

A Report for the Bronx Community

**Two Projects to Promote Healthy
Lifestyles and Eliminate Obesity:**

**The Bronx Health Behaviors Survey Project
The Bronx Health-Smart Church Program**

Conducted by:

**University of Florida Researchers
Fordham University Researchers**

**Principal Investigator: Dr. Carolyn M. Tucker, University of Florida
(cmtucker@ufl.edu)**

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PepsiCo

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The Bronx Health Behaviors Survey Project

Who answered the survey questions?

- A total of 674 adults between 18 and 83 years old (67% of whom earned less than \$40,000 per year) completed the survey.
- Of the 674 adults, 314 were Hispanic/Latino, 207 were non-Hispanic Black, and 153 were non-Hispanic White.

Who conducted the survey?

- Researchers from the University of Florida and Fordham University conducted the survey.

What did the researchers learn from these adults in the Bronx?

- Many of these adults are more likely to drink water and other healthy drinks (such as drinks with little or no sugar) if a doctor tells them to do so.
- Many of these adults find it difficult to drink water and other healthy drinks because vending machines often do not have healthy drinks.
- For many of these adults, knowing why it is healthy to eat certain foods and snacks motivates them to eat healthy foods and snacks.
- The adults between ages 18 and 24 were least likely to eat healthy foods and snacks.
- The adults with the lowest incomes (less than \$10,000 per year) reported more barriers to healthy eating and less motivation for eating healthy than adults with higher incomes.
- More of the non-Hispanic White adults reported eating healthy foods and drinking healthy drinks than the Hispanic/Latino adults.
- The non-Hispanic Black adults and Hispanic/Latino adults reported more barriers to eating healthy than the non-Hispanic White adults.

What did the researchers conclude?

- Programs to increase healthy eating and drinking among adults are especially needed in Hispanic/Latino and non-Hispanic Black neighborhoods.
- Programs to increase healthy eating and drinking must especially target young adults and adults with very low-incomes.
- Doctors must be trained in how to help their adult patients overcome barriers to healthy eating and drinking.

What do the researchers recommend?

- The researchers recommend training church leaders, doctors, YMCA leaders, and other community leaders throughout the Bronx to use the tools of the Health-Smart Behavior Program to promote healthy eating and drinking among the people they serve.

Principal Investigator: Dr. Carolyn M. Tucker, University of Florida

Research Coordinator: Dr. Paul Duongtran, Fordham University

The Bronx Health Behaviors Survey Project was funded by PepsiCo.

The Bronx Health-Smart Church Program

Who participated in this program?

- The Greater Universal Baptist Church, St. Simon Stock Catholic Church, Burke Avenue Baptist Church, and Bronx Seventh-Day Adventist Church participated in the program.
- The pastor and five church leaders from each of the above-listed churches were trained as Health Empowerment Coaches to implement the Health-Smart Behavior Program.
- A total of 219 non-Hispanic Blacks and Hispanics/Latinos from the above-listed churches and surrounding communities participated in the Health-Smart Behavior Program.

What did participation in this program involve?

- The pastors and church leaders at the above-listed churches were trained to implement the Health-Smart Behavior Program with their church members and community members.

What is the Health-Smart Behavior Program?

- It is a program for preventing and overcoming obesity and related health problems, including high blood pressure, diabetes, and heart disease.
- It is a program that promotes healthy eating, healthy drinking, and physical activity behaviors (“health-smart” behaviors).

How successful was the Bronx Health-Smart Church Program?

- For the non-Hispanic Blacks and Hispanics/Latinos who have completed the program, the program was very successful. (More success results will be ready in January 2012.)
- The program helped many non-Hispanic Blacks significantly lower their blood pressure.
- The program helped many non-Hispanic Blacks and Hispanics/Latinos lower their weight.
- The program helped many non-Hispanic Blacks and Hispanics/Latinos significantly increase their levels of healthy eating and physical activity.
- The program helped many non-Hispanic Blacks and Hispanics/Latinos take significantly more responsibility for their own health.

What did the researchers conclude?

- The Bronx Health-Smart Behavior Program is an ideal program for promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing obesity and related health problems in diverse communities.
- The Bronx Health-Smart Behavior Program ideally should be implemented in all Bronx churches.

Principal Investigator: Dr. Carolyn M. Tucker, University of Florida

Research Coordinator: Dr. Yvette Sealy, Fordham University

The Bronx Health-Smart Church Program was funded by PepsiCo.



Carolyn M. Tucker, PhD.

Dr. Tucker is a Professor of Psychology, Professor of Community Health and Family Medicine, Affiliate Professor of Pediatrics, Research Foundation Professor, and the only minority Distinguished Alumni Professor at the University of Florida (UF). She is the Director of the UF Health Disparities Research and Intervention Program, a member of the National Expert Panel for the YMCA of the USA's Diversity Health and Wellness Collaborative, and a Fellow in the American Psychological Association. She is also the founder of the Health-Smart Behavior Program to modify and prevent obesity and related diseases, which is being used in community centers, YMCAs, churches, and health care sites nationally.

Her research focuses on culturally sensitive health promotion and health care, and on the integration of health promotion into medicine. She uses a community-based/participatory health empowerment research approach. Her current research studies involve (a) defining, assessing, and testing interventions to promote health and prevent disease in at-risk communities and (b) empirically examining the links between culturally sensitive health care and health outcomes among racial/ethnic minorities and the medically underserved. Her widely used, published Health Self-Empowerment Theory and Patient-Centered Culturally Sensitive Health Care Model inform her research. She has over 85 published refereed articles and has received over \$10 million in research grants, including grants from NSF and R03 and R01 grants (Tucker, PI) from AHRQ and NIDDK.

Presently, Dr. Tucker is a Principal Investigator and Director for the University of Florida – Florida A&M University Community Health Workers Research and Training Institute. She is also a Co-Investigator on an NIDCR center grant that funds the Southeast Center for Research to Reduce Disparities in Oral Health. Her published *Motivators of and Barriers to Health-Smart Behaviors Inventory* and evidence-based Health-Smart Behavior Program, and Health-Smart Church Program are landmark health promotion tools being used nationally.

Dr. Tucker is most proud of receiving the 2010 UF Outstanding Dissertation Research Mentoring Award. Under her mentorship, 43 doctoral students have received their PhD degrees (47% of whom are racial/ethnic minorities), and 40 graduate students have received their Master's degrees (53% of whom are racial/ethnic minorities).

Dr. Tucker's honors include being named the Richard and Thelma O. C. Barney Endowed Term Professor of Health Disparities by the UF College of Medicine (2008-Present), and receiving the 2009 Outstanding Service Award from the U.S. Health and Human Services Advisory Committee on Minority Health.