



STRESS MANAGEMENT CLASSES FOR UNINSURED FREE CLINIC PATIENTS IN THE UNITED STATES

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Objective: Stress has become a growing public health concern in the United States (US). Uninsured, low-income or minority patients utilizing a free clinic are exposed to stress disproportionately across various areas of life. Health promotion programs regarding stress management have the potential to benefit vulnerable, low income populations by reducing stress related health issues. The purpose of this study was to describe and evaluate the “stress-management” education class taught at a free clinic that provides healthcare to uninsured patients.

Methods: Data for this study were collected by a pre-stress management class survey, field notes during the stress management class, and post-class survey at a free clinic for low-income, uninsured patients. The surveys and class took place in June 2018. Direct observations were based off the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB).

Results: Fifty-five stress management classes were offered with a total of 83 participants. Among the class participants, 71 filled out the survey. Free clinic patients experience cumulative negative situations. One strategy to cope with stress is to organize participant responsibilities. Main stressors among the participants included finances, family, emotions, work, health, social relationships, and a sense of not belonging.

Conclusion: Providing resources regarding stressors would be a feasible solution for patients at free clinics. Future projects should work to develop stress management class which responds to the results of this study.