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Title: Engaging College Students in Health Education Research:

The “Even One” Program

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Abstract

Senior nursing students at our small, rural, Catholic college engage in health education and research in the “Even One” Program initiated in 2002. The “Even One” Program was designed to identify any child at risk of lead poisoning in the small town of Standish, Maine where the college is located. It is so named because, unlike health education initiatives designed to impact the largest number of people possible, this program is designed to find the few children who may be lead poisoned and untreated. It is based on the philosophy that one child with lead poisoning is one too many.

Senior nursing students used a telephone questionnaire research tool developed by faculty to gather data from a significant portion of households in Standish served by listed telephone service. The tool identified households with a child under age six years at risk of lead poisoning based upon risk factors developed by the CDC and the Maine Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. Once at risk children were identified the senior nursing students referred the family to the faculty person supervising the research. Senior nursing students also offered health education to parents or guardians regarding potential lead poisoning of children as well as offering assistance in accessing adequate health care.

The “Even One” Program allowed senior nursing students the opportunity to apply principles of research and health education to improve the quality of health among children in our community.