



Sharing Discoveries, Improving Lives

Translation & Dissemination at the Saint Louis University School of Public Health

Our Mission:

The Saint Louis University School of Public Health is dedicated to the discovery, translation, and dissemination of public health knowledge to improve the health and well being of all.



Pathways

There is considerable evidence that African Americans are underrepresented in health professions. Career development resources designed specifically for African American students could be an important early influence in their selection of professions. This study is developing and evaluating *Pathways* magazine, a new health professions career development resource specifically for African American middle school students. The aims of the study are to increase students' awareness of health professions featured in *Pathways*, increase their interest in pursuing those professions, and increase their level of confidence that they could take the steps needed to prepare for a career in a health profession. This study is funded by the National Cancer Institute.

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Discovery

What is the health problem?

- ❖ Although African Americans make up 12% of the U.S. population, their representation in most health careers is less than half that percentage.
- ❖ At present, few career development resources and materials are designed for African American students and/or for increasing awareness of opportunities in health professions.

Translation

How do we take what we know and apply it to *Pathways*?

- ❖ We know that middle school students often have naïve, if any, views about professional careers because most career guidance is not provided until students reach high school.
- ❖ We know that, once aware of the opportunities, many African American students are motivated to pursue health careers by culturally based values of collectivism (e.g., addressing health problems that have adversely affected family members), activism (e.g., making a difference in the community) and social justice (e.g., addressing health disparities).
- ❖ We know that presenting African American health professionals as role models can increase students' awareness, interest, and motivation to pursue health careers.
- ❖ *Pathways* introduces and describes three health careers per issue, presents simple and concrete steps students can take to pursue these careers, and profiles local African American professionals in each field.

Dissemination

How will we disseminate what we learn?

- ❖ The findings of this study will be shared with researchers, educators and professional associations through publications in peer-reviewed journals and conference presentations.

Change

What changes do we hope will occur as a result of the dissemination?

- ❖ Dissemination should promote greater research related to health communication and further improve our understanding of factors that promote or inhibit African American students' pursuit of health careers.
- ❖ Dissemination should result in a greater likelihood of exposing African American middle school students to similar career development resources.
- ❖ Dissemination may eventually increase the proportion of African Americans represented in health professions.