

Rural Community Wrestles Obesity in a Unique Way

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Introduction

The Frio Translational Advisory Board (TAB) was established in 2008 through the Clinical Translation Science Award (CTSA) from UT Health San Antonio and the South Central Area Health Education Center (AHEC). The group is comprised of Frio County community members, stakeholders, and workers who meet monthly to discuss health improvement opportunities and challenges within Frio County. Since 2016, the TAB has partnered with the Latino Research Initiative at UT Austin, on a five-year community-based participatory research project titled the *Healthy Frio*.

The Healthy Frio study is a three-pronged research project with many collaborators: Frio TAB, YMCA of Greater San Antonio, UT Health San Antonio and UTSA. Healthy Frio compares the effectiveness of two healthy lifestyle program approaches to a control group (usual care) on weight and weight-related behaviors (i.e. physical activity and diet).



Significance

The Frio TAB is an integral part of the research team and contributes to all aspects of the study, including recruitment. While the initial plan was to recruit participants from primary care clinics, the program experienced challenges meeting recruitment goals using the limited strategy.

Methods

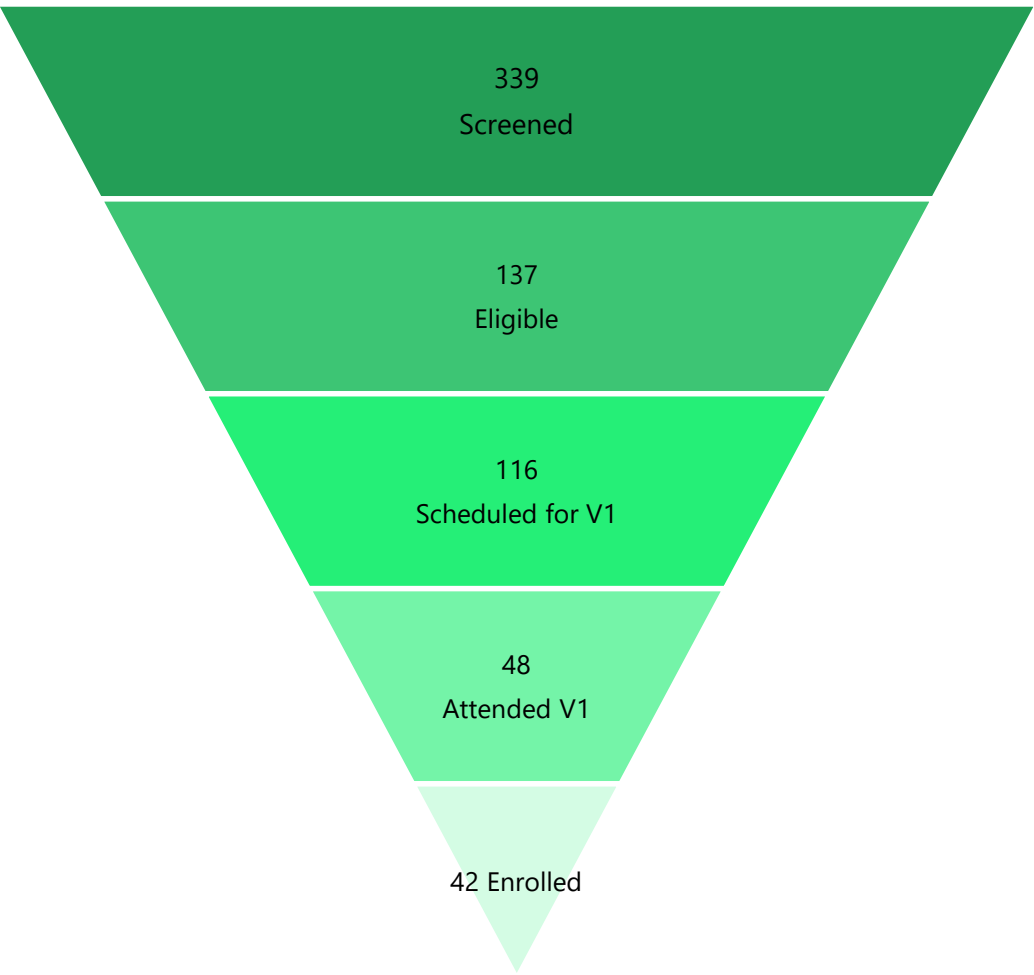
Healthy Frio is a 5-year study (2016 - 2021) with a goal of recruiting 270 parent-child pairs and randomize them to one of three groups: in-person, remote technology, or usual care.

Inclusion Criteria

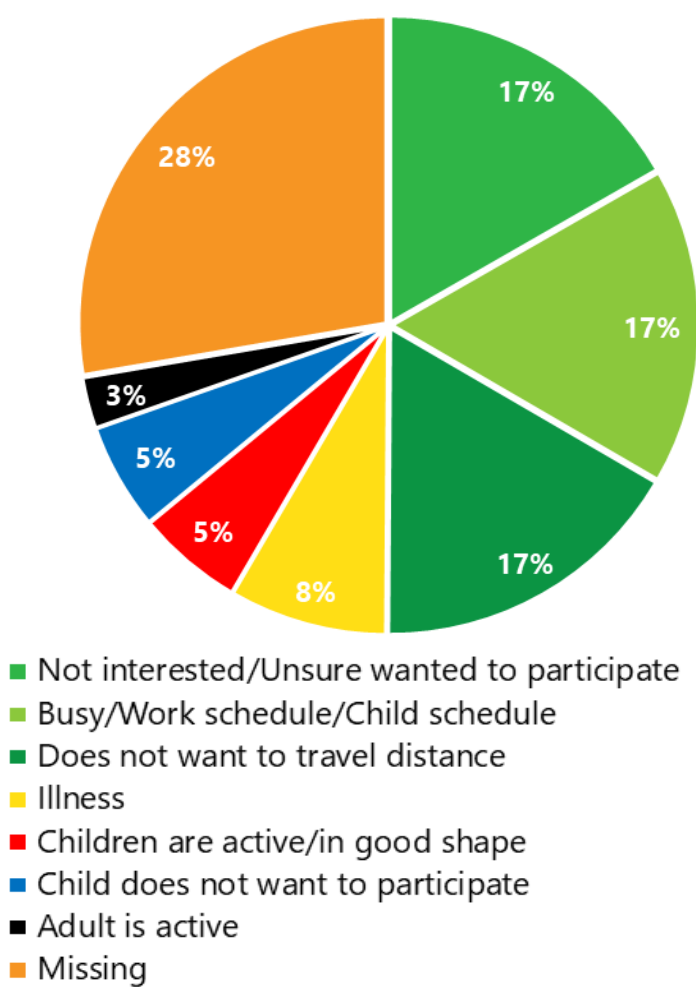
Eligible families include:

- ☐ Adult [Hispanic, overweight or obese (BMI between 25.0 - 60.0)]
- ☐ Child (8-17 years old)
- ☐ English-speaking
- ☐ Resident of Frio, Atascosa, Medina, Wilson, or La Salle County

However, from November 2017-March 2019 the study was only enrolling 12% of the individuals screened for eligibility.



Reasons for Declining Participation (n=36)



After facing several recruitment challenges, Healthy Frio staff implemented new recruitment strategies under the guidance of the Frio TAB:

1. Recruit community-wide
2. Provide incentives for completing screenings
3. Increase monetary incentives for study participation

Findings

From April 2019-September 2019 Healthy Frio staff approached 532 community members at the clinic and community events, screened 460 people, and 125 people were eligible.

On average, Healthy Frio staff attended 7 community-based events every month, post-modification. Screening increased exponentially, from 21 people per month to 65 individuals per month, an increase of over 300%.



Conclusions & Next Steps

With support from the Frio TAB, recruitment for the Healthy Frio study increased by more than three-fold. For future implementation research, we will evaluate the impact of the latest suggestions by the Frio TAB to increase Healthy Frio's web presence, which led to the development of a website that includes testimonials from Healthy Frio participants.

Frio TAB membership will discuss and develop a plan to address the cause and effect of the recruitment challenges that were experienced with the Healthy Frio study. Based on the results of the planning, Frio TAB will initiate a Collective Impact approach and seek further funding to sustain what was learned in Healthy Frio.

The 5 Conditions of Collective Impact

1. **Common Agenda**
 - Common understanding of the problem
 - Shared vision for change
2. **Shared Measurement**
 - Collecting data and measuring results
 - Focus on performance management
 - Shared accountability
3. **Mutually Reinforcing Activities**
 - Differentiated approaches
 - Coordination through joint plan of action
4. **Continuous Communication**
 - Consistent and open communication
 - Focus on building trust
5. **Backbone Support**
 - Separate organization(s) with staff
 - Resources and skills to convene and coordinate participating organizations

References

Flood, J., Minkler, M., Hennessey Lavery, S., Estrada, J., & Falbe, J. (2015). The collective impact model and its potential for health promotion: Overview and case study of a healthy retail initiative in San Francisco. *Health Education & Behavior*, 42(5), 654-668.