

Case Study: Coventry Health Projects Evaluation



BACKGROUND

Coventry Healthy Lifestyles programme was funded through Neighbourhood Renewal Funding for an eighteen month period, following two successful applications made to the Coventry Strategic Partnership (CSP) in 2005/6. The Coventry Lets Walk programme began in January 2007 and the One Body One Life programme commenced in April 2007.

Coventry Lets Walk is a group walking project. 14 regular walks are now held across Coventry as a result of the project. There are several different types of walks which have developed since it began:

- ◆ Group walking
- ◆ Lap Walking
- ◆ One off walking events

Coventry One Body, One Life (OBOL) is a family focused community weight management programme. The aim is to deliver an intensive needs-led intervention obesity programme for children, young people and families. The programme intends to enable families to make the necessary planned and sustained healthy lifestyle changes to improve their dietary habits and increase physical activity. The OBOL project has two distinct components:

- ◆ Prevention
- ◆ Intervention

METHODOLOGY

This report has focused on the key benefits of the OBOL and Lets Walk projects from the point of view of participants. This is supplemented with evidence from stakeholders and a literature review.

- ◆ Qualitative analysis was obtained via telephone interviews with stakeholders identified by the programme as having involvement in some way: Chatabout¹ sessions were conducted with groups of beneficiaries and individual family discussions were held with participants in the OBOL programme.
- ◆ Literature review. A review of programmes with similarities to the OBOL and Lets Walk projects was undertaken. This involved searching journals and internet scholar pages. The intention was to identify the extent to which the programme is innovative and/or how far each is built upon recognised examples of best practice.

CLIENT SERVICE AND SUPPORT

The project was led by M-E-L's Senior Social and Community Research Consultant, Kelly Hunt. Kelly said about the project *"Improving the health of families, children and residents was a key aim for this project, but in reality the benefits went much wider. Families felt that the weight management project brought them closer as a unit, whilst people who took part in the programme of walks spoke of the social benefits as well as the clear health bonuses. A key challenge in evaluating the project was consulting with families in the family unit, and we overcame this by undertaking household case studies with all members of the family involved. A range of innovative methods were used which both parents and children enjoyed. We hope the work of the Healthy Lifestyles Project continues to make an impact on families and residents who take part in both the walks and weight management aspects"*.

For further information about our work with Coventry City Council, please contact Kelly Hunt @ kelly.hunt@m-e-l.co.uk or call 0121 604 4664

¹ A Chatabout is M-E-L Research's equivalent of a focus group session, offering an informal, yet structured, method of consulting with people.