Among the many benefits of the Save Our Families project has been its ability to help participants with weight management as one participant stated,

“My weight is still dropping. My diabetes is under 130. I feel way better than before.”

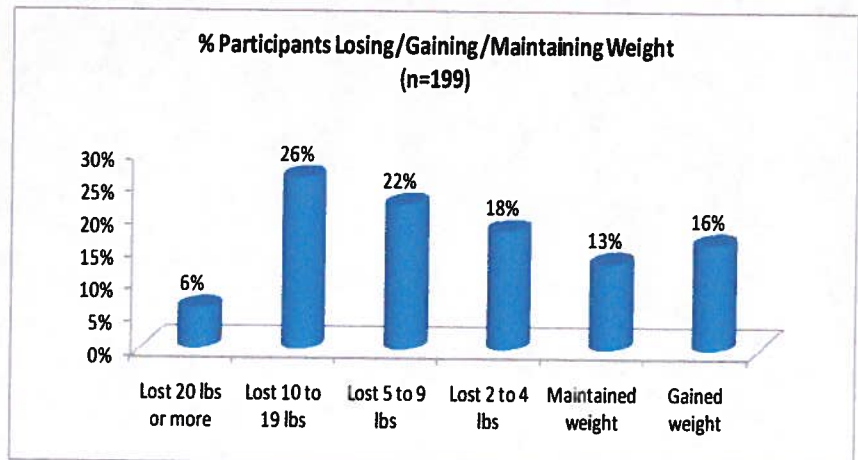
As part of the health screening, each participant’s weight was recorded at the beginning and conclusion of the program. Weights were also collected during the program and shared with program participants to show progress. At the end of the program, each individual’s weight was compared with baseline to measure improvement in weight management. Pre and post program data were available for 199 individuals or 63%. When initial weights are compared with final weights, a significant weight reduction ($p < .001$) for all participants is noted. Seven out of ten program participants (71%) or 141 individuals lost at least 2 pounds, with 62 people losing at least 10 pounds. Eleven (11) people lost 20 or more pounds, 51 people lost between 10 and 19 pounds while 43 people lost between 5 and 9 pounds and 32 individuals lost between 2 and 4 pounds. In addition, 26 people maintained their weight. The first group decreased 7 pounds per person on average (219 down from 226 lbs). The second group lost 5 pounds per person on average (209 down from 214 lbs) while the third groups lost 8 pounds per participant on average (208 down from 216).

Weight Loss/Gain/Maintenance By Group:

Weight Loss/Gain	All Participants	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Lost 20 lbs or more	11	6	0	5
Lost 10 to 19 pounds	51	21	13	17
Lost 5 to 9 pounds	43	11	11	21
Lost 2 to 4 pounds	36	12	10	14
*Maintained weight	26	10	8	8
Gained weight	32	11	15	6

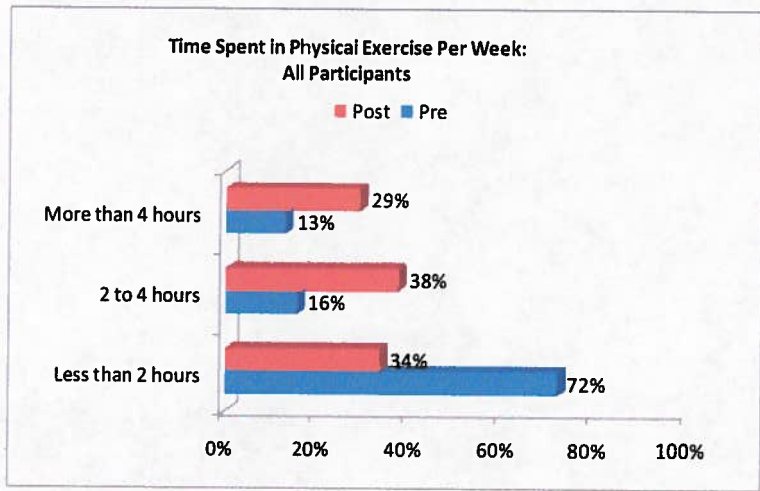
**Participants losing or gaining less than two pounds were considered to have maintained their weight.*

Weight Loss/Gain	All Participants
Lost 20 lbs or more	11
Lost 10 to 19 pounds	51
Lost 5 to 9 pounds	43
Lost 2 to 4 pounds	36
*Maintained weight	26
Gained weight	32

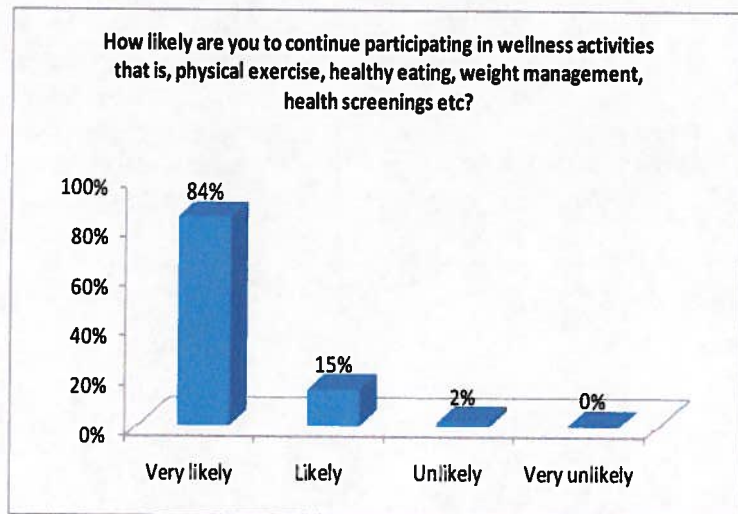


Physical Activity

Before and after the program, all participants were probed about time spent exercising. Results indicate that proportionately more Save Our Families participants are spending time in physical activity. For example, two thirds of participants (67%) report exercising at least 2 hours per week compared to only 29% before the program. Conversely, the percentage of individuals reporting a sedentary lifestyle decreased from 72% before the program to 34% after the program.



Regarding wellness activities overall, the outlook for Save Our Families is very positive. Nearly all participants (99%) intend to continue eating well and exercising. When asked about continuing wellness activities, nearly all respondents indicate they are “very likely” or “likely” to continue exercising, eating healthy, weight management, health screenings, etc.



Goal Two: Connect Program Participants with Primary Care Providers to Establish a Medical Home.

The second goal for the Save Our Family project was to connect participants with primary care providers and to assist them in establishing a medical home. Project Save Our Families has successfully met this goal by connecting many individuals with medical care providers as the following examples indicate.

- For example, by the end of the program, 19 uninsured participants were connected with a primary medical home through a partnership with the Lorain County Free Clinic.
- The initial health screening of each of the three groups revealed that a total of 72 individuals did not have health insurance. Furthermore, many of those individuals had not received medical care for over 5 years.
- In the Group 1, the initial health screening revealed serious health concerns for 3 male participants who had dangerously high PSA readings. These individuals were promptly referred to the Lorain County Free Clinic where they received care.
- Again, in Group 1, two participants under veteran health care coverage expressed concern to the project coordinator about a lack of treatment options at the county level for chronic back pain. With the help of the project coordinator, participants made appointments at the larger VA facility in Cleveland. Then transportation was provided by the project and the two individuals were able to receive needed medical attention at the Cleveland facility.
- By the end of the program, 14 participants, through behavior modifications and physician care, decreased hypertension and/or diabetic medications. In addition, 4 insulin resistant members were taken off of diabetic medication after losing 10-16 pounds through diet changes and exercise.

- In addition, in the pre/post survey, participants were asked whether or not they had a family doctor. A majority of participants (83%) indicated they had a family doctor after the program compared to only 69 % before the program.

Do you have a family doctor?	Pre	Post
Yes	69%	83%
No	31%	17%

Goal Three: Increase Awareness and Knowledge of Prevention Strategies for Program Participants Relative to Diabetes and Obesity.

To address this goal, participants were presented with information about preventing diabetes through different means including an active lifestyle and healthy eating. The program measured participant knowledge acquisition before and after each session. The goal was met with participants demonstrating great knowledge of the information learned through the curriculum and through other resources. For example, 5 participants stopped taking both blood pressure and high cholesterol medications due to implementing prevention strategies learned in the program. Impressive high post test scores are further evidence of increased awareness and knowledge (95% vs 67% in Group 1, 87% vs 46% in Group 2 & 92% vs 52% in Group 3).

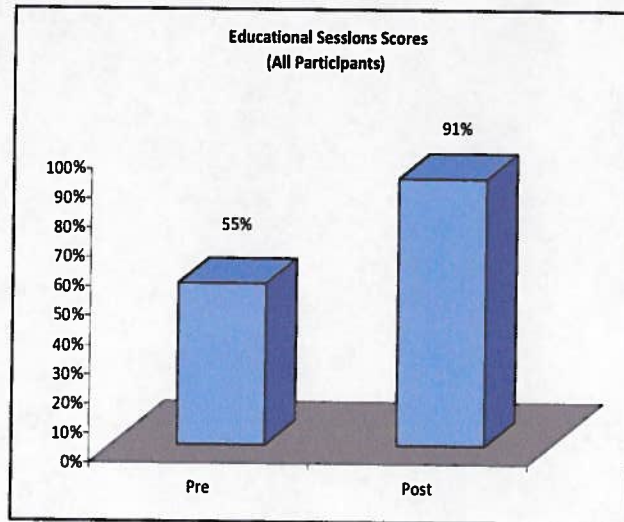
Participants also shared within the program about how much they learned and about positive lifestyle changes they were making. Examples of participant comments and testimonies are included in **Appendix A** of this report.

Goal Four: Increase Knowledge of Persons and Families with diagnosed cases of diabetes on how to manage the disease.

Similar to goal 3, the curriculum material was used to communicate knowledge about managing diabetes for those with diabetes or managing the diabetes of family members.

Save Our Families offered educational classes about diabetes in multiple modules. A pre test survey was conducted with participants prior to all educational sessions. As each module was completed, participants were tested on that portion of the curriculum. At the completion of the curriculum, a post test was conducted with participants to measure change in knowledge and awareness about diabetes and obesity.

Participants scored very high on the post test demonstrating a significant increase in knowledge about diabetes and obesity related complications since joining the program. A significant change in knowledge ($p < .001$) is observed when pre and post program test scores are compared with an average score of 91% on the test after the curriculum compared with 55% before the curriculum was presented.



Goal Five: Build Community Capacity for Addressing Health Needs of African American & Hispanic Families in Lorain County, Ohio.

Urban League forged community relationships that helped the program and benefited Save Our Families participants. Community support and partnerships helped the LCUL with program delivery and provision of health resources for participants as the following examples demonstrate:

- The YWCA/YMCA offered and will continue to offer discounted and free fitness club memberships.
- The Lorain County Metroparks was a great supporter of the Save Our Families program and provided numerous opportunities to take advantage of their healthy lifestyle programs including hiking and walking. In addition, the Splash Zone (their multi-purpose and exercise facility) will continue with its discounted memberships and day swimming passes as well as the use of classroom space when needed.
- Powerhouse Gym has been supportive with discounted memberships for program participants as well as referrals to the program.
- Gathering Hope House has been a supporter as well, going as far as providing storage and curriculum instruction space in addition to affordable memberships beyond program sessions.
- Mercy Hospital, Occupational Health and Parish Nursing have provided extremely reduced rates for health screenings.
- Rebman's Recreation/bowling alley allowed participants opportunity with affordable bowling outings with the entire family.
- Various local clubs and chapters invited the program coordinator and director to present on preventive health topics throughout the community.
- Numerous churches (at least 10) have expressed interest in running Save Our Families in their church. Four of these churches have offered free meeting and exercise space in their gymnasiums.
- The Lorain County Health and Dentistry/Free Clinic has provided means to primary care physicians and medical homes to uninsured participants.
- Local Foundations: Nord Family Foundation, Community Foundation and the United Way have provided supplemental funds for health programs.

- Lorain County Community College has provided the opportunity to have service learning students present and develop fun, interactive and educational presentations for participants at no cost to Lorain County Urban League.
- The Ohio State Extension provided free educational seminars on diet, food portions and agriculture (growing personal, home gardens). They even provided over 60 Filtrex garden socks, planted with vegetables for program participants.

Participant Satisfaction Survey Results

Overall Experience and Expectations

A participant survey was administered at the end of the program to assess participant experiences and perceptions. A total of 75 individuals completed the survey.

Overall, respondents report a positive experience with Save Our Families with a majority (80%) of all participants saying their experience was *satisfying* or *somewhat satisfying*. About one-tenth (11%) describe overall experience as *very unsatisfying*.

Would you describe your overall experience with Save Our Families as...

Satisfying	80%
Somewhat satisfying	9%
Somewhat unsatisfying	0%
Very unsatisfying	11%

Similar to satisfaction, program experience was extremely positive for participants. A majority of survey respondents (92%) indicate that program experience met or exceeded their expectations.

Did your experience during the past year, exceed your expectations, meet your expectations, or fall short of your expectations?

Exceeded expectations	40%
Met expectations	52%
Fallen short expectations	7%

Perceived Program Benefits

In addition to satisfaction and experience, Save Our Families participants were asked about perceived program benefits. First, a question was posed to participant knowledge about diabetes. Then, participants were asked about general health improvements.

As results indicate, nearly all survey respondents (97%) feel they *learned a lot* or a *good amount* about diabetes prevention.

Since you started participating in Project Save Our Families, would you say you have learned a lot, a good amount, some or not at all about how to prevent diabetes?

Learned a lot	66%
Learned a good amount	31%
Learned some	4%
Not at all	0%

Similarly, all respondents (100%) indicate program participation has helped to improve their health.

Has participation in Save Our Families helped very much, helped a little bit, or not helped to improve your health?

Helped very much	81%
Helped a little bit	19%
Not helped to improve	0%

In addition, all respondents (100%) feel their health has improved since they started participating in Project Save Our Families.

As a result of participating in Save Our Families, would you say your health had improved a lot, a good amount, some, or not at all?

Improved a lot	36%
Improved a good amount	43%
Improved some	22%

Conclusions and Implications

- Results show project Save Our Families has been very successful meeting its goals and in some aspects exceeding them.
- The success of Save Our Families might be attributed to several factors among which is the Urban League's ability to forge and maintain relationships within the community. This strength alone has enabled the organization to tap into valuable resources within the community which have been extremely beneficial to program participants. For example, initially, collaboration with YWCA ensured that participants had transportation to and from program sites.
- In addition to key relationships, having a culturally sensitive program ensured commitment and consistency in attendance. Educational interventions were specifically tailored for the target populations (African American and Hispanic populations).
- The coordinator also appeared to have played a key role in the success of the program. Participants reference a "connection" they had with the coordinator. The coordinator was also described as "caring" and "available" for questions.
- Targeting whole families is also a great feature of the program that will have far reaching implications, an one participant stated, "one of the things I like about this program is that I can bring my whole to an exercise facility." It is hoped that after the program, families will continue to support each other and challenge each other towards a healthier lifestyle.
- The program also helped to strengthen family relationships as one participant said, "this is the first time my husband and I got to spend time with our grandchildren."
- Having multiple collaborating partners throughout the County meant that exercise facilities were close to where people lived hence allowing for easy access.
- Positive peer pressure provided encouragement and motivation for participants to stay engaged and continue practicing a healthier life style. Participants frequently talked about the program in terms of "encouraging," "supportive," and "motivating."
- Urban League should also consider using the great success of Save Our Families program to seek additional funding and to sell itself to an even wider community.
- Save Our Families has the potential of becoming a model for diabetes prevention. Prevention is always better, and by far, less expensive than cure. Considering its great success, it is certainly worthy of all the support it can get.

Vue Weleb

Signature of the evaluator

Date: 8/19/2011

Appendix A Participant Stories and Testimonies

I suffered a stroke on December 22-09. I learned a lot about eating and how important exercise is. My doctor told me that taking exercises helped to save my life. My wife and I spent a lot of time bringing our grand kids to the YWCA, letting them enjoy the activities there and being able to go swimming at the Splash Zone in Oberlin. The program has truly been a blessing to each one in our family.

This program was very good in changing my habits in eating, exercise, and in reading labels and also in spending more time with my family at the Splash Zone

I joined the program in support of my son who had been ill and all the meds raised his blood sugar levels to the point of insulin dependency. However, before the program started, I lost my son but still followed through with it. It's been a big help for me to make healthier choices and just being around other people had helped to fill my void of my loss and I've been focused to stay healthy. This program has truly been a blessing for me.

Yes, I really am grateful for SAVE OUR FAMILIES helping me, to motivate and learn how to exercise and diet on an educated level. That was wonderful to participate in. But the brotherhood bond between the men I met made real friendships that helped me keep going when I felt down. Now, that is priceless. My weight is still dropping. My diabetes is under 130. I feel way better than before. Thank you. God bless

I learned a lot about all kinds of food to eat and what not to eat. It was also good that it was explained what the different scores meant on the blood test we had. This is the first time my husband and I got to spend time with our grandchildren and were able to take them to the Splash Zone in Oberlin to swim. We are retired and would not have afforded to go swimming on our own

I have no insurance and this program helped with that as well as physicals which I haven't had in three years. Now I know what I need to do to stay healthy.

I was lazy I didn't want to do anything. I was told about the program. Trying to shut up my friend, I went and it turned out I liked it. I have lost weight now and I am able to move around. Yes, it did real good for me.

It has been very information and has helped me a lot. I am happy and very glad to be a part of the program. I hope it will continue!

I am truly grateful for being in the program. I really look forward to our class and learning new materials. I really like challenging myself in the gym. Thank you Save Our Families. Keep going forward because I enjoy the program. I have told my family/friends who want to join the program because of my excitement. Thanks again 😊

Thank you for the phone calls. I need them... I have several friends I would like to encourage to join. I have a family member already waiting. Recipes and cooking classes, how to prepare food differently and address morbid obesity over 300 lbs. I'm grateful for all the **encouragement**. It's hard to see the light at that end of the tunnel with so much to lose, but thank you for everyone's **encouraging** words, pats on the back, and smiles.

I like the health information I have been receiving. I like being able to use the fitness facilities although I am having a hard time planning when I can get to one. I have already been talking to people about the program and they want to be informed when the next class begins.

Great presenters and info. Never received my workout regimen. I would definitely recommend this program to others because I think it's great. I think the presenters have been very good. I like the comradery of the participants. I love the variety of activities and choices of facilities. On the down side when you work 40-45 hours a week trying to come to 2 meetings and get at least 4 evenings of exercise in, it becomes a little taxing.

It has motivated me to be conscious of my health and well being. The curriculum is very healthy, educationally. Maybe, make more people aware of the program through advertisement, and still word of mouth.

Great information, I have learned a lot about food and nutrition. Program coordinator is easy to contact. Curriculum meetings are great & so informative. I am meeting my goals even though I'm not tracking very well right now. Having a hard time getting Splash Zone Pass renewed.

I recommend this program very highly. I'm struggling with keeping track of food diary and exercise log, that's my personal issue. I feel as far as exercise goes as long as you keep on moving, whether it's walking whenever possible, swimming, weight lifting on your own, weight loss will happen. Especially if you eat less, eat less carbohydrates and cut way down on sugar. Good awareness information and good health awareness.

The program is teaching me how to focus on me. My health and my time for me. I am watching and learning about healthy food, seasoning, and the importance of focusing and taking time out of each day for me. I will definitely recommend it to everyone I meet.

I like the **encouragement** and learning how to eat right. Would like to know if we could get bottled water and fruit also.

Yes, I would highly recommend this program. It not only helps me in maintaining my weight, healthy, and food awareness, but also is relieving my stress. I have never followed a program like this before. It has been great.

I like the exercise facility where I work-out. It's close to home. The health information is very clear and helps me understand how to maintain my desired weight. Health facts about certain foods is very helpful. **Being in a group is very helpful for me.**

Appendix B
Site Visits (Group 3)

Save Our Families: Oberlin Group

The evaluator, unannounced, visited the Oberlin group of Save Our Families project on March 15th at 6:30 pm. The highlight of the visit was observing two previous participants facilitating the meeting. During the first part of the meeting, participants took turns to sharing how they were doing regarding nutrition, weight management and exercise. They encouraged each other verbally and/or by applauding. Several people reported that they had lost weight. Noteworthy, in attendance, was a whole family (husband, wife and children). Both husband and wife shared how as a family they were incorporating lessons learned about nutrition in their own family meal preparations and how they were engaging in physical activity as a family.



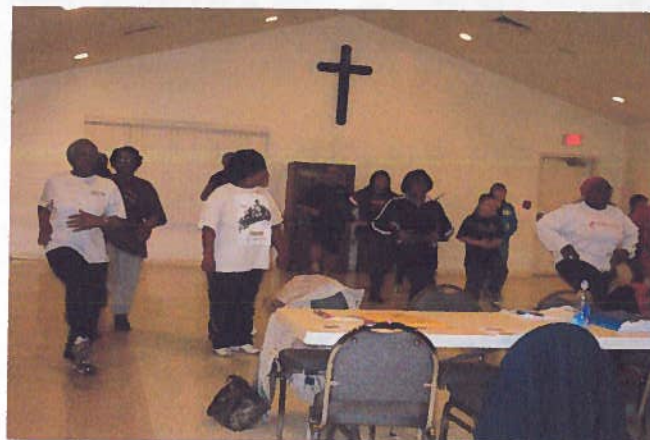
Discussion & Testimonies Prior to Working out



Warm-Up Before Workout



Group Workout



Group workout

Project Save our Families: Elyria Group

The evaluator visited the Elyria Save Our Families group on February 24, 2011. When participants came in, they first gathered in a room and talked among themselves while some were getting weighed. Participants enquired of each other, as they trooped in the room, about exercise and nutrition. One participant would ask another, "How did you do with your nutrition this past week?" While another asked, "did you go to the gym this past week?" An observation made was that group exercise was a motivator for some people who would otherwise not exercise by themselves. A group was discussing this very point with one admitting, "I have a treadmill at home, but somehow I can never use it. I just can't exercise by myself. I need this (meaning the group)."



Warm-Up before workout



Group Workout



Group Workout



Rhonda, the program coordinator, showing the children how to make a healthy dip while the adults exercised.

Save Our Families: Lorain Group

The evaluator visited the Lorain Group on March 28 at 5pm. The group started in one room with participants completing nutrition logs before moving into the exercise area. While about 15 exercised, another group about the same size was waiting to start at 6 pm. The highlight of the visit was overhearing a conversation following the exercise. A lady, sounding very excited, was remarking as she and friends descended the stairs about how much progress she had made since starting the program. "I can touch the floor now. Did you see me touch the floor? I couldn't touch the floor when I started." Two friends with the lady both agreed that they had seen her get down. "Yes, I saw you touch the floor, and I say praise God! That is progress," encouraged the friend.



Participants completing foods logs before a workout



Lorain Participants working out



Rhonda, the program coordinator conducting the workout



Group workout