

## **Abstract Title**

The role of the Youth Advisory Group (YAG) in implementing nutrition interventions for the South Asian Adolescent Diabetes Awareness Program (SAADAP)

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## **Abstract**

**Purpose:** The South Asian Adolescent Diabetes Awareness Program (SAADAP) is a research-based health promotion program developed to increase awareness and knowledge of diabetes prevention strategies for South Asian (SA) adolescents with a family history of diabetes. The research team established a Youth Advisory Group (YAG) to capture youth perspectives, needs and recommendations to implement nutrition interventions for the study.

**Summary of Content:** We recruited YAG members to participate in three focus groups (N=4 each) in April and May, 2017; and one pilot test (N=2) in November, 2017. Feedback suggested that participants have a range of eating out (fast foods) frequency i.e. from once a year to once a day. They have limited involvement in cooking and grocery shopping at home. YAG members urged the researchers to include: hands-on engaging activities; content on learning to read nutrition labels; cooking with various dietary restrictions and information on diabetes and its complications.

**Systematic Approach Used:** A community-based participatory research approach to guide the study has been utilized. This approach involves youth to be engaged in the research process and create social change through a collaborative partnership with the research team. Our aim for the YAG is to empower SA adolescents to contribute to positive and culturally-relevant health promotion experiences for their community.

**Conclusions:** This program encourages researchers and dietitians to consider youth to participate and provide leadership in research studies to guide nutritional interventions.

**Recommendations (for researchers):** Youth engagement should be considered for diabetes prevention in the SA population; Researchers should empower youth members to become leaders of their communities; Researchers should provide adequate incentives for youth to participate in research studies (e.g. volunteer hours).

**Significance to the field of dietetics:** Youth involvement in the development of nutritional interventions provided key insights into SA adolescents' dietary patterns that have both western and cultural influences.