

NORTHEAST REGION HEALTH PROMOTION NEWSLETTER

ASSESSMENT: noun; plural noun: ASSESSMENTS

The evaluation or estimation of the nature, quality, or ability of someone or something.

On the NE Region Health Promotion Team, we talk about the Community Health Improvement Process (CHIP) a lot! Not only do we talk about it, we strive to apply it to our work in communities, both with Health Councils and with community partners, and to engage our partners in the CHIP cycle.

It does seem that some pieces of the CHIP cycle get more attention than others. Community Health Assessments (CHA) are getting a lot of attention these days, in part because of the Affordable Care Act requirements that tax-exempt hospitals produce CHAs. Program implementation always gets a lot of attention because it is a tangible aspect of our work.

The mention of “evaluation” tends to elicit sighs or other signs of distress. If we take a closer look at evaluation, a different picture begins to emerge. As the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes: “Most of us assess the value and impact of our work all the time when we ask questions, consult partners, make assessments, and obtain feedback. We then use the information collected to improve the program.” Indeed, such informal assessments fit nicely into a broad definition of evaluation as the “examination of the worth, merit, or significance of an object”

When we begin to look at evaluation of our work in this way, we realize that we are engaged in evaluation, perhaps even on a daily basis. Evaluation provides an opportunity to gain insight into whether activities are achieving their desired results, improve services and activities and share information with others regarding program success.

This issue of our newsletter provides examples of how the NE Region Health Promotion Team evaluates our work to make sure that we are focused on what is important, and that our efforts are impactful.



EVALUATION OF THE HEALTH COUNCIL DELIVERABLE SUBMISSION PROCESS

BY CHRISTA HERNANDEZ

HEALTH PROMOTION COORDINATOR

On the first of July, the dust has settled, invoices have been paid, deliverables have been met and many health councils and their members are enjoying the summer and activities associated with warm weather. It is during this time each year that the Northeast Region Health Promotion Team comes together to evaluate the previous year.

Either a special meeting is convened or a chunk of time is allotted at our monthly meeting for the very specific task of evaluating the successes, barriers, processes and procedures of the prior fiscal year. Input and observations about the health council deliverable submission process are discussed and decisions are made. Was the process effective? Did health council coordinators feel supported? Were all deliverables completed by the deadline? If not, why? What barriers did coordinators face? How could we

improve the process? These are a few of the process evaluation questions we ask ourselves each year to determine what worked, what could be improved, and what changes should be made for the next year. We do this evaluation because we understand that each health council coordinator in every community has a different relationship with their partners and community organizations. We also understand that dynamics and priorities change with new leadership or with new stakeholders and we want to make sure the health council deliverable submission process is meeting the needs of each health council.

Each year, from 2013 to now, the health council deliverable submission process has evolved and, hopefully, improved to better meet the needs of our partners. It is fascinating to look back and remember just five years ago health councils were asked to pick their deliverables from a menu of options, whereas now, each health council has the

ability to freely choose the deliverables they want to complete for the year. In 2013, many of the Northeast Region health councils were trying to re-establish themselves and establish the foundation of a health council, whereas now, many health councils are established and are working to implement specific strategies related to their strategic or action plans. Health council work tends to ebb and flow, but regardless of what is going on locally, there are always lessons to be learned, and we are grateful to be able to learn these lessons with our health councils.

Please know the Northeast Region Health Promotion Team aims to follow the expectations set forth for health councils in that we also aim to follow the Community Health Improvement Process. We will continue to support health councils to build capacity; we will continue to assess the health council deliverable process and prioritize the areas where improvement is needed; and lastly, we will take action to change what isn't working. We look forward to whatever 2019 has in store for us and we hope to continue to be of service to our partners.

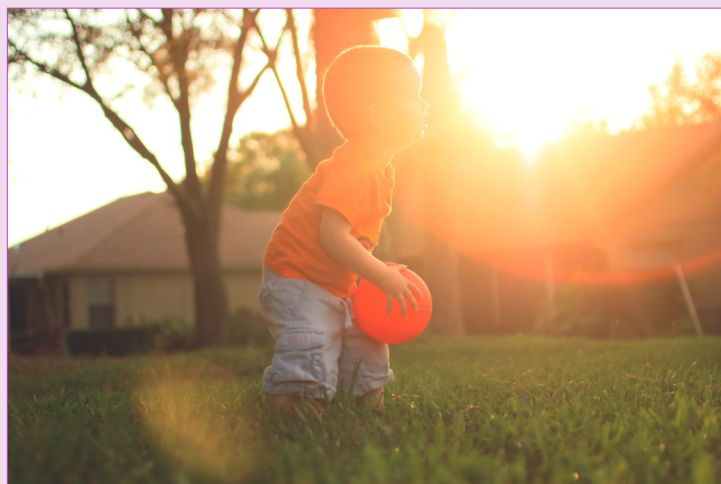


Process Evaluation in Action

PROMOTING HEALTHY LIVING IN COLFAX COUNTY

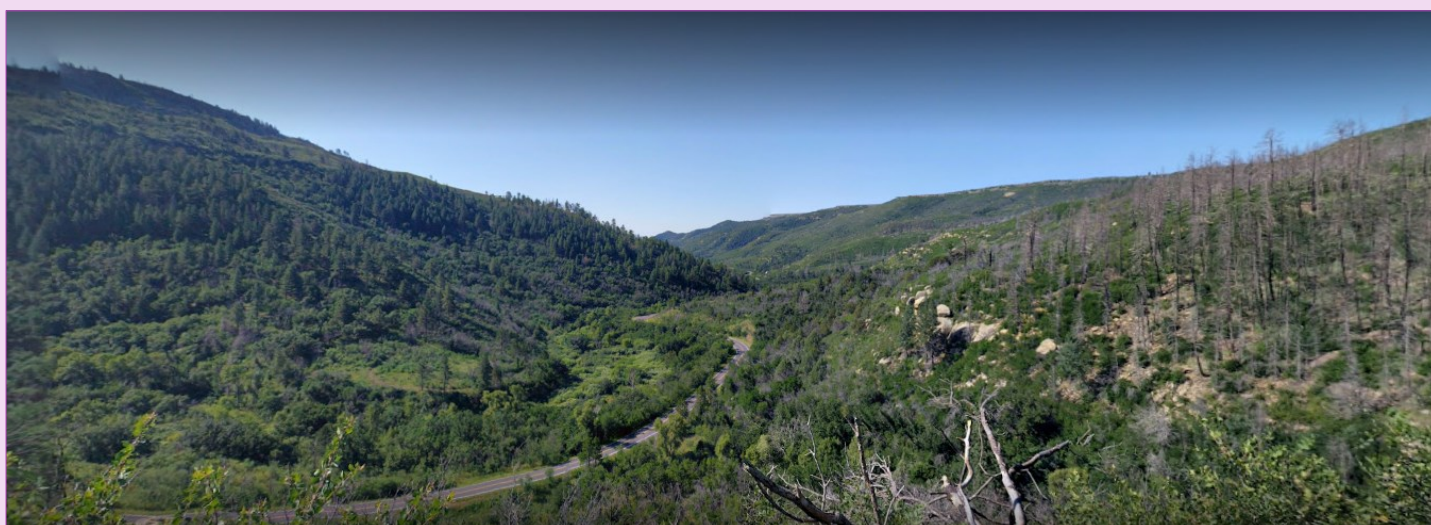
BY NICHOLE ROMERO
HEALTH PROMOTION SPECIALIST

Ramblin Round Raton (RRR) was founded in 2016 by Health Promotion Specialist, Nichole Romero and NM State Park Ranger Patricia Walsh. Since its inception, assessing the needs of the community and looking to the wealth of natural resources available to residents, RRR has been inspiring community residents and visitors to get out and move. Some projects RRR has implemented include monthly summer walks, creation and distribution of a walking/hiking guide and phone app, partnering with University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center, forming a walking club, and completing a walkability study to expand their efforts. Community members and stakeholders are brought together continuously through RRR meetings to assess their current efforts, improve community events, and share information with one another, with the goal of improving on and expanding the built environment within Colfax County.



RRR's success regarding physical activity and chronic disease prevention was instrumental in positioning Colfax County to be chosen by the New Mexico Department of Health Obesity, Nutrition, and Physical Activity Program to participate in the Healthy Kids Healthy Communities Program. RRR is currently partnering with Healthy Kids Healthy Communities Coordinator, Emma Green, to expand into schools, establish farmer's markets, create biking clubs, and to apply for various grants.

With the assistance of RRR and the Healthy Kids Healthy Communities award, Colfax County is well on its way to becoming an attractive walking hub for residents and visitors.



Sugarite Canyon

Source: <https://www.roverpass.com/c/sugarite-canyon-raton-nm/>

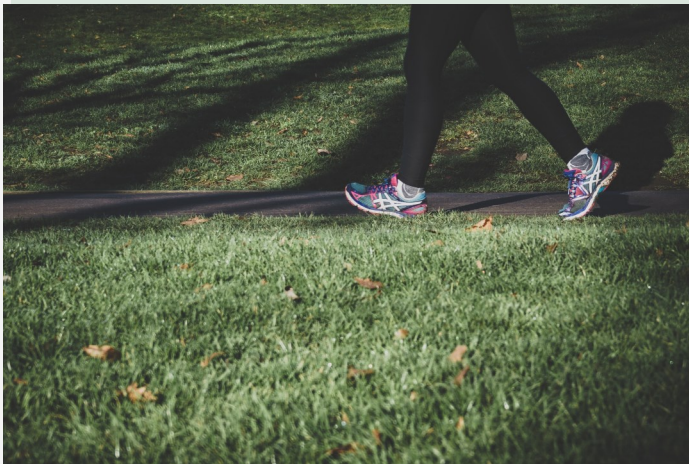
PROCESS EVALUATION WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS

BY NAOMI BRODKEY AND VALENTINA WHITE

HEALTH PROMOTION SPECIALISTS

November is National Diabetes Awareness Month. Health Promotion Specialists Naomi Brodkey and Valentina White collaborated with El Centro Family Health and other community partners in Las Vegas, Taos and Espanola, to organize walks around International Diabetes Day, on November 14, 2017. Regular planning meetings were held between the Health Promotion Specialists and El Centro in the preceding months and weeks to ensure successful implementation of the walks and activities.

Following the walks, the collaborative reconvened to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the organization process leading up to the events, and to evaluate the various activities. This collaboration to organize diabetes awareness walks was the first between El Centro and the Northeast Region Health Promotion Program. Understanding the process of this joint effort will allow future collaborative events to be even more successful and will build on the existing strengths that were identified.



Through process evaluation the team learned several important things. Outreach to potential partners should occur earlier in the planning process. Other partners may want to support or participate in the event, but more lead time is needed in order to bring everyone to the table. Partners who might offer incentives and prizes, also need advance notice of the event as well as inclusion in the planning. The team also identified the need to utilize appropriate educational materials for each target audience.

According to the American Diabetes Association, in 2015, 30.3 million American had diabetes. Of the 30.3 million adults with diabetes, 23.1 million were diagnosed and 7.2 million were undiagnosed. Also, in 2015, 84.1 million Americans age 18 and older had prediabetes. Exercise is one way to prevent and address diabetes.

With awareness and education events like these walks, NMDOH hopes to help New Mexicans learn about or learn how to manage their diabetes through physical activity and healthy eating.



LOOKING TO THE PAST

BY AMY SANDOVAL

The inspiration for this year's Spring Health Council Gathering came from Senate Memorial 44, which was passed during the 2018 NM Legislative Session. This particular memorial is requesting the NM Alliance of Health Councils to convene a New Mexico Health Council System Task Force to analyze the work of the county and tribal health councils in relation to the Maternal and Child Health Plan Act (MCH). The goal of the task force is to put forth a report inclusive of recommendations to update the MCH Act by assessing the current efforts of health councils across New Mexico.

The intention of hosting our Spring Regional Health Council Gathering was to focus not only on the future of health councils, but on current efforts and the historical component which places us where we are today. Much can be

learned from studying history because it allows us to understand our past, which in turn allows to understand our present. If we want to study more about our current individual and community health efforts, we must look to history for answers. People often say, "History repeats itself," but if we study the successes and failures of the past, we may, possibly, be able to learn from what did not work well and avoid repeating mistakes in the future.



Left: Rachel Wexler, Health Promotion Coordinator, facilitates a panel at the Spring Health Council Gathering.



Each county and tribal health council in the state of New Mexico has a unique story to tell. With these stories, we are enriched and able to bridge the past to a successful future. For over 25 years, New Mexico's county and tribal health councils have played a key role in the state's public health system. As we evaluate the history of health councils over the past 25 years, we must think of our communities' unique stories as integral pieces to the puzzle of a larger picture. This historical component can provide us with remedies in painting a brighter future.

Although this year's Spring Health Council Gathering touched on the larger history of the

MCH Councils, I would encourage health councils statewide to also entertain this topic at a future meeting. Knowing your own health council's history and sharing solutions can also support the charge of the NM Alliance of Health Councils in putting forth thoughtful recommendations as they prepare for the 2019 Legislative Session.

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Northeast Region Health Promotion Team

We • Connect • the • Dots

