

Diabetes: A Family Matter

Outdoor Recreation

Brief Description:

Fishing and hunting are long valued activities that many in the Appalachian region enjoy. Young boys, teens, and grown men well into their later years often participate in these often seasonal sports. Of course, they are also of interest to some girls and women as well. While these sports were once a primary way food for the family was secured, today they are mostly viewed as leisure behaviors. However, promoting these behaviors can be a fun way to engage local people in spending more time enjoying the outdoors. Thinking about them as family activities is also a way to consider increasing physical activity, healthy eating, and address environmental concerns. However, fishing and hunting are only two of the many possible ways one might think about outdoor activities.

Objectives:

The purpose of this activity is to raise awareness that fun and health should go hand-in-hand.

Participants:

Most everyone can participate! It is an activity that individuals, families, and members of local groups might consider. This activity encourages inter-generational activities. Grandparents, parents, and children can all join together in the fun.

Costs:

Costs would likely be marginal unless you choose to buy some new expensive equipment.

Activity Duration:

This is an activity that could occur in a small block of time or be stretched out for weeks or even months depending on how you hope to approach the ideas.

Materials Needed:

These will vary depending upon the approach your group takes.

Instructions:

Many ways can be suggested to think about hunting and fishing. These are sports are often enjoyed by solitary individuals, with family members, and shared with friends. While at one time in history all boys would have likely learned these skills, this is less true today. Thus, thinking about ways to teach others about these sports can become part of this activity. The male volunteer *SUGAR Helpers* may find some of these ideas especially appealing.

A main purpose of the *Diabetes: A Family Matter* program is to get local people involved in healthy lifestyles and prevent diabetes and other chronic illnesses. Thus, finding novel ways to consider healthy eating and active lifestyles is a primary challenge. Being active through sports is a fun way to encourage others to think about their health.

Here are a few ideas for thinking about sports in your community:

- Encourage young and old, male and female to get outdoors!

- Work with local scouts and 4H groups to encourage activities linked with outdoor sports.
- Organize local people to take a more active role in outdoor activities.
- Enlist a local physical education teacher or some university students to share ideas about ways to engage local people in fun outdoor activities.
- Talk with those who at local, state, and national parks in your area to see how you can better promote available programs to local people. Often local people do not realize all of the good things that might be available.
- Begin sportsmen clubs with young boys and girls and their fathers.
- Start a gun safety education group.
- Involve community people in local environmental concerns and consider ways to address residents' health and wellness needs.
- Ask your local librarian to display a series of books on outdoor sports, physical activity, environment, and healthy lifestyles.

Only a few details are suggested in regard to this activity. The real ideas should come from the brainstorming efforts of local people that want to see some changes happen in their neighborhoods, villages, towns, and cities. Any changes to be made will be unique to each community. The things to do and approaches to take should come from local people. Volunteer *SUGAR Helpers* may want to have a brainstorming session or more as they gather ideas about what kinds of things can be done to increase the health of the people where they live. An important key in taking action

is the inclusion of those opinion leaders and local experts that can make things happen. Good ideas need to be energized through the collaborative work of people working together for positive changes.

Final Word:

If you complete this activity, be sure to return to the **Communicate** section of the *Diabetes: A Family Matter* website <www.diabetesfamily.net> and describe how you have used this activity in your community. Share the outcomes of the activity. What worked well? What did not work? By doing this, others across the Appalachian region can learn from one another about new and better ways to use these activities. It is likely that you will have some new ideas of your own to contribute.