

# **New web-based course to prevent excessive weight gain may improve health in young adults**

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The transition from adolescence to adulthood presents individuals with many challenges. Perhaps none are as important as those relating to health and quality of life. Young adults, aged 18 to 25, are at high risk for weight gain. Being mild to moderately overweight during this period substantially increases the likelihood of obesity at age 35 to 37. To prevent weight gain and promote healthy decision making, researchers from 14 institutions collaborated to develop a tailored, theory-based, web-delivered course to prevent excessive weight gain in young adults. The results are published in the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*.

The course, Project YEAH (Young Adults Eating and Active for Health), represents "an intervention that pilot-test college student participants found relevant and useful, gained participants' attention, instilled confidence in participants' ability to apply the information gained, and provided a sense of satisfaction," according to lead author Kendra K. Kattelman, PhD, RD, Director, Didactic Program in Dietetics, Health and Nutritional Sciences, South Dakota State University.

Using the PRECEDE-PROCEED method, based on the Community-Based Participatory Research model, Dr. Kattelman and her colleagues recruited college students from all associated universities to create a program specifically addressing issues regarding those in the transition

between adolescence and adulthood. Through several phases of development, students' motivations, barriers, and desires beyond health and weight were determined, as well as the environment surrounding the students. After determining the importance and changeability of all these factors, the information was synthesized to create Project YEAH.

The resulting Project YEAH course was specifically developed to include a website for participant interaction. The website allowed for more individualized attention to the participants, including goals and tips. Using a program like this, along with a Community-Based Participatory Research model, allows Project YEAH to be more flexible in terms of adoption across multiple locations, such as college campuses, and therefore more successful in theory.

The researchers believe Project YEAH to be the first course of its kind. However, because it implements the PRECEDE-PROCEDE method, they trust it can be successfully applied widely to provide [young adults](#) with successful strategies to achieve and maintain good health.

**More information:** "Development of Young Adults Eating and Active for Health (YEAH) Internet-Based Intervention via a Community-Based Participatory Research Model," Kendra K. Kattelman, PhD, RD; Adrienne A. White, PhD, RD; Geoffrey W. Greene, PhD, RD; Carol Byrd-Bredbenner, PhD, RD; Sharon L. Hoerr, RD, PhD, FACN; Tanya M. Horacek, PhD, RD; Tandalayo Kidd, PhD, RD; Sarah Colby, PhD, RD; Beatrice W. Phillips, EdD, RD; Mallory M. Koenings, PhD; Onikia N. Brown, PhD, RD; Melissa Olfert, DrPH, MS, RD; Karla P. Shelnutt, PhD, RD; Jesse Stabile Morrell, MS, DOI: [dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2013.11.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2013.11.006) , *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*

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