

## RESEARCH PROTOCOL OUTLINE

**Title of Project:** Physical activity among young adults in the work force

**Co-Principal Investigators:**

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**Abstract**

Oklahoma continues to rank near the bottom for many health indicators, including obesity. Rates of obesity increase the most between the 18 to 25 year old age group (22%) and the 26 to 44 year old age group (36%). Reasons for this increase are unclear. It is during this time that many young adults transition from high levels of physical activity in high school and/or college to relatively sedentary lifestyles. However, this is also an important time for establishing healthy exercise routines that can last a lifetime. In this study we want to explore how physical activity changes from childhood to young adulthood and examine facilitators and barriers to physical activity among young adults in the work force.

The purpose of the project is to explore changes in physical activity from childhood to young adulthood among young adults in the workforce. We will identify facilitators and barriers to getting the recommended amount of physical activity and evaluate key life events that may impact physical activity levels in young adults.

Ten semi-structured interviews will be held with young adults working on the OUHSC campus to gather factors related to physical activity. We would like to identify ways to facilitate physical activity in young adults in the work force and identify key events that may impact their physical activity level. Our central hypothesis is that young adults who establish a healthy exercise routine will be more likely to continue to be active throughout their lives.

Ten in-depth interviews will be held in August, 2017. Questions will be asked regarding physical activity and any changes in activity levels from childhood to young adulthood. Information will be gathered to determine if key life events may affect physical activity levels. Approximately 10 participants will be involved in the study. Once data collection is complete, qualitative data analysis methods will be used to interpret findings.

**Specific Aims**

The purpose of the project is to explore changes in physical activity from childhood to young adulthood among young adults in the workforce. We will identify facilitators and barriers to getting the recommended amount of physical activity and evaluate key life events that may impact physical activity levels in young adults.

**B. Background and Significance**

Oklahoma continues to rank near the bottom for many health indicators, including obesity. Rates of obesity increase the most between the 18 to 25 year old age group (22%) and the 26 to 44 year

old age group (36%). Reasons for this increase are unclear. It is during this time that many young adults transition from high levels of physical activity in high school and/or college to relatively sedentary lifestyles. However, this is also an important time for establishing healthy exercise routines that can last a lifetime. In this study we want to explore how physical activity changes from childhood to young adulthood and examine facilitators and barriers to physical activity among young adults in the work force.

### **C. Preliminary Studies/Progress Report**

In a previous study we found that young adults aged 23-30 were twice as likely to report a sedentary activity level as those aged 18-22. Oklahoma ranks in the bottom in obesity and pre-diabetes in the young adult population. Previous research has shown that physical activity and nutrition habits formed in young adulthood tend to carry forward and stay with the person throughout their lifetime. Therefore, it is important to understand factors that affect physical activity decline in this group so that targeted interventions may be applied.

### **D. Research Design and Methods**

Six interviews will be held in August, 2017. Questions will be asked regarding physical activity levels, changes in physical activity from youth to adulthood, and barriers and facilitators to getting enough physical activity. Participants will also fill out a demographics questionnaire to gather age, race, and family dynamics.

The target population for this study is young adults, aged 23-30 in the workplace. We will use purposive sampling to recruit 6 adults aged 23 to 30 who are currently employed. Sample size was based on previous studies. We will aim to recruit an equal number of males and females using community-based recruitment through the following strategies: 1) study advertisements posted at job sites; 2) online social media postings on sites such as Craig's List and Facebook; and 3) radio and newspaper advertisements. Eligible participants who consent and participate in the full interview and questionnaire will receive a \$30 Walmart gift card as compensation for their time.

Trained research staff from the OUHSC College of Public health will conduct the interviews. Information shared in the interviews will not be linked with the names of the participants in any communications or reports outside of OUHSC staff. Although the topic for the interviews is not particularly sensitive, participants will still be assured that all information will be kept confidential and data stored on a password protected server.

Interview session audio will be recorded for the sole purpose of supplementing written notes taken during the sessions. Recordings will be deleted at the conclusion of the study.

### **E. Statistical Methods**

After completion of the interviews, OUHSC staff will use qualitative data analysis methods to summarize the discussions and sort results into categories in order to look for patterns and trends. Data analysis software will be used to index and cross-reference responses.

### **F. Gender/Minority/Pediatric Inclusion for Research**

Men and women will be included as participants. Only English-speaking adults will be included. There are no restrictions by race/ethnicity. Children will not be included in the study as the aims are to examine physical activity among working adults.

## **G. Human Participants**

1. All interview participants will be healthy volunteers over the age of 18 years. The only exclusion criteria will be inability to speak or understand English.
2. Research material will be interview transcripts and notes.
3. Recruitment and consent will occur via telephone and in person. Potential participants will be contacted via telephone by the study coordinator, who will provide information about the study. If the participant is willing, the study coordinator will establish a time and location for the interview that is convenient for the participants. Verbal consent will be obtained by the study coordinator at the beginning of the interview.
4. The potential risks for this study are very low. The first risk of this study is subject boredom or inconvenience with study participation. To minimize these factors, the time, date and location of the interview will be scheduled to be as convenient for participants as possible. Although very unlikely, some questions may make participants uncomfortable; participants are not required to answer questions they do not wish to. These are low risk discussions taking place in a non-threatening setting. The second risk is the potential for loss of privacy during the research process. Participants will identify themselves in the interview only by ID number. Participants will be identified by an ID number on interview transcripts. All documents including contact information that contain participant codes and/or names will be stored in a separate locked file cabinet. All electronic data files will be password protected for access by project staff only.
5. The potential risks and discomforts for our study participants are low. Every effort is taken to ensure that subjects are protected. We have made efforts to make the focus group as short as possible. We frame questions about physical activity in nonjudgmental language. Subjects may opt not to answer any of the questions during the interview. Respondents are told that their responses will be kept private. No PHI will be collected during the interviews.
6. There is no direct benefit to interview participants. The results of this research can be used to improve systems approaches within the healthcare setting to address tobacco dependence treatment.
7. The risk/benefit ratio is highly favorable. The risks and discomforts of the study are small (primarily boredom and inconvenience). The study benefits in terms of improved strategies for physical activity interventions among young adults outweigh any risk.

## **H. Data and Safety Monitoring Plan**

All databases will be stored in a centralized location on an OUHSC Data Hosting Center server, with access limited to specific users as per OUHSC guidelines regarding the electronic storage of protected health information. Participants will not be identified in any public reports or documents.