



CAMBRIDGE Fitness Buddies

**A Community-Wide Social Support Model
to Increase Physical Activity and Healthy Eating**

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Pro Walk Pro Bike 2006

September 8, 2006

Cambridge Adopts 5-2-1



- 5 servings of fruits and vegetables
- 2 hours or less of TV or recreational screen time
- 1 hour of physical activity

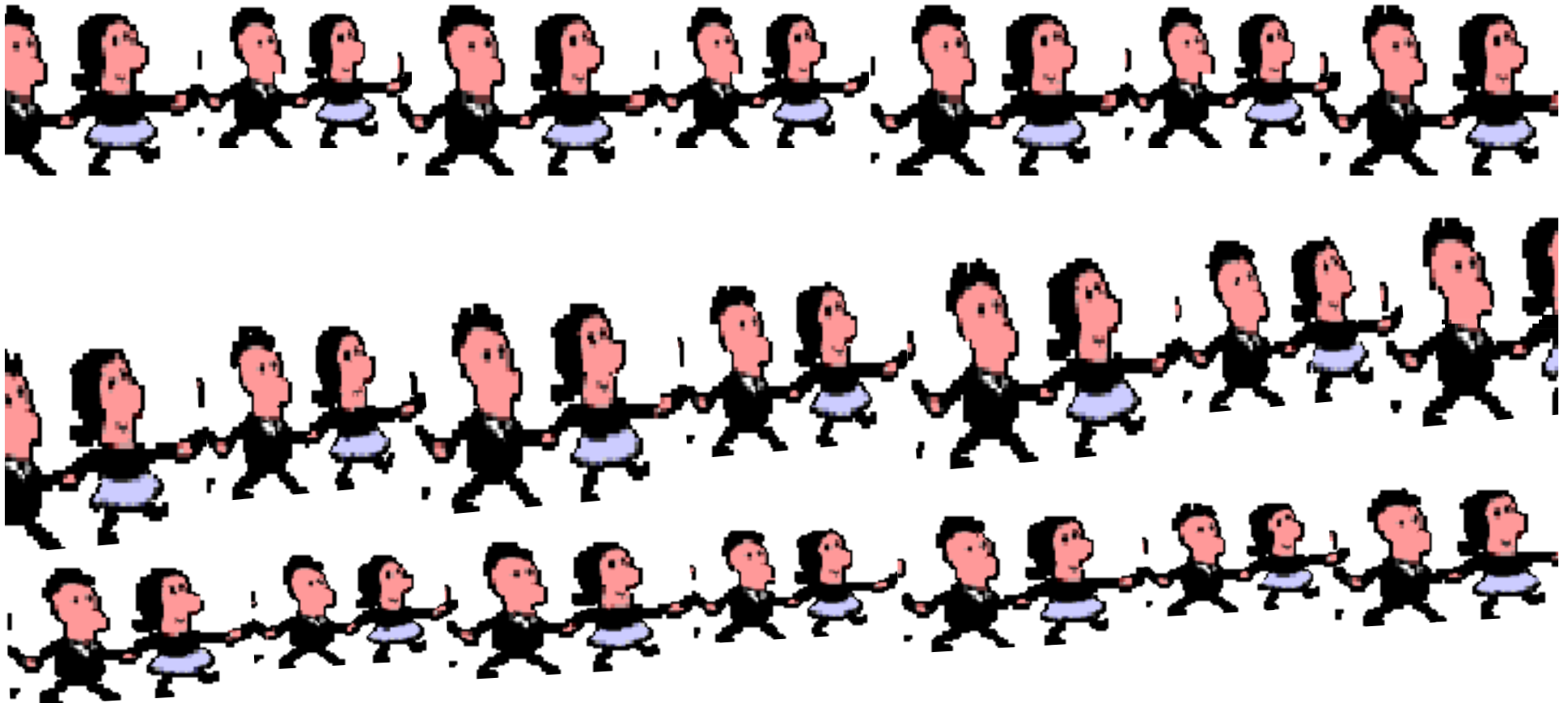


Goals Informed by 5-2-1

- Provide a clearinghouse for "5-2-1" programs and events
- Expand "5-2-1" opportunities for kids and adults
- Market "5-2-1" opportunities → Cambridge Lives Healthier!



Cambridge Fitness Buddies





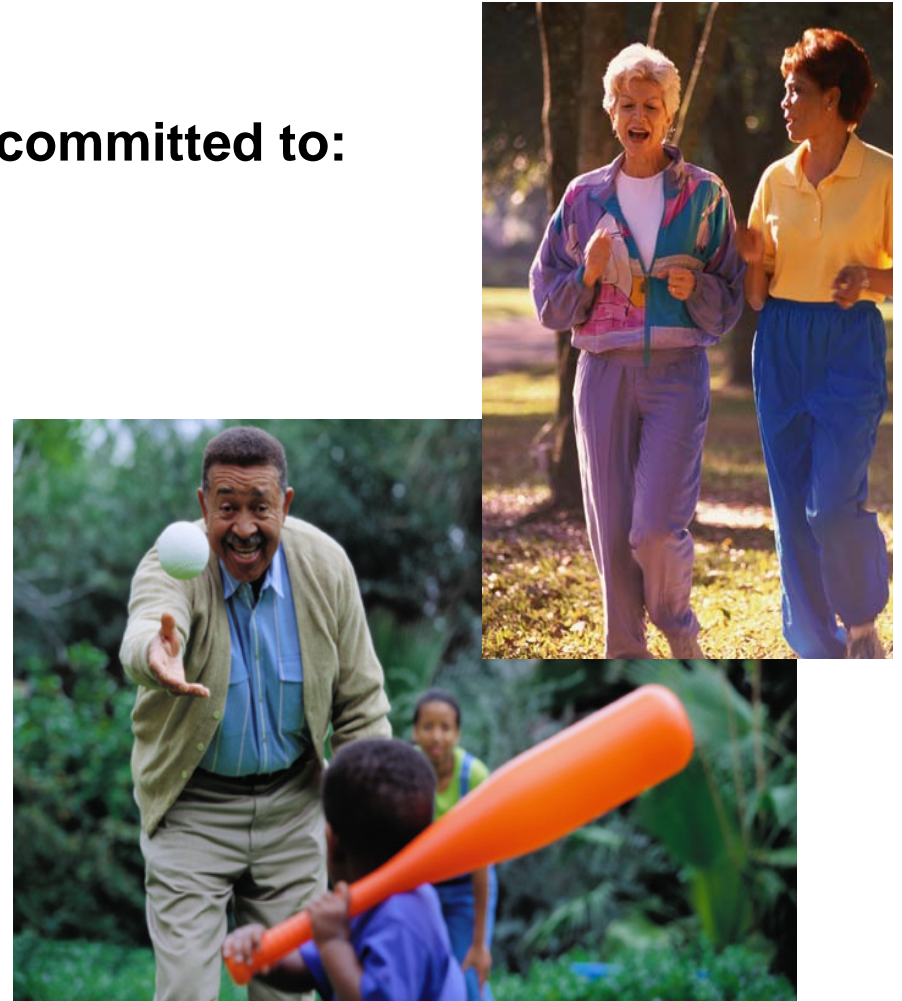
Goals of the Program

- Use social support model to increase physical activity and healthy eating
- Increase knowledge and behavior of “5-2-1 Every Day!” goals
- Design a program template that could be run by inexpensively by individual organizations and customized

What is a Fitness Buddy?

A Fitness Buddy is someone who is committed to:

- Engaging friends, family, or colleagues
- Get Moving Twice a Week
- Helping their Fitness Buddies meet their goals
- Moving toward a 5-2-1 lifestyle





The Basics of the Fitness Buddies Program

- Free 10-week program
- Get started and stay motivated
 - Get Moving Twice a Week
- FitKit Manual and free gifts
- 3 coaching workshops
 - Learn how to be active at your own ability level
- Ongoing support (weekly emails/Yahoo Group)
- Celebration event in the spring



Marketing Fitness Buddies

The Email Flyer

This season
GIVE THE GIFT OF FITNESS



**CAMBRIDGE
FITNESS BUDDIES**

*Get Moving Twice a Week for 10 weeks
with your Cambridge Fitness Buddies
Kicking off this January!*

*Invite 2 or more friends, co-workers, neighbors, or family to join you in a fitness activity
of your choice (walking, trying out a local gym, etc)! The Fitness Buddies Program
will provide you a free FitGift Pack, 3 free coaching workshops, pedometers, and support
to help you and your Buddies get fit in 2006!*

FREE WORKSHOPS! GREAT GIFTS!

ORIENTATION SESSION
Wednesday, January 11
10.00 - 11.00 am, at Cambridge Water Department, 250 Fresh Pond Parkway
Optional walk at Fresh Pond to follow!

*Call today for free beautiful invitation cards to give your Fitness Buddies this
December and full details about the program!*



Marketing Fitness Buddies

The Invitation Card





Fitness Buddies Experience

Standing Room Only at Orientation





Fitness Buddies Experience Giveaways





Fitness Buddies Experience

Motivation and Education





Fitness Buddies Experience

Learning New Exercises





Fitness Buddies Experience

Community Fitness Experts





Fitness Buddies Experience Prizes and Politicians





Success of Fitness Buddies

- 230 registered participants
- Social support was the key for over 80% of participants
- Diverse group
- Improved 5-2-1 behaviors
 - ↑ physical activity
 - ↓ TV viewing
 - ↑ fruit and vegetable consumption
- Flexibility was important



Social Support

86% joined the program because the idea of having a buddy was appealing. 88% said that their buddy group was important for sticking to the program.

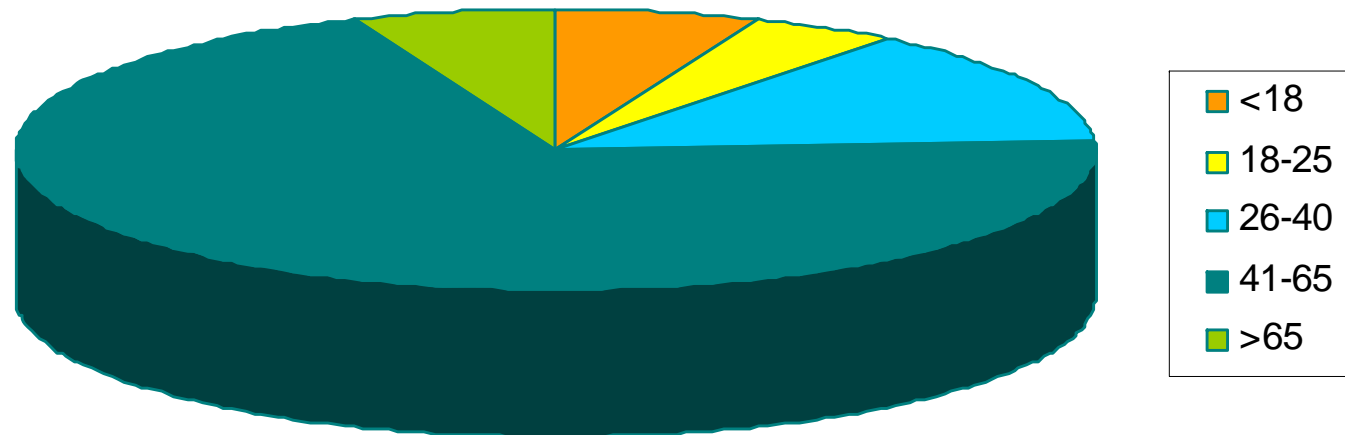




Buddy Demographics

Most Buddies were aged 41-65, but the program attracted all age levels

Age of Participants

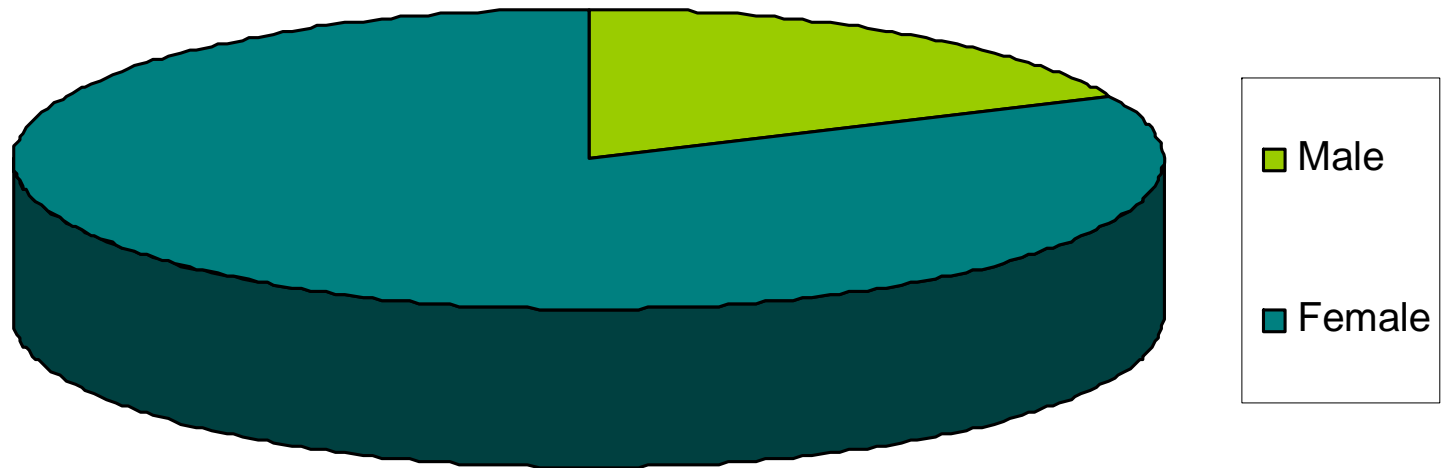




Buddy Demographics

Most Buddies were women

Gender Ratio

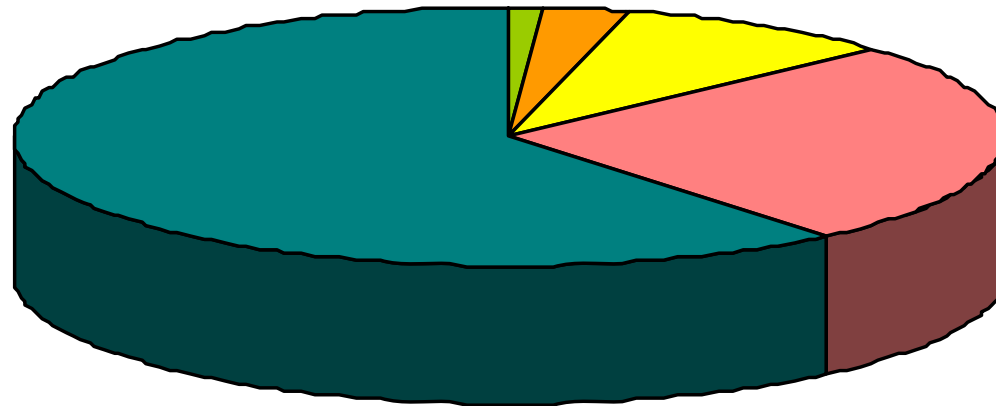




Buddy Demographics

Buddies were racially and ethnically diverse

Race/Ethnicity



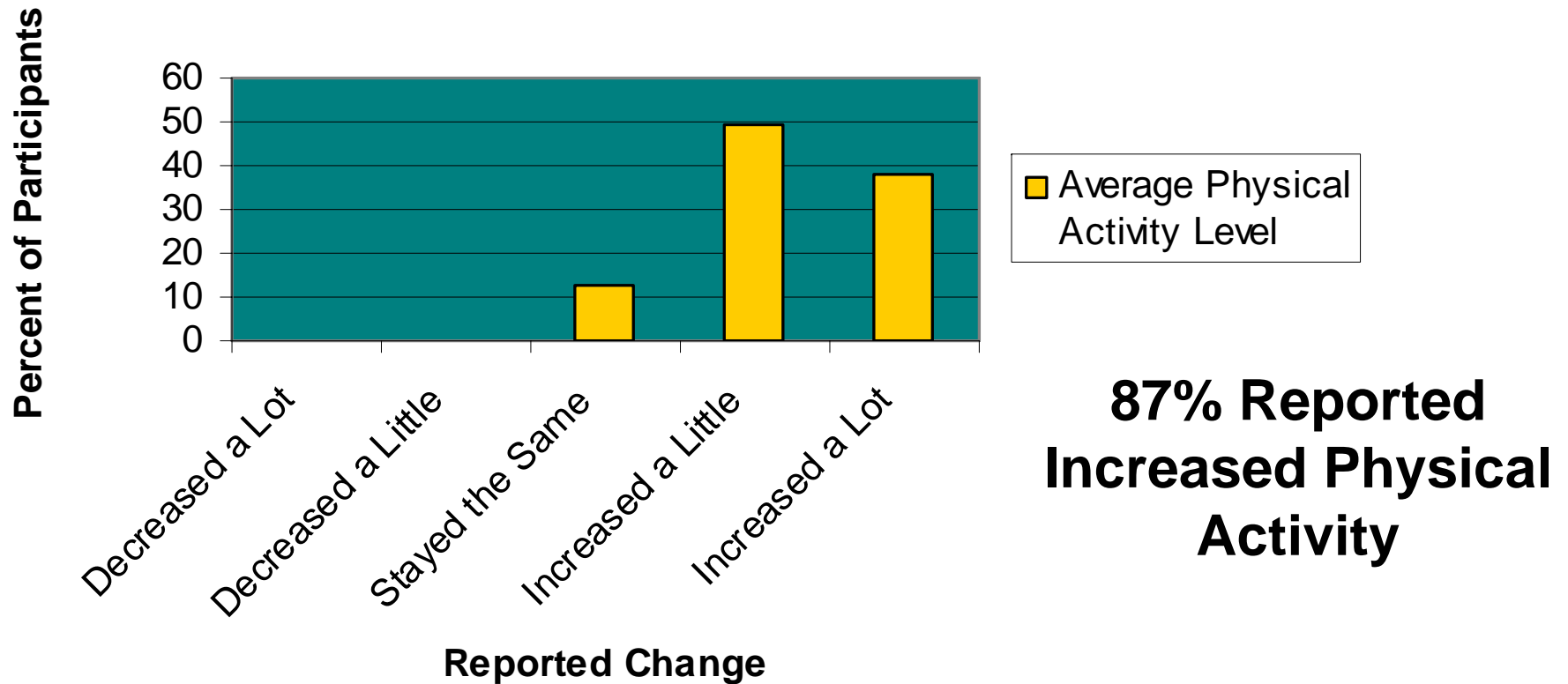
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Native Hawaiian
- Asian
- Other
- Hispanic
- Black
- White



5-2-1 Behavior Change

Physical Activity Increased

Average Physical Activity Level During the Program





5-2-1 Behavior Change

Physical Activity Increased

Weekdays (Average minutes)

- Mean number of minutes during program: 45.5 minutes
- Mean increase: + 14.3 minutes

Weekends (Average minutes)

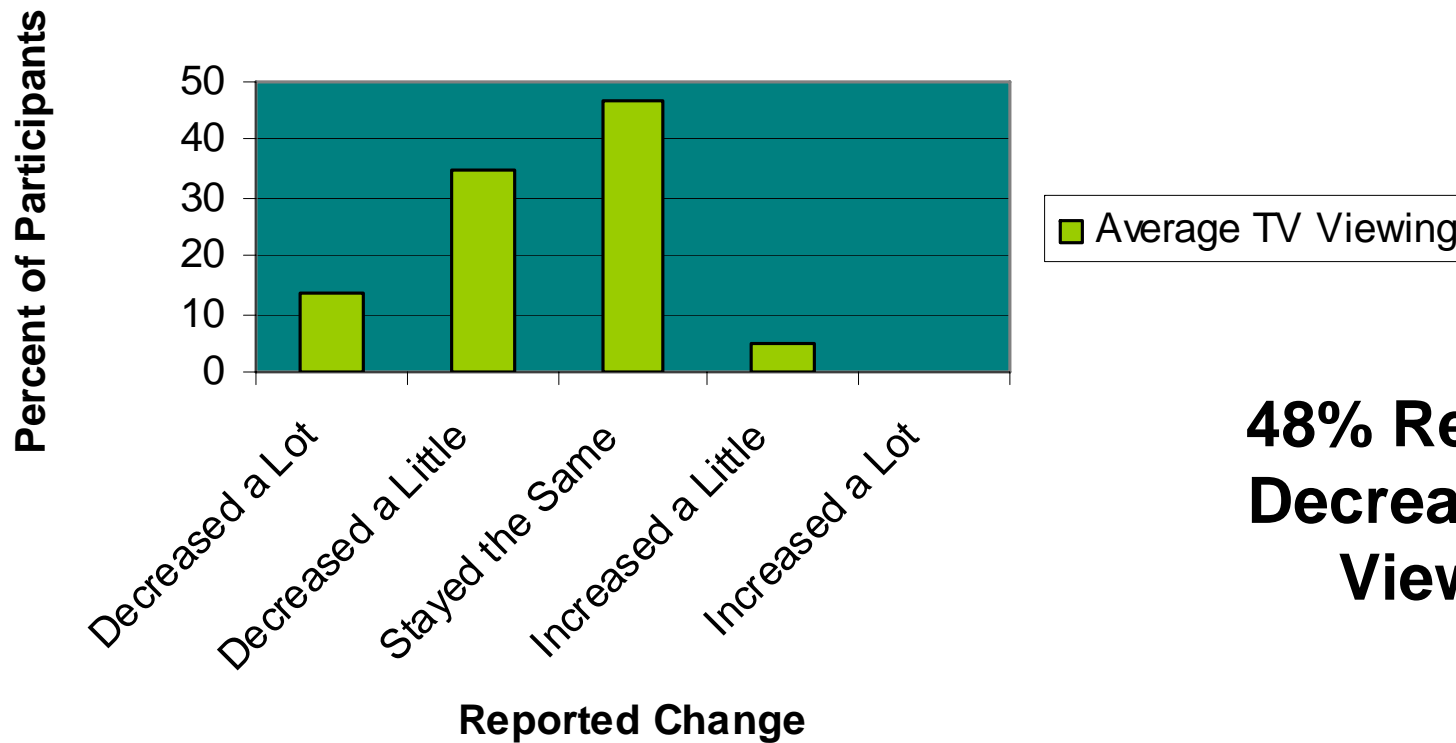
- Mean number of minutes during program: 47.4 minutes
- Mean increase: + 20.9 minutes



5-2-1 Behavior Change

TV viewing decreased (slightly)

Average TV Viewing During the Program



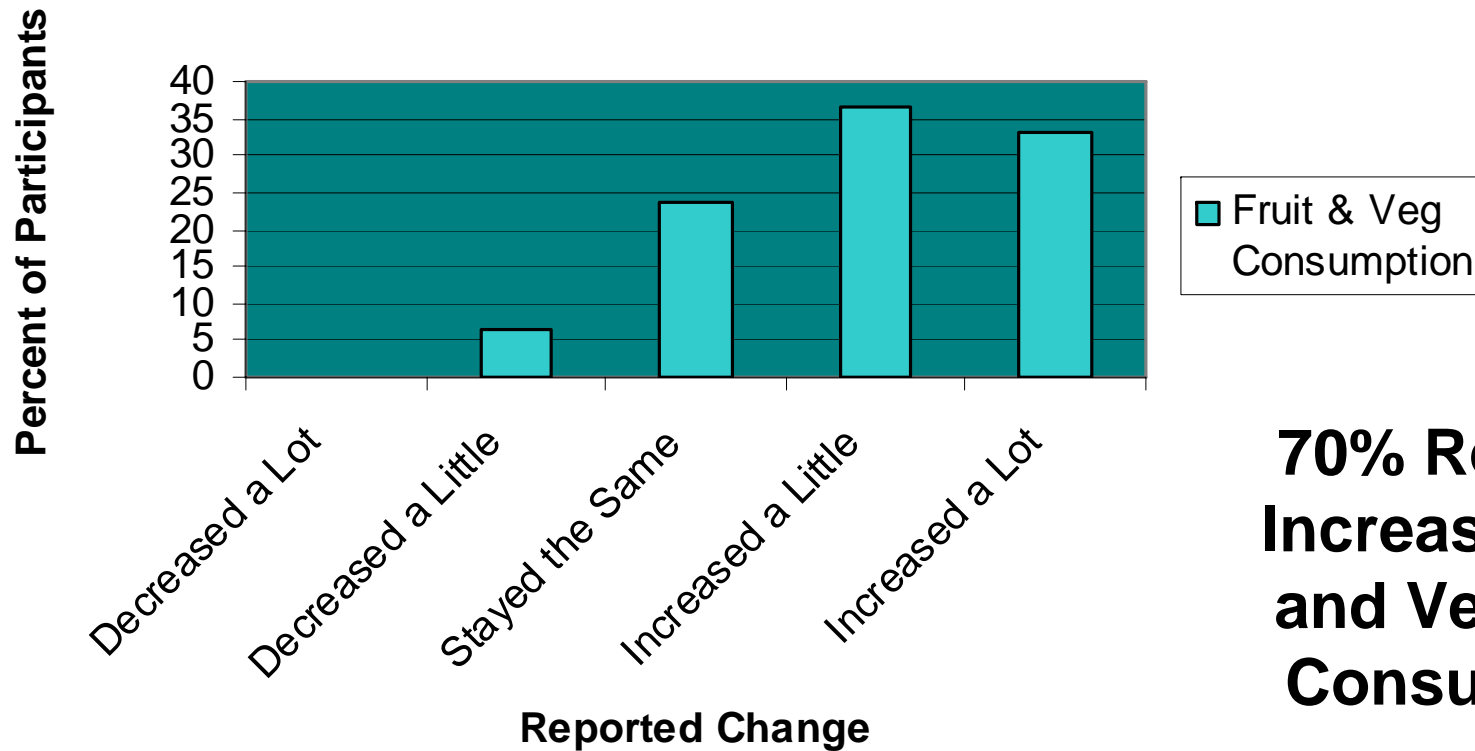
**48% Reported
Decreased TV
Viewing**



5-2-1 Behavior Change

Fruit and Vegetable Consumption Increased

Average Fruit/Veg Consumption During the Program



70% Reported Increased Fruit and Vegetable Consumption



Reflections

Social support was critical

Buddies say:

It's because I don't want to let her down. She'll call me when I don't feel like exercising and I'll say OK. I'll call her and we just keep on each other. But we equally call each other. When I don't want to exercise and I think she might feel the same way, I'll be sure to call her. Even when it's stupid, like 9:30 at night, we'll do it anyway.



Reflections

Sharing success was a source of pride

Buddies say:

I remember at one of the workshops they asked people to be a witness, and they would stand up and say, you know, the five of us go for a walk at lunch time. That's really cool. That's what it's all about.



Reflections

Community building was an unintended result

Buddies say:

What I really admired about the program is that it seems like it goes across groups. It's really great to work in a community that values this type of thing, and not only values it but puts together a program to follow through with it. I think it's an admirable endeavor to come up with.



Fitness Buddies Expands

- New host sites in Fall 2006
 - Peabody School
 - Community Learning Center
 - Cambridge Citywide Senior Center
 - St. Paul's AME Church
 - Keverian School (Everett)
 - Police Department and Area IV Youth Center



**CAMBRIDGE
Fitness Buddies**

Acknowledgements

- Cambridge Public Health Department: Community Health, School Health, Epidemiology
- Institute for Community Health
- Vanessa Cavallaro and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
- Cambridge Health Alliance: Community Affairs
- Fitness Trainers: Fitness Together, Boston Sports Club, Curves, Wellbridge, YMCA, FitCorp, Tufts Nutrition
- City of Cambridge: Senior Center, Water Department, Libraries, City Council, Healthy Children Task Force
- ...and all the Buddies!



**CAMBRIDGE
Fitness Buddies**

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