In 2011, the CIR members of the Bronx created the Healthy Bronx Initiative (HBI) with the goal of going beyond the hospital walls to understand the context in which our patients lived. By identifying and tackling the root causes of health problems in our community, we broadened our role as service-oriented providers but found that we were ill-prepared to address the environmental and behavioral factors that not only influence health but prevent diseases.

To address this problem, we incorporated one of CIR’s four core values, service, to implement a model that would improve the quality of care we provide to our community. Through service, we hoped to gain a better understanding of the conditions our patients face in our community and be better informed when advising and treating them. Since then, CIR has developed other service-oriented programs, including the Family Health Challenge, which is tackling one of the most serious health concerns — child obesity. By educating and encouraging healthy behavior changes in the classrooms of school-age children, residents that have participated in the Family Health Challenge are making strides to halt the progression of obesity in the Bronx and finding that they are in fact learning along the way.

Below is the culmination of a year’s worth of work and data regarding the implementation and dissemination of the Family Health Challenge.
Intervention

A year-long intervention, wherein residents addressed a health topic of their choice, was implemented in the 2013 Family Health Corps (FHC). The program was designed to improve residents’ knowledge and awareness of health disparities and to empower them to engage in health education.

Methods

To determine the impact of the FHC on participating residents, we developed a questionnaire that included questions on social and environmental determinants of health and empowerment of residents to engage in community-based solutions to health disparities.

Results

The program increased the self-reported competence of 73% of participants as health educators. 87% of the participants stated that FHC increased their awareness of the role of physician activism in improving population health. Improved health behaviors of participating children were observed.

Significance

The program indicated that participating residents demonstrated improved awareness of health disparities and increased comfort in serving as health educators.

Conclusion

The program provided a unique opportunity for residents to improve their knowledge and awareness of health disparities, leading to improved health behaviors of participating children.

References