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|  **“Living in the parks” project: a green educational approach for improving health and well-being among individuals**  |
| **Background/Objectives**“Living in the parks” is a two-year project promoted and financed by the Apulia Region, Southern Italy. The main goals of this plan are i) to improve lifestyles, ii) to reduce chronic-degenerative diseases, iii) to ensure health equity, iv) to promote individual empowerment and enhance the territory.**Methods**From April to October 2017, 48 meetings were planned in ten protected areas (Parks and Nature Reserves) distributed throughout the Apulia territory. All meetings were structured in two weekly events lasting two hours each (1h of physical activity, 1h of educational activity aimed to increase knowledge on environmental, food and cultural heritage of the region). The accession to the project was free, designed for families and individuals, particularly focused on the participation of people with physical/sensory/relational disabilities. The data of the participants, collected through the compilation of questionnaires, were processed by STATA software.**Results**Overall, 516 individuals joined the initiative (50 from families): 16% declared at least one disability (mostly Down syndrome, followed by visual impairment and spastic tetraparesis) and 11.5% chronic-degenerative diseases (e.g. diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hyperthyroidism). Initially, 41% of the participants were overweight (28.2%) or obese (12.8%); the daily fruit/vegetable consumption was 1-2 portions *versus* 5 recommended by WHO; the participants claimed to do a sedentary job (75%), to move by car (46.2%) and not to engage in any physical activity (45%). After six months of project activities, the consumption of sweets/snacks decreased by 3%, while the fruit/vegetable consumption increased by 3-4 portions a day. The participants said they had reduced the use of the car in favour of walking (6%).**Discussion**The first phase of this project highlights an improvement in lifestyles, including a better perception of one's own psycho-physical well-being, thus improving the level of socialization both within the family and outside. The authors hope to increase the positive feedback by the end of the project and to extend it nationwide.**Keywords**Health Promotion, parks, social inclusion  |