



Obesity Prevention and Resiliency Promotion Programs Success Showcase 2022

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Thursday, Jan. 20, 2022

JENNIE HEFELFINGER:

Well, welcome everyone. I'm very excited to talk with you all today about two of our BRIC programs and our SPINE programs. I'm going to give you just a little bit of information about our center that encompasses both of these programs and talk a little bit about collaboration. I do want to mind folks, though, if you have any questions, please drop them in the chat. We promise to answer them. And with that, I also want to remind folks if you need live caption it's on the bottom, and if you have any questions, I think you all heard, you can go to the showcase help person. Joanne is here to help us with the session as well. If you need any help, you can just reach out to her. I just want to go ahead and just give a little bit of information about our center and you can see the name is Center for Advancing Healthy Communities. My name is Jennie Hefelfinger, and I'm the director for this program. I'm very excited to be able to have this team today to be able to share with you some of the work that we're doing in this center.

So we know that where you live matters and accessing healthy living opportunities should be available for everybody, wherever you live, work, play, learn. Um, you could keep adding, uh, verbs to that, but we really want to focus on work where there is a lot of synergy looking at systemic racism and unhealthy built environments and connecting these together with the work that we're doing. The next slide talks a little bit about our focus on addressing health equity. I really just want to let everybody know that in our NACDD mission, we really look at supporting the public, uh, the health of the public by strengthening state-based leadership, providing expertise for chronic disease prevention and control at the state, national, and community level. We're very lucky in that. And that we like to do this through leading and influencing by providing information, technical assistance, opportunities. And we can't do this without our partners, two of whom are on the call today.

Our Division of Nutrition Physical Activity Obesity as well as our CSTLTS program funding. So we do appreciate that support to help us engage leaders on threats and opportunities to support them. So we're really looking at how we can center our work to foster healthy communities, address social justice and health equity.

We are trying to do this through building partnerships, engaging local and state leaders in these health promotion efforts, looking at partnerships, prevention, and inclusion for

all. I'm going a little bit faster, just because I want to get you all to our main session. All of our programs look at accessibility for all we're working on root causes.

We are really looking at sustainability for healthy communities through policy systems and environmental change, and trying to be innovative in the work that we're doing. But bringing the right people to the table is critical. And that is one thing that both of these programs do very well with, um, the states.

The next slide shows our whole team. And you'll see that there are a bunch of people on the slide who are in other rooms, giving different presentations. We're very happy today though, that Patrilie and Charita manage our newest program SPINE. And they're going to talk to you a little bit about social justice in our planning.

And I mean, really, it just kicked off. So it's very exciting. And then Mara is going to talk with you about the BRIC program and how we are trying to bring mental health into this and social connection, which is something that Kristi mentioned in her comments is how can we break into these areas as public health?

So just wanted to share that with you all. The next slide really you'll see the two highlighted in yellow areas, BRIC and SPINE. And these are the programs you're going to hear more about. I do want to let you all know though that our programs work together, we're collaborating, we're trying to provide thought leadership across all of these areas, we're trying to be inclusive, looking at expanding capabilities, again, promoting healthful PSE changes, looking at fostering mutually beneficial partnerships and being supportive for inclusion as well. I want to go ahead now and introduce you to Mara Galic, who is going to talk next about our BRIC program. Mara.

MARA GALIC:

Thanks, Jennie. And welcome everyone. So great to have you. I am just really thrilled to share with you some information about the BRIC program, which started back in January of 2021. So we're celebrating a year this month, so I'm really happy to have you all and, and, uh, share with you some information.

So the overall purpose and program strategy related to BRIC, and I really do want to take a minute to read the slide because the words really are important and they do matter to us is to improve, establish, or maintain equitable and socially just state partnerships on food and nutrition security, physical activity access, and social connectedness, all within the context of COVID-19 and responding and pivoting as a result of COVID-19. I think Kristi, NACDD's board chair, mentioned kind of a new normal, some of the things that we are, that some of our BRIC states are doing in

response to COVID we may keep, and especially in response to the inequities that COVID-19 has, has really laid bare.

So you'll see health equity kind of, weave throughout this strategy and as I get a bit more information about what BRIC is about. So with BRIC, we are funding 20 states, and I think we have some of you on the call today so hopefully you can reach out to your, um, your BRIC state, but each of these states had the opportunity to pick one to five communities to work with in the three BRIC strategy areas.

And so a total of 63 communities across the country are working on BRIC strategies, as well as health equity. And just to give you a sense of the communities, the scale, and the urbanization, the majority of our BRIC states are working at the county level and that's around 68%. And in terms of urbanization, the majority are in a non-metro or, or rural community or county.

One of the most important aspects of the BRIC work in terms of NACDD and our partners is to build state and local capacity around the three BRIC strategy areas, responding to COVID, learning from COVID and how states are responding so that we can be better prepared for future pandemics. And learn how to be resilient in the light of the pandemic.

And so we don't do that alone. And so on the screen, you'll see a list of our national partners, along with CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity, Division of Population Health, and some of our other national partners that really help us to support the states and communities around food and nutrition security, like Feeding America, Mental Health America and Healthy Places by Design support the physical activity and social connectedness work. So you have a sense of the scope of our partnership. And so you might ask what type of technical assistance we're providing our states. Well, it varies and, and the ranges from webinars on a monthly basis to more interactive opportunities such as office hours, peer exchange. And you'll see one of the strategies on social connectedness, consult, curbside consulting and learning series. And that was really in direct response to what our states and communities were asking for. And so we adjusted our technical assistance plans and strategies to, to provide more of that content area.

Again, in, in terms of being responsive to our state needs, we conducted a survey mid-year last year in July of 2021, to get a sense of, you know, what states are learning and how can we improve our TA plan? So we had 35 people respond from states representing, sorry, representing 20 states of those 35 people. So this slide's very colorful, but really kind of the take home is that our, our BRIC states found our TA offerings very helpful.

And the kind of, the top three were kind of the one-on-one support, the monthly webinars and the one-on-one technical assistance from our national technical assistance partners. Kind of keeping in mind that that was midyear year one. And we know that some of this may shift and change as we go along. So the next next two slides, um, just want to highlight the success of the technical assistance that we are able to provide.

To increase the BRIC states knowledge, if you recall, one of the main purpose of our work is to, you know, build state capacity around the BRIC strategy areas. So this slide really shows improvement in knowledge and understanding of the three BRIC areas. And health equity, but especially around social connectedness and health equity.

Many of the states that we are working with are also SPAN states, um, which stands for State Physical Activity and Nutrition states that get funding from CDC. So their knowledge on nutrition, physical activity is always, it's already pretty high. Just really quickly, we also saw improvements in capacity around policy systems and environmental change across the three BRIC areas and health equity.

And just to show you, uh, the scope of the, what the work of our communities are doing in the three BRIC areas, as well as health equity, that many of the communities, they only had to pick, you know, one to two outcomes in the three areas. But as you can see by the outcomes column, many of the 63 communities picked more than two.

And so really making a, uh, an effort to make impact in our communities around the three BRIC areas. And last, I want to close with the importance of health equity in BRIC, in that it's not just a one and done, but ingrained and built in throughout the entire BRIC process, from planning to implementation, to using, interpreting data and telling our stories around the BRIC program.

So thanks so much and I'll turn it over to my colleague Patrilie with SPINE.

PATRIE HERNANDEZ:

Hello everybody. My name is Patrilie Hernandez and I work with Charita on managing the SPINE program. We are thrilled to be able to share information today about the state partnerships improving nutrition and equity program, otherwise known as SPINE. As you will see here, we are a team of two, but a mighty team of that. We were brought in, started October of 2021, and we have definitely hit the ground running. So the program was launched on January 1st of 2022, um, in which the goal of the SPINE program was, is to address food and nutrition security across the lifespan through equitable and sustainable actions.

Through the SPINE program, we tackle various socioeconomic conditions that limit equitable food and nutrition security. For example, such as food access. And due to this program, only being 12 months, states that are funded for this work must have an existing work plan that supports state and or community level actions to improve healthy food access that they can leverage for this work in addition to building strong partnerships. So as you see that our program really focuses on two things, uh, food and nutrition security and health equity. We believe that combining both of these ensures that groups that are often overlooked and systemically marginalized are included, specifically black and Latinx communities and Native American and American Indian populations.

We believe this work is important because over 10% or one in eight individuals experience at least some level of food insecurity. And health equity becomes a concern, right? Because we see that low income, single parent, black, Native American, Latinx household disproportionately experience food insecurity at higher levels compared to white non-Hispanic households.

Nutrition insecurity also becomes a concern because we see that low income individuals typically experience higher levels of diet related nutrition deficiencies, have less access to nutrition dense foods compared to those in higher income households. So as you see here, these are some of the activities that SPINE states will engage in over the course of the next year. To ensure that states are supported throughout program implementation, we will offer them and they will engage in enhanced technical assistance and training provided by us at NACDD and will also be linked to pertinent CDC training opportunities. And because health equity is a major component of our program, states will work with diverse communities, groups, and populations while applying cultural relevance, awareness, and humility. As I've mentioned before, equitable food and nutrition security is the focus of SPINE. One of the areas that we want to see this achieved through is increased food system partnerships and partnerships with other BRIC project states as you heard before. We've incorporated peer to peer connections in our training and technical assistance plan to encourage strong partnerships between BRIC states and SPINE project states.

And as I mentioned earlier, SPINE states should be able to leverage an existing state plan to carry out SPINE program goals. The SPINE team will also work with states to develop a SPINE action plan that incorporates community-based participatory approach and activities around equitable food and nutrition security.

And as a result of the SPINE program, we anticipate robust and sustainable cross sector partnerships that increase equitable food and nutrition security and that can also be leveraged, as well as promoting PSE, or policy systems and environmental changes, that support equitable food and nutrition security.

Through an objective request for proposals and review process, nine states were funded for the SPINE program. We received 12 applications in total and selected states that demonstrated the capacity and readiness to swiftly implement SPINE goals due to the short program period. And here you see a map of the funded states throughout the US. You see that they're located all over, from coast to coast.

Thank you all so much for your time today. I'm going to turn it back over to Jennie.

JENNIE HEFELFINGER:

Thank you and appreciate those great comments, Charita and Patrilie both are, have done just a fabulous job with getting this program up and running. And we're very excited because our kickoff for this is next week. I just have two slides I want to share.

And then we will have time for questions. I think we talked a little faster than we were expecting, but there are opportunities for collaboration. And there was a question in the chat about how can I collaborate with other programs? And my suggestion would be to reach out to programs to see where there is that overlap between physical activity and healthy nutrition and if there are ways for you to partner with your BRIC or soon to be SPINE, uh, project. I see that there could be a lot of overlap with diabetes or your programs working with people with disabilities and some other project areas. We expect that BRIC is in some SPAN funded states, as we mentioned, but there are five states that are not SPAN funded.

So we're assuming that they're working pretty collaboratively in the SPAN states. But do reach out, we can give you a list. I dropped the chat, or the website for BRIC in the chat if you want to grab it, and it links you to all of our states, but just want to really quickly share a little bit more information on this.

You heard Kristi talk about the need to reach out, and I think Kristi is on this call, to reach out to mental health, how can we reach out more to mental health? And our BRIC team is doing that. We have made, as you heard from Mara, collaborations with two organizations for mental health. Uh, we're looking at being more inclusive and, uh, focusing somewhat on people with disabilities and people who are experiencing tremendous amounts of food insecurity.

And I'm so happy to know that SPINE is going to even bring more emphasis to that in a few more states. We're working with Feeding America and Equitable Cities, as you heard. We're, we're encouraging people to work with housing and transportation organizations, organizations that support people with disabilities.



As we know, people with disabilities have a big risk for chronic diseases, they are impacted even more so and then their access, their ability to access helpful organizations of physical activity may be limited even more during COVID. So I would take a look at the programs in your state that you can work with and maybe look at how you can share resources or collaborate or link to existing programs.

There's a lot of great things going on in our BRIC states and soon to be happening in our SPINE states as well. I do want to talk just briefly about some of the work we're we're trying to do across our, our, our center is looking at working with the department of aging, looking at getting into, as I mentioned, departments of mental health and encouraging people to work with those organizations. We've supported community, we've supported training on economic development organizations so so communities can look at housing and transportation. And so just want to finish with a quote that Robyn said earlier is that everyone rises together and we know that in this project is we're seeing great things happening in our communities, our BRIC communities, because of the collaboration that they're doing.

Just go to the last slide, if you could. I just want to open it up for conversation if you all like, but this is the website for our advancing healthy communities page. I dropped the BRIC one in the chat if you want to grab that. And Patrilie or Charita, I think our website for SPINE is open, is it, is it public yet?

If you want to drop that in. It's it's still, as I said, it's new. So we have a lot of work to put on there still, but there are ways to find out more information. So there's a question in the chat. There are a lot of great resources and work happening with SPAN, BRIC, and now SPINE. Do you have recommendations for states to best connect to this work if they don't have any of those funding sources?

Hey, Mary, good to see you again. Yes, we do. All of our BRIC webinars are open to all SPAN, BRIC, HOP, REACH states, but we also, Mara heads this up for us. We have a listserv of over 650 people, um, including ambassador states. And we do want to do some specific outreach to ambassador states to make sure we can bring them into the webinars.

And there might be a few other opportunities as well for states to get some additional learning. Our websites are open. Our resources are posted there. Anytime we have an opportunity for other states to join in this work, we want you to take advantage of it. There is a SPAN, there is an ambassador website on NACDD's website that has resources for states that don't have any other resources or any funding.

And so look for some of those coming. Mara will be the one sending those out. Mara, that goes through our MailChimp process. Yeah. So hopefully Mary, we can get you



some of those resources. I know you all participated in the PAN StEM, so hopefully you all were able to get some good information through that process.

And I know Robyn encouraged folks to join GEAR groups earlier, and I don't know what the GEAR group topics are, but they are good opportunities for learning. We do hope to do more promotion to ambassador states from our center that focus on meeting some of the strategies or supporting some of the strategies for the Active People, Healthy Nation.

We've found that many of those strategies in that can cross over many of our program areas. So, um, look for some of that as well. Uh, Joanne is dropping in a few things, uh, Patrilie, thanks for dropping in the SPINE one. Joanne has dropped in, um, information on how to reach out to presenters. We enjoyed having you all join us today.

I hope you all take advantage of the last session and go hear about another one of our, uh, Center for Advancing Healthy Communities programs. They're doing a lot of great work. Or join one of the other ones that's happening. And thank you for joining us. And again, reach out to us if you have any specific questions.

Thank you.

- END OF TRANSCRIPT -