

Evaluation of an inter-agency collaboration to promote park visitation and physical activity among youth in Greenville County, SC

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Study Background

With over 30% of Americans classified as overweight or obese and 50% not meeting the minimum guidelines for physical activity participation, one of LiveWell Greenville's central goals is to help Greenville County residents find fun ways to become more active by utilizing existing community amenities. Parks are increasingly recognized as a key resource for increasing population-level physical activity. With a wealth of parks in Greenville County that have playgrounds, ball fields, walking trails, and numerous other attractive features, connecting people to these fun, cost-effective, family-friendly amenities is a way not only to help residents meet fitness goals, but build a sense of community as well.

LiveWell Greenville, in order to foster park usage, park discovery, and physical activity within the parks, launched the Park Hop Scavenger Hunt in partnership with the Cities of Greenville, Fountain Inn, Greer, Mauldin, Simpsonville, and Greenville County Parks Recreation, and Tourism. During this summer-long scavenger hunt, children and their families are incentivized to visit local parks and identify clues with the help of their Park Hop Passport and Park Hop mobile scavenger hunt app. Completed passports are submitted for a chance to win physical activity-themed prizes at the yearly closing event, including bikes, camping gear, Greenville Zoo passes, Greenville County Waterpark passes, and much more.

Purpose

The study will assess the effectiveness of the Park Hop campaign in increasing park usage, park discovery, and physical activity within parks, as well as overall satisfaction and enjoyment of the Park Hop program.

Setting

The Park Hop program will include 19 parks and recreation venues across Greenville County during summer 2014. Observations of park use and physical activity will occur in 2 Park Hop parks and 2 matched control parks not included in the program.

Study Participants

Study participants will include children and families completing the Park Hop Scavenger Hunt using either the Park Hop paper passport or the Park Hop mobile scavenger hunt app.



Study Timeline

Study Activities (2014)	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Dec
Park Hop Development											
Park Hop Scavenger Hunt											
Pre-Survey Development											
Pre-Survey Completion											
SOPARC Observations											
Post-Survey Development											
Post-Survey Completion											
Data Analysis and Dissemination											

1. **Park Hop development:** The park hop passport will be developed, including selection of parks, development of clues, and development of print media, website, and mobile app technology.
2. **Park Hop scavenger hunt:** Participants will visit up to 19 parks and recreation venues, identify clues with the Park Hop passport or Park Hop mobile scavenger hunt app, and submit clues for a chance to win prizes.
3. **Pre-survey development:** The study team will develop a pre-program survey to establish baseline measures of perceptions of park quality and safety, and park usage and enjoyment.
4. **Park Hop pre-survey completion:** The pre-program survey will be sent throughout the entire course of the program to participants via email within 3-4 days of registration. Participants will be incentivized to complete the survey with random \$25 visa gift card drawings.
5. **Park observations:** Systematic observations of park usage and physical activity within 2 Park Hop parks and 2 matched control parks will take place over three days (one weekday and two weekend days), with four observations each day (early morning, mid-morning, afternoon, early evening).
6. **Post-survey development:** The study team will develop a follow-up survey to assess measures such as program satisfaction and enjoyment, change in perception of parks safety and quality, change in parks usage, parks discovery, change in time spent in physical activity while in the park, and participant demographics.
7. **Post-survey completion:** The post-program survey will be sent to all participants via email upon completion of the program. Participants will be incentivized to complete the survey with random drawings for \$25 visa gift cards.
8. **Data analysis and dissemination of findings:** Findings will analyzed and compiled and then presented to all park partners. Results will also be presented at the South Carolina Recreation and Park Association Annual Conference.

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