

ShowCase

Agita São Paulo

Topic: Physical activity

Organisation: Centro de Estudos do Laboratório de Aptidão Física de São Caetano do Sul (CELAFISCS)

Location: São Paulo (Brazil)

Dates: 1996 to ongoing

Budget: US\$150,000 to US\$400,000 per year

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Overview

The Agita São Paulo programme was developed in 1996 to combat the low levels of physical activity amongst residents of the Brazilian state of São Paulo. The Portuguese word 'Agita' means to move the body, but the term also includes considerations of the mind, social health and citizenship. The programme encourages residents of São Paulo to accumulate at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per day, and this message is supported by the programme's mascot – the 'half-hour man'.

To encourage people to become more physically active, the Agita São Paulo programme seeks to deliver interventions that impact on interpersonal, social and physical environmental factors. This has included: mass media; promotional giveaways; mega-events; creating access to sporting facilities; influencing policies, statutes and laws; improving physical environments; and working with health professionals to 'prescribe' physical activity.

Results:

- Proportion of inactive individuals declined from 10 per cent in 2002 to 3 per cent in 2008
- Proportion of very active individuals increased from 7 per cent in 2002 to 16 per cent in 2008
- 37 per cent of the state's population was aware of Agita São Paulo in 2002, rising to 60 per cent in 2008

1. BEHAVIOUR

- Adults to achieve at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per day on most days of the week
- Children and youth to engage in at least 20 minutes of sustained vigorous physical activity three days a week

2. CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

- Literature review on physical activity and health promotion initiatives
- Consultation with experts in physical activity and health promotion, from:
 - Pan American Health Organisation
 - US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 - UK's Health Education Authority
 - Institute of Aerobics Research in Dallas, Texas
 - Advisors from Brazil, US, Finland, UK and Australia
- Approximately 20,000 questionnaires with target groups to understand barriers and motivations to physical activity

3. THEORY

- **Transtheoretical model:** Aims to move people from pre-contemplation of a new behaviour, through contemplation, towards action and maintenance
- **'Mobile management' of ecological model:** Need to address the three interrelated factors that influence physical activity – interpersonal, social and the physical environment

4. INSIGHT

- Lack of time was the most cited barrier to physical activity, regardless of sex or stage of behaviour change
- Lack of company and lack of interest were also important barriers to physical activity
- Medical professionals were not sufficiently aware of the benefits of physical activity and so were not 'prescribing' it to their patients
- (Long-term) health benefits derived from an active lifestyle are not always immediately perceived by the target audience

5. EXCHANGE

- **Barriers:** Lack of time, company and interest
- **Benefits:** Promotional materials emphasised benefits the target audience could perceive quickly, such as mental health, because people's perception of increased mental wellbeing can occur directly following physical activity
- The programme emphasised free ways to become more active and opened school sporting facilities at weekends
- Promotional freebies were given out at events

6. COMPETITION

- The programme tried to tackle competition from other organisations or initiatives through creating multiple partnerships (over 300) with government agencies, NGOs and businesses

7. SEGMENTATION

- The programme targets the whole population of São Paulo, but focuses on the three population groups identified as being at greatest risk of physical inactivity:
 - Students (children and adolescents)
 - Workers (young economically active men and women)
 - Older adults (those over 60 years of age)

8. METHODS MIX

- Branding and 'half-hour man' mascot (with adaptations including 'half-hour woman', 'half-hour cowboy' and 'half-hour seashoreman')
- Posters, leaflets, brochures, non-paid media and promotional giveaways
- Annual mega events to promote physical activity
- Agitol – Package containing educational materials on physical activity for health professionals to 'prescribe' to patients
- Influencing policies, statutes and law
- Changes to physical spaces, e.g. greater access to sporting facilities, creating more green and leisure spaces