

Building Physically Active Communities The Walk into Health Pedometer Lending Program

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OPHA November 2, 2009

Collaborative initiative between:

- Culturelink
- A Community Resident
- Toronto Public Health
- Toronto Public Library
- Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation
- Toronto Catholic District School Board
- Toronto District School Board
- City Planning and Transportation Divisions

- Building Physically Active Communities Project (BPAC) began Spring 2007 with \$55,000 in funding from the Ministry of Health Promotion's Communities in Action Fund
- Began in eight of Toronto's 13 Strong Neighbourhoods as well as Willowdale (North York) and Kensington-Chinatown
- Target groups were those with most barriers for participating in physical activity: priority neighbourhoods, immigrants and newcomers to Canada, English as a second language

Major Components of the BPAC Project

- Community-based media strategy
- Pedometer lending program (PLP) through the Toronto Public Library
- Promotion of Parks, Forestry, and Recreation's walking programs at various community centres across the city
- Establishment of new walking groups within existing social support networks within various community agencies/organizations
- Point of decision prompts in stairways (Step into Health)
- Conduct a small scale walking audit in priority neighbourhood(s)
- Support the Proposed Framework for a Toronto Walking Strategy



Objectives were to:

- Increase awareness of the health benefits of walking
 - Increase awareness of the pedometer lending program among community residents
 - Establish and maintain a pedometer lending program with Toronto Public Library
 - Increase access to physical activity resources as a motivational tool for beginning and maintaining walking
- * Extensive consultation was done with Ottawa Public Health related to their program.

Pedometer Lending Program

- 12 out of Toronto's 99 branches were chosen
- 10 library branches in eight of Toronto's priority neighbourhoods
- Two libraries in the non-priority neighbourhoods of North York and Kensington-Chinatown
- 17 library heads and 160 circulation staff were trained

Pedometer Lending Package

- Library patrons able to borrow pedometer for normal three week loan period

Accompanying package included:

- The Walk into Health Booklet
- The Walk this Way Calendar
- Walking Resources
- Consent to participate in a follow-up telephone survey



- Media releases
- Paid advertisements in 10 ethnic newspapers
- Toronto Public Libraries “What’s On” magazine
- Library Displays
- Bookmarks
- Toronto Fun Guide
- Distribution of posters
- Resources at community events
- Establishment of the Walk into Health website within Toronto Public Health

Evaluation



- Was the PLP used by people in priority areas?
- Did the PLP change walking behaviour?
- Did PLP participants use and value the pedometer and information package?

- Evaluation took place from May to September 2007
- Follow-up telephone survey of lenders
- Key questions included participation in walking...
 - prior to the PLP
 - during the 1st week
 - during the final 3rd week
 - approximately 3-6 weeks after the pedometer was returned
- Reactions to information package
- Demographics

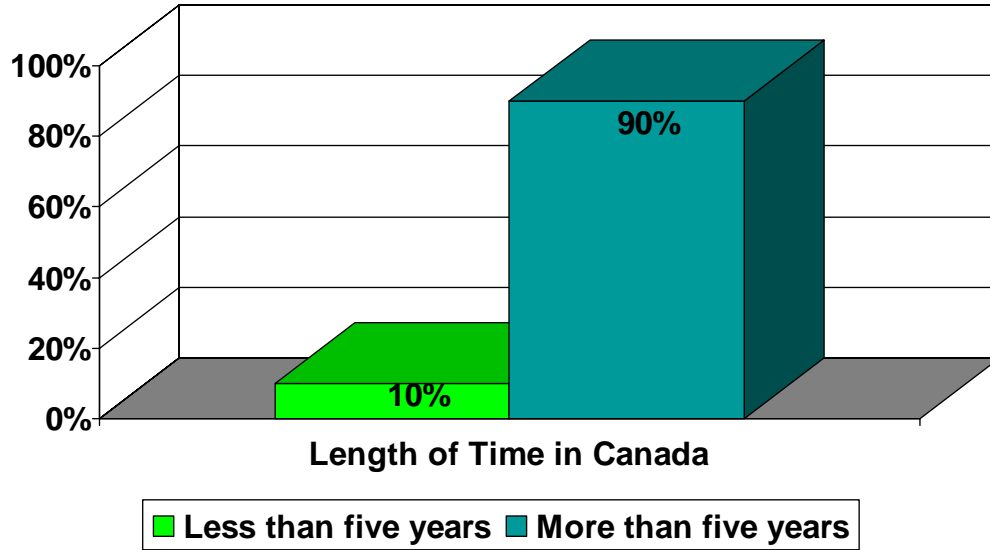


- A total of 325 participants completed consent forms and agreed to be telephoned
- Of the 325 that agreed to participate, 125 could not be contacted (after 10 tries), moved, or partially completed the survey
- 200 surveys were completed

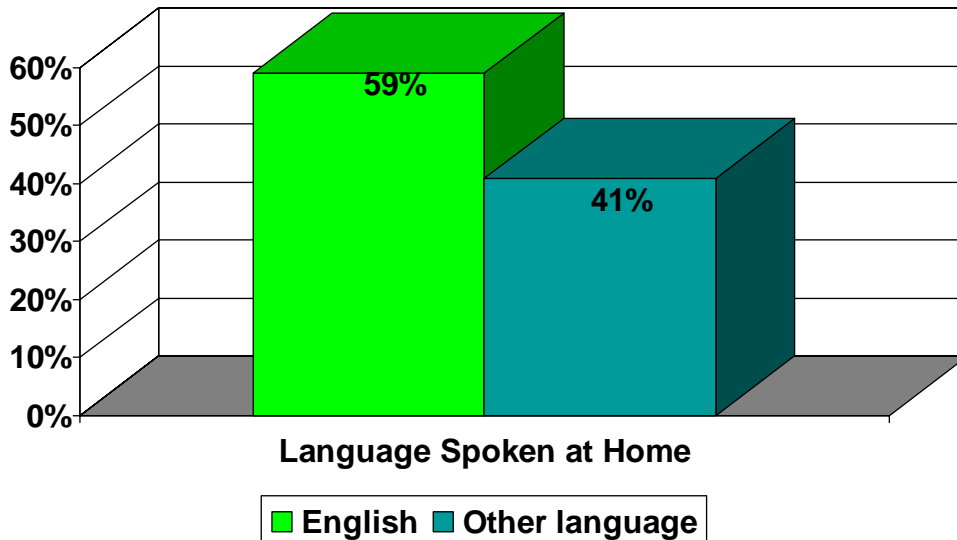
Demographics



Demographics



90% of respondents had been living in Canada more than five years



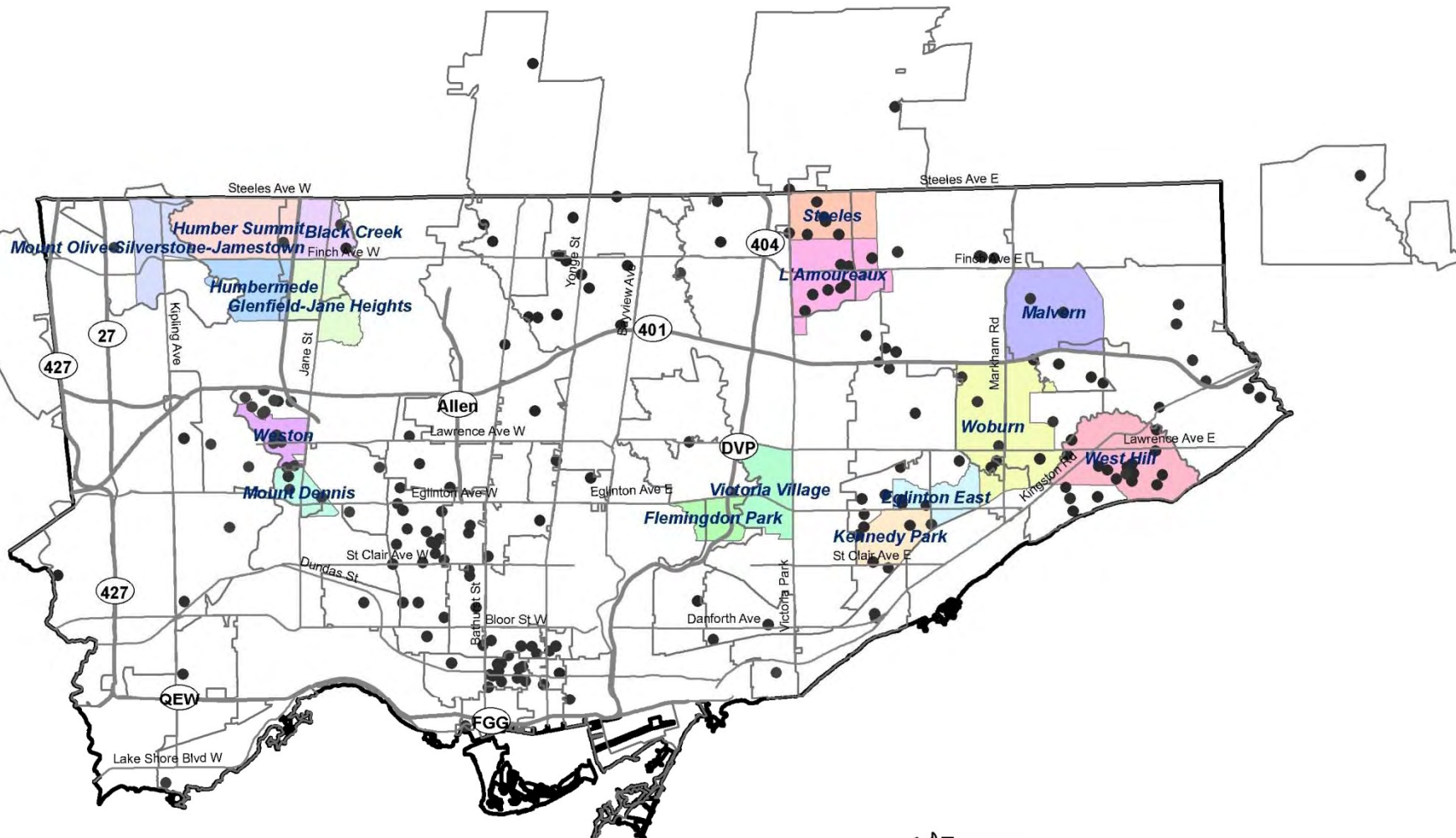
59% spoke English at home.

- Just over three quarters (79%) of the sample were female
- Approximately 84.0% of participants were either adults or older adults (ages 25-64)
- Only 11% were in the seniors category and even fewer (5%) were between the ages of 19 and 24

- Most of the participants learned about the program from the library (74%), either from the staff, the poster or displays/brochures in the library
- Friends and family were also a source (11%)



Geographic Distribution of All Pedometer Lenders by Priority Neighbourhood



Walking Behaviour

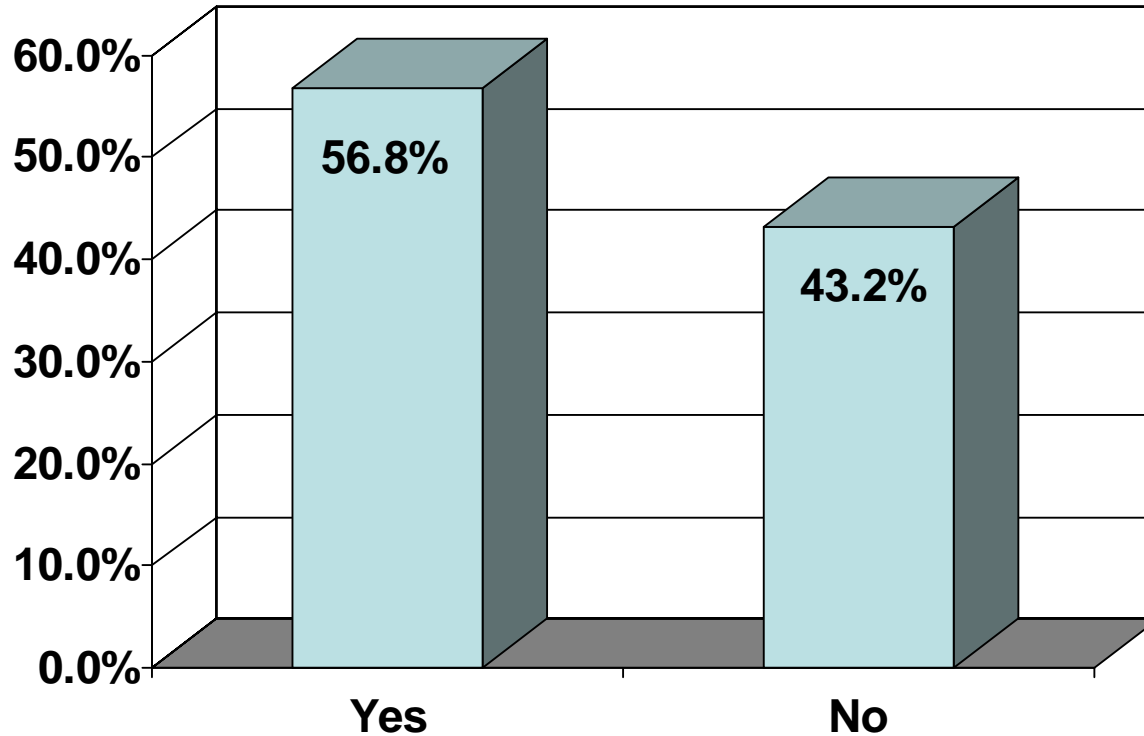


- According to research¹ need to walk more than 30 minutes or take more than 10,000 steps per day for four or more days a week to receive health benefit from walking
- Used these cut-offs to investigate walking behaviour of respondents

1 Catherine Tudor-Locke. Taking Steps Toward Increased Physical Activity: Using Pedometers to Measure and Motivate. President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Research. Series 3, No. 17. June 2002

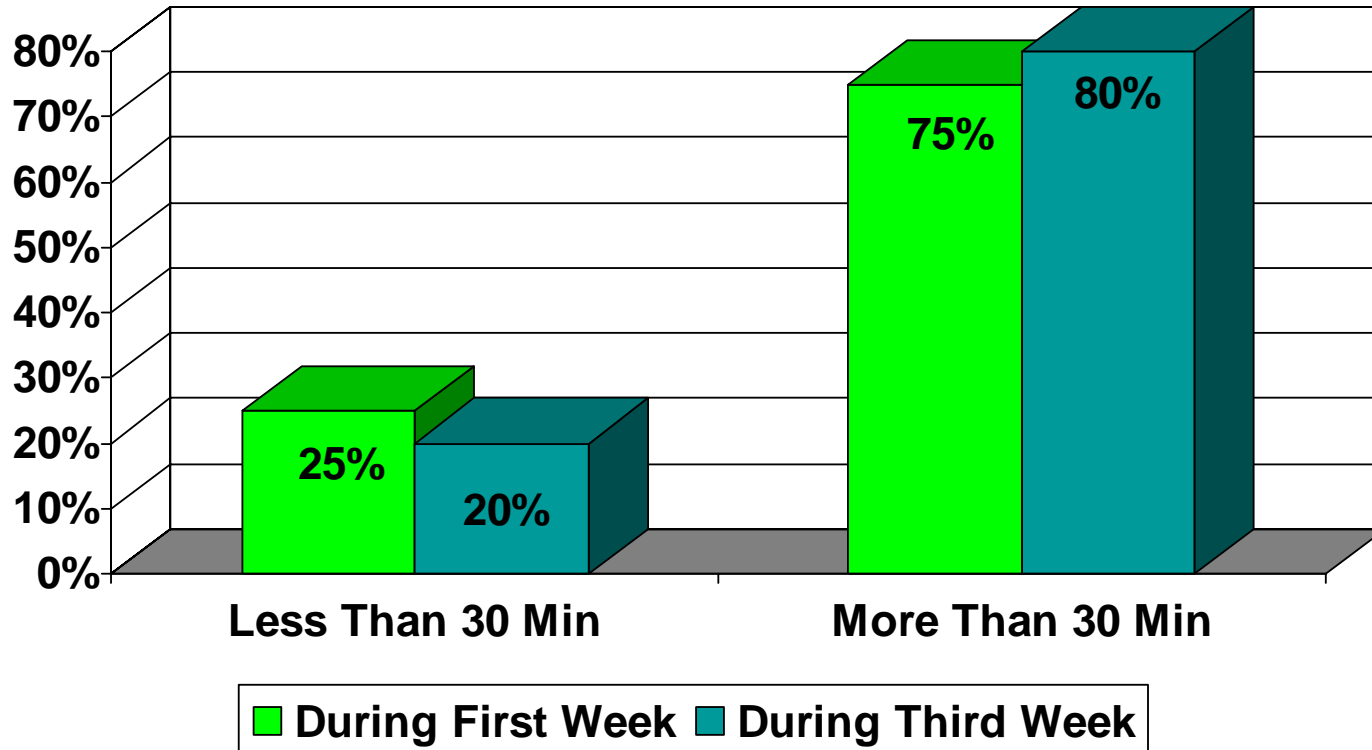
Findings

Did the pedometer lending program, help you begin walking for exercise?



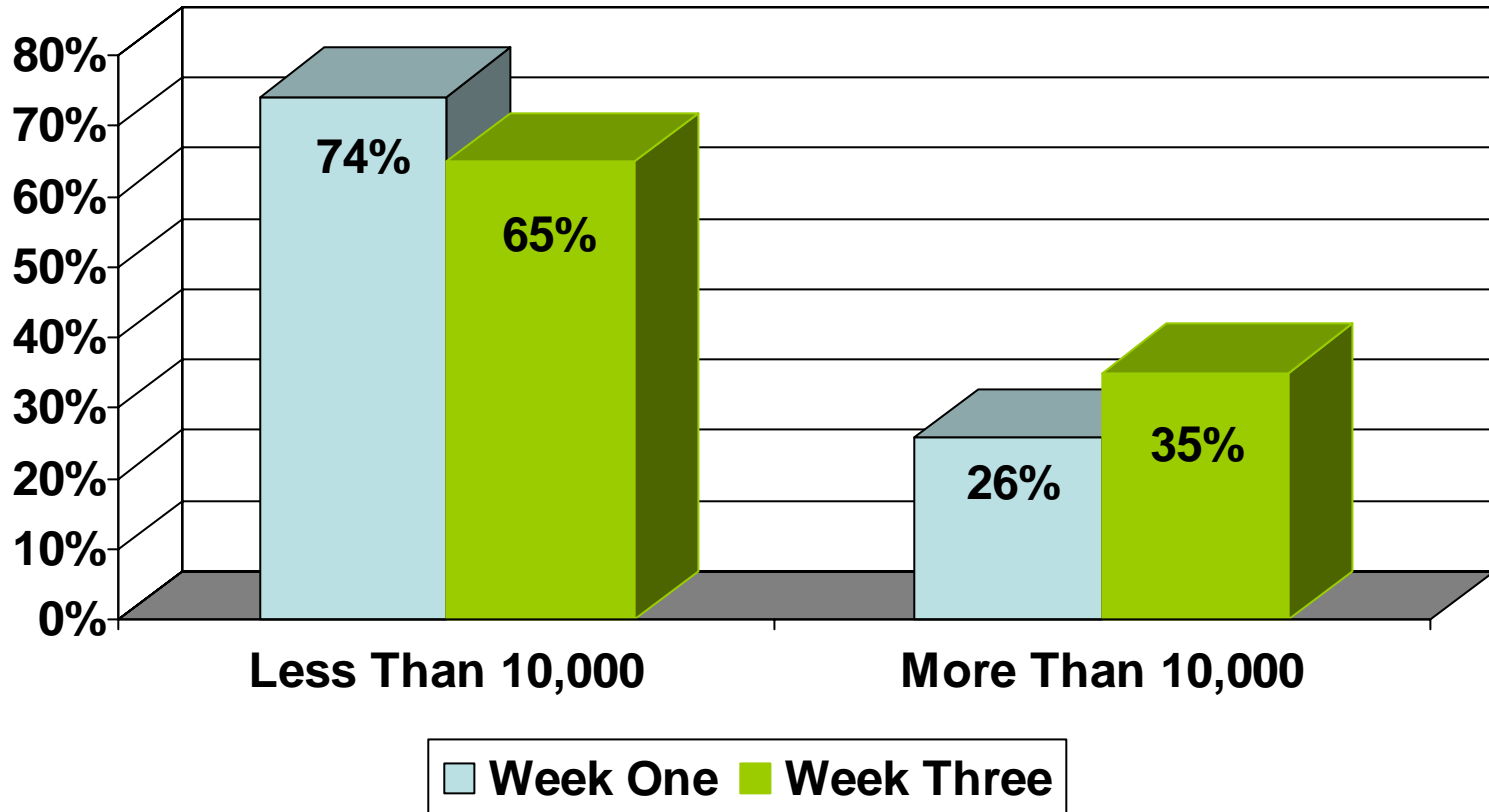
Among those participants who walked less (less than 30 minutes per day and less than 4 days a week) prior to borrowing the pedometer, just over half (56.8%) indicated that the PLP helped them begin walking for exercise.

Changes in Minutes Walked Per Day During the First and Third Weeks



The percentage of participants walking more than 30 minutes per day increased slightly from 75% to 80%

Changes in Steps Taken Per Day During the First and Third Weeks



The percentage walking more than 10,000 steps increased from week one to week three.

Detailed Change in Steps Taken Between Week One and Week Three

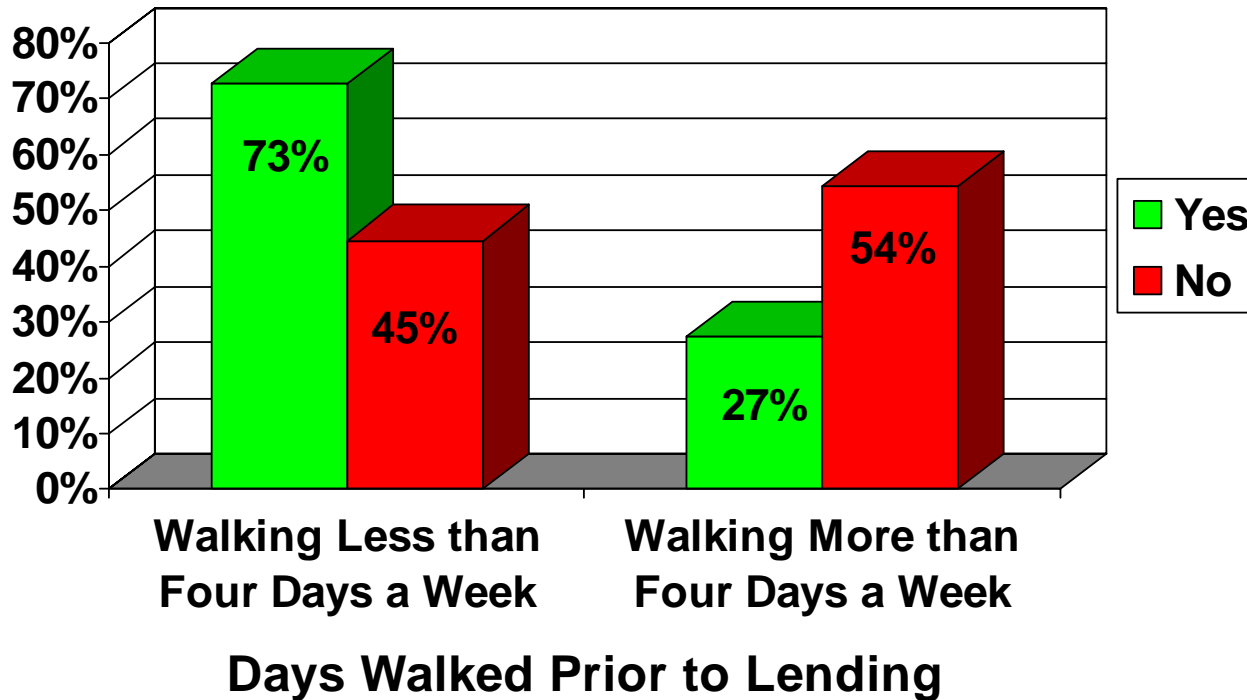
| | | Steps Week Three | | | | | | Total % Who Increased Steps Week One to Three |
|----------------|------------------|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------------|---|
| | | 0-1900 | 2000-3900 | 4000-5900 | 6000-7900 | 8000-9900 | 10000 thru 25000 | |
| Steps Week One | 0-1900 | 25.0% | 25.0% | 50.0% | | | | 50.0% |
| | 2000-3900 | 5.9% | 35.3% | 41.2% | 5.9% | 5.9% | 5.9% | 58.8% |
| | 4000-5900 | | 10.5% | 26.3% | 26.3% | 26.3% | 10.5% | 36.8% |
| | 6000-7900 | | | 6.3% | 37.5% | 37.5% | 18.8% | 56.3% |
| | 8000-9900 | | | 6.7% | 6.7% | 53.3% | 33.3% | 33.3% |
| | 10000 thru 25000 | | | | | 4.8% | 95.2% | 0% |

Red – Decreased their steps week one to week three

Yellow – Steps in same range week one to week three

Green – Increased their steps week one to week three

Did Program Increase the Amount of Walking You Do for Exercise?

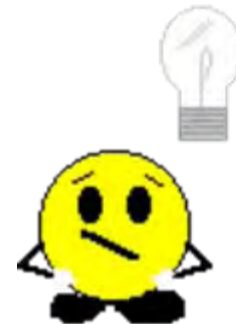


- Those walking less than four days a week were more likely to indicate that the PLP increased their walking. This indicates that the PLP was more useful for those walking below the level needed to receive health benefits

Walking Behaviour After the PLP Program

- 86.9% of participants continued to walk for exercise after the program
- 72.7% of the participants stated that the pedometer program helped them continue to walk for exercise

Information Kit/Walking Package and Pedometer Use



Satisfaction with Pedometer

- 90% of participants were either very or somewhat satisfied with the way the pedometer worked
- 8% somewhat or very dissatisfied



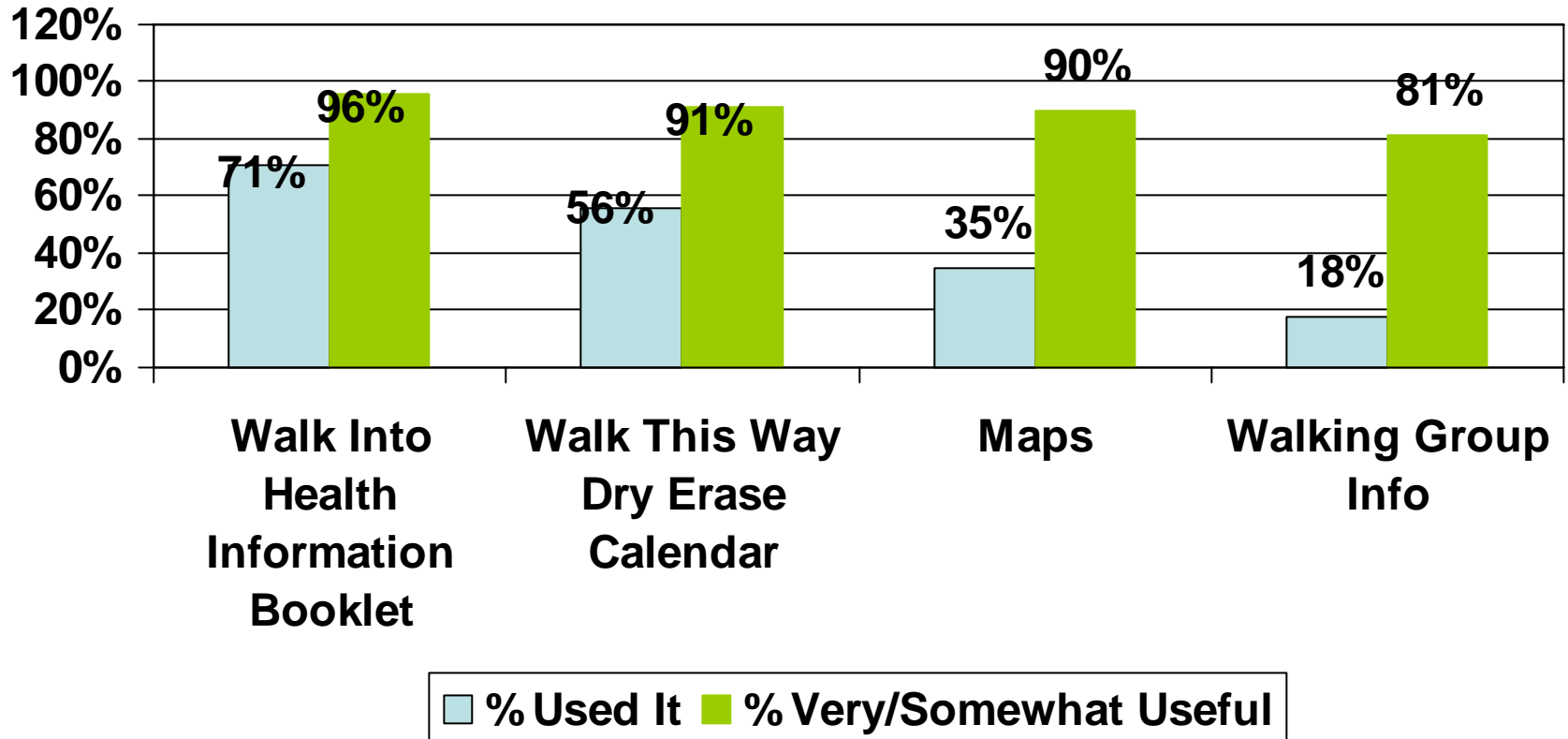
Comments

- Really like them and will buy one
- Helped me be consciously aware of my fitness
- Easy to use
- Good motivation
- Very lightweight and works well

Comments

- Did not always work and did not get a consistent recording of steps
- It may be over sensitive as it was over counting

Use and Usefulness of Walking Package Components



Summary

- Program did not really attract the target group of interest
- The program did change walking behaviour
- There was use of and high satisfaction with the supporting materials

Successes

- **Program did increase walking behaviour**
- **Participants increased steps in realistic increments**
- **10% achieved health benefits**
- **2,070 pedometers circulated from May 31 – December 31, 2007**
- **Received additional funding – expanded to 28 libraries**

Successes

- **As of July 2009, approximately 6,000 pedometers have been circulated**
- **Expanded to community agencies and workplaces**
- **Built stronger links with other divisions such as City Planning and Transportation Services**
- **Project incorporated into and supports the City of Toronto's Walking Strategy under Promoting a Culture of Walking**

Challenges

- Difficult to reach target group
- Difficult to know the long term impact of program
- Timelines were too short
- Pedometers were borrowed from library patrons outside the neighbourhood
- Public complaints - only available in select libraries

Thank You

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