

Small Steps to Health and Wealth™: Colorado Rural Pilot Project

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Key Words

Health, nutrition, personal finance, rural outreach, social media, wealth

Target Audience

Adults aged 25 to 65+ living in rural areas of Colorado

Objectives/Purpose

To revise, update, and reorganize the original Small Steps to Health and Wealth™ (SSHW) materials, add social media enhancements, and pilot test program with rural residents of Colorado. Project is funded by a Rural Health and Safety Education Competitive Program of USDA/NIFA grant number 2011-46100-31139.

Content/Description

SSHW has been named as a signature Cooperative Extension and outreach program related to NIFA's Division Family and Consumer Sciences. This pilot project, funded through a USDA/NIFA Rural Health and Safety Education Grant, will lay the foundation for the next generation of SSHW program delivery and impact documentation nationally.

The Colorado SSHW program uses an updated logo reflecting the new Choose My Plate graphic and nutrition recommendations. It includes 13 of the 25 original SSHW behavior change strategies organized into one two-hour workshop, a series of three two-hour workshops, and a one-hour worksite workshop. The face-to-face workshops will be supplemented with enhanced online, interactive program features for receiving additional health/wealth information and encouraging positive behavior changes for access and learning anytime, anywhere. The online, interactive features will include a Web site (<http://bit.ly/SSHWCOLO>), Facebook page (<http://on.fb.me/SSHWCOFacebook>), Twitter (@SSHWColorado), Online Challenge(s), eXtension materials and features (Families, Food, Fitness and Financial Security for All), and YouTube videos.

Results

An evaluation of knowledge gains, behavior changes, and health/wealth improvements which result from program components and delivery methods will be conducted to direct future efforts. To evaluate the reach and utility of the social media components of the project, a triangulation (multiple evaluation methods) approach to measure impact will include the use of a unique Twitter hashtag (#COSSHW), bit.ly analytics to determine clicks on links embedded in the SSHW messages, and tracking pre- and post-project Twitter influence metrics. Upon completion of the pilot study, materials and online features will be made available for a national effort to offer similar SSHW programs via face-to-face workshops, online content only, or a combination of methods to serve the needs of diverse rural and urban populations.

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