



<b>Success Story Title:</b>	WISEWOMAN Walking Group
<b>Location</b>	Public Health Delta Menominee
<b>Focus</b>	The main focus of the group was to increase healthy lifestyle behaviors through walking and health education.
<b>Strategy</b>	The WISEWOMAN Coordinator held a weekly walking group for ten weeks. Participants met for the sessions in a local park. They were provided with pedometers at the beginning of the program and were encouraged to record their daily steps. In addition to walking, the group had regular guest speakers who provided information on everything from healthy eating to smoking cessation.
<b>Outcomes</b>	Twelve women completed the walking group. Over the 10 week period, the group had a combined total of 6,339,557 steps. They were able to learn a great deal about their health through the weekly educational sessions. Individuals in the group became a support system for each other, and as a result the women are eager to have the next ten-week session start.
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*For more information about the Michigan WISEWOMAN Program go to <http://www.michigancancer.org/bcccp/wiseWomanProgram/index.cfm>*

## **Group Walking Program**

Public Health Delta Menominee (PHDM)

This 10 week walking program was led by the WISEWOMAN Coordinator. Each week speakers provided educational information on health related topics. We had a really good group dynamic throughout the 10 weeks, but one week in particular stood out. That week the pharmacy intern (from Wal-Mart), the PHDM tobacco coordinator, and the WISEWOMAN Coordinator were all on hand to offer information and support on smoking cessation.

In the group of 12 women there was one woman Lisa who shared her struggle to quit smoking. Many of the other women were former smokers. Some had quit within the last year and for others it had been many years. Each woman shared what had worked for her, but more importantly they offered such positive words of encouragement for Lisa. They were more encouraging and supportive than we as facilitators ever could have been. They talked about how they had been praying for her and how they would continue to do so. They showed her that she was not alone in this difficult process; that many people were cheering her on.

The educational portion of the sessions generally lasts 15 to 20 minutes. This session went 50 minutes. The women were more than willing to stay and discuss issues with this woman in need. At the end of the session Lisa expressed her gratitude for the group's support. Although she was crying and could barely speak, she did say that she appreciated everyone's support so much and that she was ready to make this important change in her life.

As the facilitator of the group, I had little involvement in this discussion. The women really took on the session and made it their own. It was so powerful to witness this. I truly believe that this is what the WISEWOMAN program is all about. I have found our group programs to be especially beneficial in helping women to make behavior change.

Lisa has not yet been able to quit successfully, but she is so much closer to being smoke free than she was at the beginning of this program. I know that with time she will be successful.

If you plan to try this activity it's very important to:

- Advertise effectively to all WISEWOMAN clients
- Establish a meeting time that works well for those who want to be involved
- Offer a variety of different educational sessions to keep clients interested
- Encourage group interaction, as clients appreciate feedback from their peers and the opportunity to be an integral part of the discussion
- Include information/support for participants to quit smoking