

UrbanActionLab

Building a Healthier Codman Square

Spring 2023

In the early 1900s, Codman Square was a multi-religious neighborhood with a growing business district and bustling streets. Mixed-used buildings lined the streets with lively storefronts on the ground

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Research

Observational /Experimental Studies on Healthy Food Consumption

We have analyzed peer-reviewed studies that explore the efficacy of different health-based initiatives to craft effective policies that will improve health outcomes in the Codman Square community. Information from these studies and input from the BOLD Teens will guide our courses of action to promote healthy food consumption. This report focuses on three secondary sources and their corresponding studies.

The first source is from Mayne et al. and serves as a review of 37 experiments on diet and physical activity carried out between 2005 and 2013. Eighteen of these experiments focus on nutrition and diet, eight of which evaluate the effectiveness of nutrition labels in reducing high-calorie food consumption. Six of these eight studies found nutrition labeling to have no substantial impact on food purchasing. The ten remaining studies concluded that regulatory measures such as trans fat bans and decreased availability of sugary drinks effectively reduce caloric intake at restaurants and within schools. The studies regarding increased physical activity indicated that improving local infrastructure is the most effective intervention strategy. For example, schools with recently renovated playgrounds had higher rates of physical exertion among students than schools with dated recreation spaces. Furthermore, at the community level, constructing safe and functional bike lanes increased physical activity among residents.

The second study, at two Coles Supermarkets in Melbourne, collected quantitative data from shoppers to determine the efficacy of skill-building and price-reduction interventions. The study used four randomly assigned test groups, including a control group. They found that the skill-building intervention, which included education on the advantages of healthy food and goal-setting for increased consumption of fruits and vegetables, did not affect shoppers' buying

E ectiveness of Fast Food Bans

The Urban Action team reviewed a study done in the city of Los Angeles to evaluate if fast food

Wu, Michelle. Boston, Massachusetts. CBC 4-9 "Requiring City Departments and Vendors to Adopt Good Food Purchasing Standards" Filed January 7, 2019.