



Community partnerships for health promotion and obesity prevention initiatives

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Innovations in design, implementation and evaluation

Innovation:

new idea, product

(Oxford Dictionary 2007)





What is the problem?

- Children getting fatter faster
 - 15% in 1985
 - 23% in 1997
 - 30% in 2004
- Major social and physical environmental determinants remain unchanged
- Inequality strong ie. higher % in lower SES
- Co-morbidities significant and costly
- Innovations and long term solutions required – social movements





Physical and social environmental determinants

physical activity

- Spending time outside

- Fundamental motor skills competence and choice of physical activities of interest

food patterns

- Energy dense foods,

- Energy dense drinks

- Food for behavioural management

crime and justice

- Perceptions of crime

- Public litigation, playgrounds

- Involvement of kids in canteens

- Children's involvement in food preparation and fruit and veg exposure



Physical and social environmental determinants

technology

- Computer and screen use

- Energy dense snacking

- Food advertising in children's television hours

parental work:

- Family work patterns

- Parents both working/studying

family social changes

- Family separations

- Burden of responsibility

- Sole mothers, living longer, increased care obligations

cultural issues:

- Acculturation to host country trends, consumption of fast foods

- Perceptions of healthy children



Historical context for interventions

- Top down prescribed programs
- Short term
- Injections of funding
- Focus on individual's behaviours – parents
- Perceived as health issue
- Regulations and legislation underscrutinised



Evidence of what works

(Flynn M., 2005, Summerbell et al 2005)

- Interventions should use a **whole school/whole environment approach**
- Interventions do **NOT** need to be expensive or intense.
- Interventions should be underpinned by a **theoretical model**.
- Interventions should consider the **school environment**, and be developed in partnership with **families, school staff, and the wider community**.



Considerations for a fair chance for all

(Whitehead, 2005)

Making a difference to equity and inequalities

1. Target disadvantaged populations
2. Reduce the health gap between rich and poor
3. Target social determinants

Innovations in design



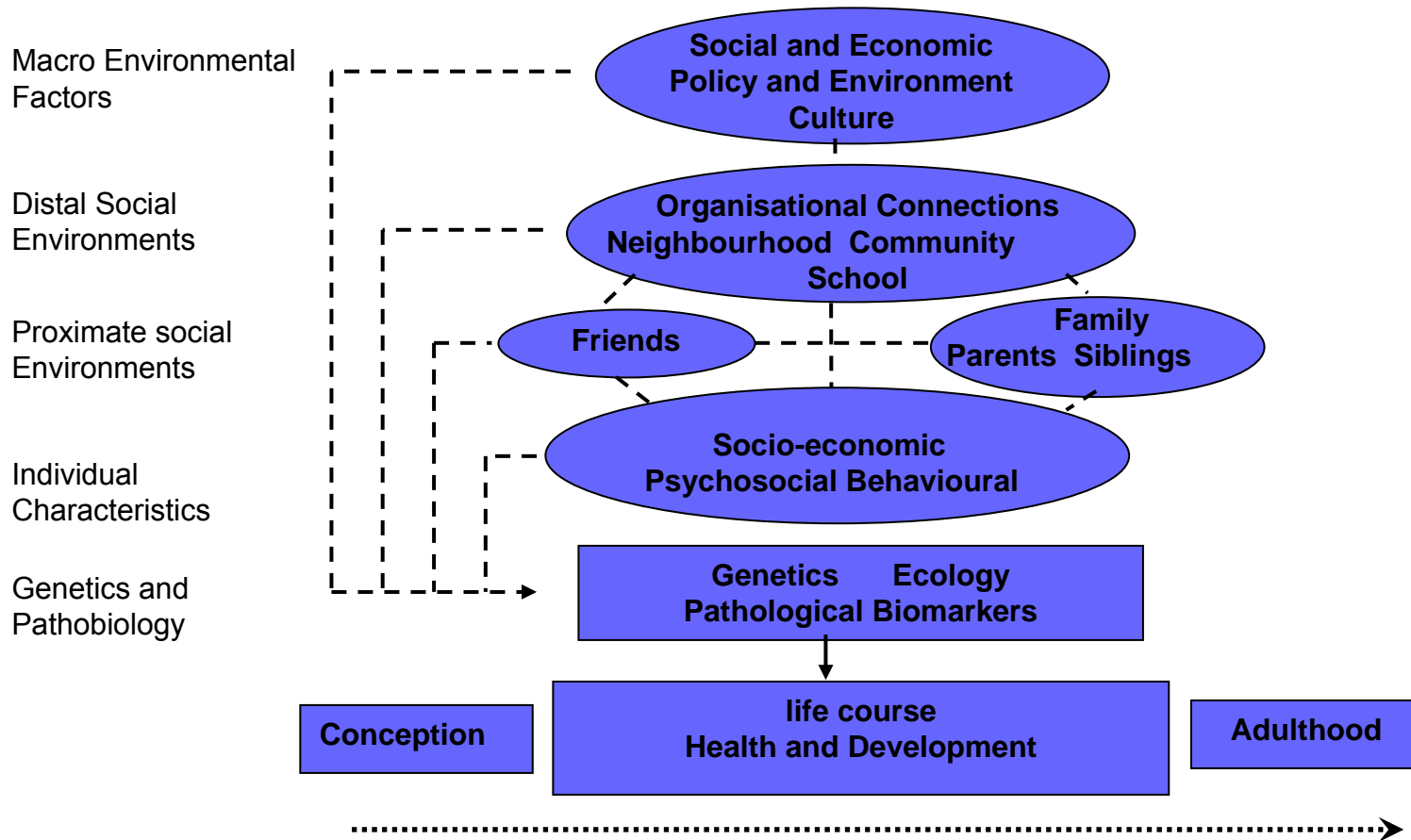
- Theoretical frameworks appropriate to context and determinants
- Addressing determinants and related evidence from other sectors eg.
 - educational
 - transport
 - food sector
 - natural and built environments
 - technology
- **Core components for HP&OB programs**
 - Food choices, food access, food preparation time, food industry awareness
 - Physical activity: time, options, confidence and ideas
 - Wellbeing, bullying, diversity



Innovations in design

- Core components: new ideas, synergistic ideas
 - Green exercise and activity
 - Food and social engagement
 - Solutions and participation
- Increasing examples of win-win solutions eg.
 - Indoor playspaces
 - Healthier tuckshops
 - Co-location of commercial options with improved playspaces
- Focus on benefits for families and children can pay off commercially and politically eg. Carparking solutions, lighting, community safety

Ecological model of health and development across the life course



Lynch, J. 2000. Australasian Epidemiologist; 7: 7-15



- Work to people's strengths, but don't shy from problems or recalcitrants!
- Develop programs to meet needs of context eg. teaching, local government, but provide pathways for new solutions
- Need beyond 12-18 months for cultural and meaningful changes in determinants



Innovations in implementation

- Strong, sustained leadership and advocacy
- Considerations of multi-sectoral partnerships and opportunities
- Equity of language and processes
- New ideas harnessed through entrepreneurial sustained partnerships eg. connections with established infrastructure
- Focus in innovation and sustainability



Strong evaluation designs

- **Know your evidence:** what works and what influences behaviour and environments
- **Logic model:** how is it likely to work - map it out a priori (use theoretical frameworks as appropriate)
- **Comparison groups:** If benefit and harm uncertain, comparison groups ethical
- **Mixed methods:** Combine qualitative and quantitative
- **Monitor intervention:** Monitor intervention progress and attend to issues (is the intervention being implemented as intended)
- **Context:** Describe and consider
- **Outcome data:** core to the sectors you are working with eg. Baseline and outcome height, weight, waist + educational outcomes/transport/planning/legislation etc



Innovations in evaluation

- Use strong evaluation design always

PLUS

- **Seek new perspectives:** digital methods (video, camera)
- **Audit environmental changes:** is any progress being made? geographic information systems, integration of digital imagery
- **Capture new concepts:** eg through qualitative methods.
- **Innovate with outcomes:** with methodologists on new measures



Innovating in school context

School participating in *fun n healthy in Moreland! 5 year health promotion and obesity prevention program, partnership with Moreland Community Health Services, 23 schools and Deakin University*

Background context

Late arrivals generally plus poor attendance on days of inter-school sporting activities.

- Children did not enjoy the competitive sport and were not successful against the larger schools
- Parents were prepared to let children stay at home on those days because they did not place importance on sporting activities



Innovation developments

- School withdrew from inter-school sport
- Introduced morning fun and fitness activities.
- Children rotate randomly between activities and teachers so each day is a surprise.
- On any given day a grade will have a different teacher, and do a different activity compared to the last time.
- Kids don't know which teacher or activity they will be doing, eliminating the "I don't want to go to school today because we're doing....."or "we haveteacher."
- School has a bank of indoor and outdoor activities that they work through rather than doing the same thing.





Progress so far

- ↑ School attendance and on-time arrivals.
- ↑ Activity on the playground at lunchtime, particularly for girls, has also been observed by staff.
- ↑ New school enrolments
- ↑ Teacher reported concentration by students

Health and educational outcomes to be measured 2 years in and compared to baseline.

Shared Programs for Health

- Partnership between
 - Kildonan Child & Family Services
 - *fun 'n healthy in Moreland!*
 - Newlands Community Support Centre
 - Northern Migrant Resource Centre
 - Moreland Community Health Service
- Introduce people to a place (cooking garden) where they can grow healthy traditional foods in a friendly supportive environment
- Pathway for new arrivals and existing residents to move from service support to community involvement
- Multigenerational approach





Conclusions

- Prioritise synergistic relationships between physical and mental health
- **Innovations in design:**
 - Focus on the lifecourse and social context
 - Walk with your feet – eg. McDonalds in Lygon st
 - Changes for children need to be underpinned by fun
 - Changes for adults need to be underpinned by assistance with available income, current employment and social burdens and external pressures eg. influence by industry
 - Behaviours without environmental change are not sustainable



Conclusions

Innovations in Implementation:

- Ensure interventions make an equitable impact eg. interventions based on written word

Innovations in evaluation

- Innovations are new ideas.
- Intuition is not good enough.
- Essential that strong evaluations examine impact and effectiveness.

