



ACTIVE FOR LIFE



DANCE FOR FITNESS

**A HEALTH AND FITNESS PROJECT FOR ARABIC
SPEAKING WOMEN IN THE EASTERN SUBURBS
OF MELBOURNE**

An Evaluation Report

**A Collaborative Project between Family Planning
Victoria, Migrant Information Centre (Eastern
Melbourne), Network of Australian Muslim Women and
Donvale Living and Learning Centre**

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1 Introduction

“Dance for Fitness” was a six-month project from April to September 2000 funded by the VicHealth Active for Life Grants Scheme targeting Muslim women residing in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. Arabic speaking women from non-Muslim backgrounds were also welcome. The project was managed by Family Planning Victoria and supported by the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne), the Network of Australian Muslim Women and Donvale Living and Learning Centre.

A Planning Group with representatives from each of the participating agencies was established to plan and promote activities for the project, which consisted of two terms of Dabkeh Dance classes, one term of aerobics, women’s health information sessions and a Muslim Women’s Health Festival. As the majority of women who participated in the project were Muslim, activities were developed to meet the needs of this community. This report is an evaluation of each activity from both the perspective of participants and the planning group.

2 Evaluation Method

Feedback sheets were developed and distributed to participants at the end of each term of the Dabkeh Dance sessions, aerobics, at each health information session and to all adults who attended the festival. In addition, a discussion group was held at the end of the project with the workers from all participating agencies. This discussion enabled the Planning Group to reflect on project successes, areas for improvement from a planning perspective and what they had learnt from the project and how it would affect their management of future community development projects.

3 Background

In July 1999, the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (MIC) held a focus group with Arabic speaking women as part of the development of a needs analysis of migrant communities and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds residing in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne.¹

The focus group was promoted and facilitated by Rokaya Nabulsi from the Network of Australian Muslim Women. During the discussion, women raised a number of issues including the need for women’s health information and access to culturally appropriate sporting facilities for healthy exercise. This was particularly important for Muslim women who require women’s only venues to participate in active sports and exercise.

A representative from Family Planning Victoria was a member of the steering committee in the development of the MIC’s needs analysis. She approached the MIC and the Network of Australian Muslim Women to make a submission to VicHealth Active for Life Grants Scheme for a collaborative project to meet the needs of Arabic speaking women including Muslim women in relation to women’s health and healthy exercise using a community development approach.

¹ The report of the needs analysis “Making a Future” is available on the MIC’s web page www.miceastmelb.com.au.

4 Project Objectives

The objectives for the project were to:

- Enable Arabic speaking women to have access to exercise facilities within a culturally respectful environment particularly in relation to privacy, safety and affordability,
- Provide opportunities for Muslim women to learn and be informed of relevant women's health issues so that these women will take action for their own health,
- Initiate and promote community collaboration between the Network of Australian Muslim Women, the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne), neighbourhood houses and health and recreation service providers, and
- Encourage and support positive participation from the Muslim women through the leadership of the Network of Australian Muslim Women and other participating agencies.

5 Project Aims

The anticipated outcomes of the project included:

- Women will be better informed about the value of physical activity and women's health issues and continue to access aerobic and dance classes and encourage their peers to participate,
- Women will have more knowledge and begin to access local social and health activities from neighbourhood houses and community health centres, and
- Service providers will be better informed of the cultural and religious needs of women from Arabic speaking backgrounds including Muslim women to deliver more effective programs to this community.

6 Project Promotion

Each activity was promoted through an extensive mail out to individual homes, Islamic and Arabic support agencies, local Mosques, Islamic web sites and ethnic radio.

Muslim women on the Network of Australian Muslim Women and the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) mailing lists received invitations in the post for each activity. Notices were also mailed to community health centres, major hospitals, women's health organisations, multicultural health centres and Islamic organisations. Notices were distributed in Mosques and the Arabic Children's Sunday School and placed on four local Islamic web sites. Rokaya Nabulsi from the Network of Australian Muslim Women promoted the project and individual activities on Arabic radio.

Word of mouth and invitations from friends and agencies of which the women were familiar appeared to be the most effective promotion for all activities throughout the project. However, the non-Muslim Arabic speaking women who participated in activities learnt about the project through Arabic radio.

7 Healthy Exercise for Muslim Women

7.1 Dabkeh Dancing

Dabkeh Dancing is a Middle Eastern folk dance that enables women to dance together, have fun, listen to Middle Eastern music and improve coordination, balance and fitness. Approximately 8 weeks of dancing sessions were held at the Donvale Living and Learning Centre, a local neighbourhood house, over two terms coinciding with terms two and three of the school year. Participants were asked to pay \$32 in advance per term and \$2 per hour per child for childcare.

Classes for the first term were taken by an Arabic-speaking woman who was known to many of the participants. She was not available to continue in the second term of the project so it was necessary to engage a new teacher. The second teacher was also of Arabic speaking background and was known to many of the women.

7.1.1 Participation

Participation rates varied over the two terms - ten women participated in the first term and three in the second term of classes. The number of women who attended the second term was disappointing given the positive response of participants in the first term and their indication that they would return for the second term. Only two women completed both terms. Rokaya Nabulsi from the Network of Australian Muslim Women attended most sessions to encourage the women to continue and to promote the project. In addition, Louise Marsdon, a women's health educator from Family Planning Victoria also attended the sessions so she could get to know the women and find out about their interests in women's health.

7.1.2 Background of participants

Table 1 - Country of Birth and Language Spoken by Participants of Dabkeh Dancing over Terms 1 and 2

Country of Birth	Language	No. of Participants
Lebanon	Arabic	5
Jordan	Arabic	2
Kuwait	Arabic	1
Egypt	Arabic	2
Australia	English	1
Syria	Arabic	2
Total		13

7.1.3 Childcare

In the first term, four women required childcare – two women had two children each and two women required childcare for one child each. In the second term, childcare was required for two children of two of the participants.

In order to manage childcare arrangements and meet government requirements, childcare needed to be booked and paid for in advance to cover the costs of providing the appropriate number of carers based on the number of children using the centre. Many of the women chose to pay as they went and in some instances, participants did not advise

the childcare centre if they were unable to attend the session for that week. This meant that the childcare centre lost income because it was too late to enrol other children or to cancel additional staff required on the day.

Although participants were advised of the procedure, the Planning Group believes that the project would have benefited if an Orientation Day had been arranged to assist mothers to complete childcare forms, learn about centre procedures and requirements, and become more familiar with the venue and the programs provided. Other advantages would include:

- Meeting the Planning Group and gaining an understanding of the aims and objectives of the overall project,
- Meeting the teacher and learning about the program and program requirements such as appropriate dress and shoes, and
- Meeting other women who had enrolled in the program.

7.1.4 Participant Satisfaction

At the end of each term, participants were asked to complete a feedback sheet (see attachment 1) to measure their level of satisfaction with the classes. Of the total thirteen women who participated in the Dabkeh Dance classes over two terms, seven (54%) completed and returned the feedback sheet.

Of these, all reported being pleased with Dabkeh Dancing as a way of promoting fitness and exercise for Muslim women as well as being pleased with the teacher. In relation to costs, six participants reported being pleased and one reported that she was neither pleased nor displeased. In relation to class times, which were held on Mondays from 12.30 to 1.30pm, four reported being pleased, two neither pleased nor displeased, and one disappointed. The time for the classes was chosen because of the availability of the venue and childcare places, and to allow the women time to meet family commitments and complete daily prayers.

7.1.5 Venue

Participants were asked to tick from a list, the descriptions that best described their views about the venue. They could mark as many boxes as they wished. Table 2 indicates their responses to this question.

Table 2 – Description of venue by the number of participants

Description of Venue	No. of Participants
Central location	6
Adequate parking	7
Private facilities for Muslim women	7
Good childcare facilities	4
Good amenities	4
Other	-

The overall satisfaction with the venue was high. All the women who completed the feedback sheet found the parking and privacy offered at the venue suitable. As most participants resided in the City of Manningham, the venue was considered centrally located. It should be noted that one woman travelled a long distance to attend the sessions and she was unable to complete the second term due to rising petrol costs.

7.1.6 Promotion of classes

On enrollment, women were asked how they heard about the sessions. Of those who responded, five heard about the classes through friends and a flyer mailed to their home, one through her sister and one through SBS radio.

7.1.7 Future Health Activities

To assist us to plan fitness and health activities in the future, women were given a list of suggestions to indicate their interest in other activities. Table 3 provides a summary of the activities the women indicated an interest in by the number of participants.

Table 3 – Fitness and health activities by the number of interested participants

Description of Venue	No. of Participants
Women’s swimming sessions	6
Information sessions on women’s health	2
Netball	2
Aerobics	2
Walking	4
Volleyball	4
Other	-

Swimming was identified as a major need for Muslim women. Many local pools do not meet their privacy requirements, which is a major barrier for accessing public swimming facilities. The Network of Australian Muslim Women and the MIC’s Muslim Women’s Group² identified a suitable pool in the City of Banyule and were successful in receiving a small local government grant to subsidise the costs of hiring the swimming facilities on a regular basis. Since August 2000, swimming is available on a weekly basis for two hours per week every Friday during school terms. At the time of writing this report, attendance has been high with approximately 60 to 70 women and children attending each week.

7.1.8 Comments

Two participants provided comments on the feedback sheets. One wrote: “I was not pleased with the information sessions. I understand the people were not attending. However, the presentation was lacking substance.” The other wrote: “I have young children who have a midday nap. It would be more convenient to have classes at 10 or

² The MIC Muslim Women’s Group meet on a monthly basis at the MIC to plan and meet the needs of Muslim women as identified in the MIC’s needs analysis.

11am. Then I would be able to stay for the health information sessions.” The health information sessions will be discussed further in this report.

7.2 Aerobics

At the focus group for the MIC’s needs analysis, aerobics was raised as an activity that would increase the fitness of Muslim women. The need for private facilities that men could not access was identified as a major issue for Muslim women joining aerobics classes that are available to other women in the local community. As a result, aerobics was identified as an activity that would be subsidised as part of the project and a professional female aerobics instructor was hired to provide nine weekly aerobic sessions at the Donvale Living and Learning Centre on Wednesdays from 12.30 to 1.30pm.

7.2.1 Participation

Although seven women indicated interest in joining the group, only three women and Rokaya Nabulsi from the Network of Australian Muslim Women participated in the classes offered through this project. As a result of low attendance and the high costs for hiring the teacher and venue, aerobics was only provided for one term of the project rather than two as originally planned.

The low attendance rate for the aerobics was discussed at a meeting of the MIC’s Muslim Women’s Group. Reasons given included:

- Fernwood Women’s Fitness Centre had commenced a new promotion enabling women to join at \$90 for 12 weeks with unlimited access over the period. This issue was particularly important as a mistake was made with the price of the aerobics session in the initial advertising – the sessions were advertised in the first notice at \$64 for nine weekly sessions instead of \$32 per term.
- Fernwood Women’s Fitness Centre provided showers and changing facilities after sessions, which were not available at Donvale Living and Learning Centre.
- One session per week was not considered enough to increase fitness.

Nevertheless, the small number of women who attended enabled the instructor to pace the classes at the level of the individual and as a result, the three participants became noticeably fitter by the end of the program.

7.2.2 Background of participants

Table 4 - Country of Birth and Language Spoken by Participants of Dabkeh Dancing over Terms 1 and 2

Country of Birth	Language	No. of Participants
Lebanon	Arabic	2
Australia	English	1
Total		3

The three women who attended aerobics did not require childcare.

7.2.3 Participant Satisfaction

At the end of the term, participants were asked to complete a feedback sheet (see attachment 2) to measure their level of satisfaction with the classes. Of the three participants, one woman and the instructor completed and returned the feedback sheet.

The feedback response from the one participant indicated that she was pleased with the aerobics teacher and the exercise as a way of promoting fitness. She was also pleased with the venue, cost and the times for sessions. Other activities she would be interested in included women's swimming sessions, netball, Dabkeh Dancing and volleyball. Her final comments were: "I wish they could have continued the aerobic classes."

The instructor felt that the women who attended regularly were generally pleased with the classes and became more fit even though "it was difficult at times due to the fluctuations in numbers and the varying fitness levels" of participants. This is consistent with the verbal feedback provided to Louise Marsdon and Pat Hill from Family Planning Victoria.

8 Women's Health Information Sessions

In the initial phase of the project, Family Planning Victoria planned to discuss women's health issues before Dabkeh Dancing and aerobics classes as well as arrange information sessions in a more formal setting during the evening so that a larger group of women could attend. The aim was to support the women who participated in the fitness activities by encouraging them to talk about women's health issues in a supportive, informal environment and to provide opportunities for other women who could not attend the fitness activities to attend the information sessions in the evenings.

The first attempt at meeting with the group may have also influenced people's perceptions and understanding of health information sessions. At the first meeting only five women could arrive early and they were asked to move to a small kitchen area, as another group was using the venue. Childcare was also not available. The approach was informal and involved open discussion. The benefits of this approach may not have been understood by women whose expectation may have included a more structured educational approach. The change in focus was perceived as nonprofessional.

A further attempt was made to hold information sessions after classes. However, most women who participated in the fitness activities were unable to stay after classes. Reasons for this varied from needing to collect children from childcare, lack of interest and preferring to go home and shower and change after strenuous activity.

As a result, two formal information sessions were held in the evenings – one at Donvale Living and Learning Centre and another at Family Planning Victoria. The first session was on healthy eating and the second session on women's health. Two additional health sessions were held at the festival – one on "Women's Health After the Birth of a Baby" and the second on "Women's Health and Menopause".

For the evening sessions, attendance was low. However, this may improve following the high attendance at the health information sessions held at the festival where approximately 30 to 40 attended each session. Individual reasons such as time of the

year, working parents, caring for children and weather conditions may have impacted on attendance for the evening sessions.

Family Planning Victoria will follow up with women who participated in the project in 6 months time and invite them to another session or workshop. In addition, it is likely that the Planning Group will participate in Women's Health Week in late February, early March for the City of Manningham.

8.1 "Healthy Eating and Exercise" Women's Health Information Session

The "Healthy Eating and Exercise" Health Information Session included a halal cooking demonstration and a talk on nutrition and cooking techniques by a Muslim chef as well as a presentation by Louise Marsdon from Family Planning Victoria on nutrition and health. Three women attended the session. However, it should be noted that the weather was particularly stormy, wet and cold on the evening the session was held.

The women were asked to complete a feedback sheet (see attachment 3). All three women were pleased with the venue, speakers and the overall session including the topics covered and the cooking demonstration. Comments made included: "Loved this evening a lot, well done" and "Thanks it is a good workshop". All three found out about the session through a flyer received in the mail. Other health issues participants indicated an interest in included breast health, menopause, mental health and parenting.

8.2 "Women's Health" Information Session

Louise Marsdon from Family Planning Victoria facilitated the second evening health session and covered women's health issues including young women's health, pregnancy, midlife health and a healthy body image. The session which four women attended was held at Family Planning Victoria in Box Hill and included a tour of the agency and information about their services.

The women completed a feedback sheet (see attachment 4) which indicated they were pleased with the overall session, the speaker and the topics covered during the session. In relation to the venue, three women felt it was a central location, two indicated adequate parking was available and three described the venue as private facilities for Muslim women. Three women heard about the session through a notice mailed to their home and one woman through word of mouth. Three women were pleased with the timing of the session and one woman neither pleased nor displeased. Other topics of interest identified by the participants included breast health (1), menopause (1), mental health (4), adolescent health (2) and parenting (3).

9 *Muslim Women's Health Festival*

To celebrate the end of the project, a Muslim Women's Health Festival was held on a Sunday afternoon in a local community arts and exhibition centre incorporating activities for women, men and children. The festival was a success with approximately 115 men, women and children attending.

Activities for women included an arts and crafts exhibition, a fashion parade, a Dabkeh Dance demonstration and two women's health sessions facilitated by Muslim GPs.

Activities for the children included story telling by the Arabic Cultural School,³ door prizes and a man in a chicken suite developed for the Chicken Pox vaccination promotion campaign. A male GP was available to conduct men’s health checks and a female nurse was available for female health checks. In addition, halal food and drinks could be purchased in the kitchen and lounge area of the venue from a cook known to the many families within the Muslim community.

Several agencies were invited to promote their services at the festival. Three agencies Maroondah Breastscreen, Bulleen and Templestowe Community House and Donvale Living and Learning Centre provided brochures and pamphlets for display at the festival. The Quit Campaign, Family Planning Victoria and the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) provided a display and staff to talk to people directly about their services.

9.1 Community Satisfaction

Each adult who attended the festival was given a feedback sheet to complete at the end of the event. The feedback sheet was designed to measure the overall level of satisfaction with the festival and each activity the person attended. Questions were also included about the person’s age, gender, how they found out about the festival and other topics on which they would like information. People were also asked to identify three messages they learnt from the festival and would take home with them. Only twenty-four people completed and returned the survey, which is summarised below.

9.1.1 Age and Gender

Of those who completed the feedback sheet, twenty-two were female, one male and one unknown. Table 5 shows the age range of those women who attended the festival and completed the survey. The age range of the male who completed the survey is unknown.

Table 5 – Age range of women who completed the feedback sheet and attended the festival

Age	No. of women
Less than 20 year	4
20 to 30 years	4
31 to 40 years	4
41 to 50 years	4
Greater than 50 years	4
Not specified	2
Total	22

Many women attended the festival with their husbands and children and their mothers and other extended family members. People were asked to fill out an attendance list as they arrived. Although the majority of people who attended lived in the eastern suburbs, some families came from other suburbs of Melbourne including Bentleigh, Carlton, Cranbourne, Dandenong, Lalor, Moonee Ponds, North Melbourne, Pascoe Vale, Richmond, and Tullamarine.

³ The “Arabic Cultural School” teaches children Arabic language and culture on Sundays.

9.1.2 Level of Satisfaction with the Festival

People were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction on a scale from “1” poor to “5” very good. The overall level of satisfaction with the festival was high. Of those twenty-four who completed the survey, twenty-two people responded to this question – eight people gave it the highest rating of “very good” (5), eleven gave it a rating of “good” (4) and three people rated it as “average” (3).

These responses are consistent with the ratings respondents gave to the individual activities they attended which are summarised below in Table 6.

Table 6 – Level of satisfaction with activities by the number of people who gave the same rating

Activity	Very Good (5)	Good (4)	Average (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)
Men’s Health Assessment	1	-	-	-	-
Women’s Health Information – post natal	7	3	-	-	-
Women’s Health Information – menopause	6	3	1	-	-
Dabkeh Dance Demonstration	11	5	4	1	-
Fashion Parade	9	8	2	1	-
Women’s Health Assessment	4	3	1	-	-
Health Service Stands	3	4	1	-	-
Art & Craft Exhibition	9	1	3	-	2

9.1.3 Festival Promotion

Respondents were asked how they heard about the festival. Fourteen people responded to this question. Of those, half (7) heard about the festival through friends and family, three people saw flyers, two found out through the Arabic school and two people saw an advertisement of the festival on their e-mail.

9.1.4 Key messages

Only seven people responded to this question. Each person who responded took home with them a different key message. However, four talked about what they learnt from the health sessions. Others noted Arabic culture, food and hijab, the importance of community and community arts, and the fun activities available for the children.

9.1.5 Other areas of community interest

Seven people responded to this question. The feedback sheet listed other general topics of interest and respondents were asked to tick each topic of which they have an interest in knowing more about. Table 7 is a summary of their responses.

Table 7 – Other topics of interest by number of respondents

Other topics of interest	No. of respondents
Women’s health	5
Mental health	4
Adolescent health	7
Available health services	3
Breast Health	3
Parenting	3
Men’s health	2
Other	2

The additional topics suggested by two respondents included youth and assisting young unmarried Muslim women in forming relationships and finding a partner of their choice. The issue raised by the most respondents involved adolescent health including social issues for young people.

9.1.6 Suggestions for improvement of the festival

Six respondents suggested improvements to the festival. These included:

- More turn up, interaction, fun, humour, short succinct Islamic lectures, Islamic music (Yusuf Islamic, David Wharnsby Ali)
- More fun for children e.g. jumping castle, hot food i.e. sausage sizzle, hijab sales
- Send out a notice to more people
- Longer time for women’s health programmes and issues
- “Bigger”
- More health information for young people (teens)

Other comments to the same question included: “Nothing – it was really great. It’s really good that FPV and VicHealth did this for us.” And finally, “I am very impressed with the good work. May Allah guide you in your endeavours . . . most enlightening especially for the young.”

10 Reflections from the Planning Group

The Planning Group gained considerable experience and learning from the implementation of the project and the individual activities completed as part of the project. On the basis of attendance levels and participant feedback, the first term of Dabkeh Dancing and the Women’s Health Festival were the most successful activities. However, the second term of Dabkeh Dancing, the aerobics and the health information sessions were successful for those few people who attended and completed the course.

10.2 Dabkeh Dancing

Dabkeh Dancing enabled women to preserve their culture and work with a teacher from the same cultural and language background. As a result, in first term, attendance and

enrolments were high and the women showed enthusiasm and had fun as well as worked hard and exercised for fitness.

As a result of this project, Dabkeh Dancing lessons will be provided for children and young women after classes at the Arabic Cultural School.

10.2 Women's Health Festival

The festival was a success both from the perspective of the people who attended as well as the organisers. The following factors contributed to this success:

- Appropriate timing on a Sunday afternoon when families usually relax and socialise,
- Activities were available for the whole family including women, men and children – Muslim women are more likely to attend community functions and activities if they can bring their family with them,
- Involving the Arabic Cultural School to provide activities for the children encouraged parents to come and bring their children,
- Speakers for the two women's health information sessions at the festival were local GPs from the same religious background – approximately 30 to 40 women attended each session,
- People were able to take time out to chat, eat and drink together,
- The hijab fashion parade encouraged young women to come,
- Men were able to meet together close to food and coffee in a café environment, and
- Appropriate activities such as the storytelling and the man in the chicken suit were available for the younger children.

Despite the success of the festival, more activities were required for young people particularly young men and children aged between 8 to 13 years. (The children's activities were suitable for younger children.) Activities needed to be developed to target these age groups so they could be occupied and settled. In addition, as the venue was shared with other groups, the high number of children in the venue and the timing of activities became an issue.

Many people came to the festival late as it was the first day of daylight saving, which affected prayer time. Prior to daylight saving, prayer time was at 12.30pm and the festival was planned to commence at 1pm. With the advent of daylight saving, prayer time was at 1.30pm. The late start affected the timing of events and particularly those activities held in rooms that had been booked by other groups.

10.3 Planning collaborative projects

The Planning Group gained considerable experience in working together on the project particularly in relation to the need for clear roles and common understandings of aims and objectives, expectations and planning procedures.

The worker from Family Planning Victoria who initially approached the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) and the Network of Australian Muslim Women

was unable to continue working on the project. New staff - the Project Manager and the health educator - were appointed from Family Planning Victoria to manage the project and work in partnership with representatives from the other agencies. The change in management meant that particularly in the initial stages of the project, the planning group did not share common understandings of their role and procedures for implementing the project, which caused some frustration and misunderstanding.

Collaborative interagency community development projects are resource intensive and require a significant amount of staff time in meeting together, administrative tasks, promotion and delivery of programs and activities. The Planning Group would have benefited from a planning day to develop an action plan, to reach agreement on how the planning group will work together and to clarify expectations of organisers as well as participants. For future joint projects, this procedure will be implemented.

10.4 Key Findings

The key findings of the project in relation to planning and facilitation, promotion and participation and culturally appropriate activities are listed below.

10.4.1 Planning and Facilitation

Collaborative interagency community development projects are resource intensive and require a significant amount of staff time in meeting together and completing administrative tasks, promotion and delivery of programs and activities.

An agreed action plan, aims and objectives of the project and the role of each member of the planning working group needs to be developed in the initial stages of collaborative community development projects.

10.4.2 Promotion and Participation

Promotion and involvement by a respected community worker such as Rokaya Nabulsi from the Network of Australian Muslim women encourages community involvement in community development projects

Word of mouth and personal invitations mailed to participant's homes are effective promotional strategies for Muslim women residing in the eastern suburbs.

Arabic radio is an effective strategy for promoting projects to the broader Arabic speaking community.

A number of personal circumstances can influence an individual's willingness to participate in activities. For example, timing of sessions, the part of the year sessions are held, weather conditions, cost (including costs not directly related to project costs such as petrol costs), availability of alternative options (such as the Fernwood promotion) and family and prayer needs.

10.4.3 Culturally Appropriate Activities

Participants are more likely to attend culturally appropriate exercise activities facilitated by an instructor from the same cultural background.

For projects consisting of a number of separate activities, an introduction session and orientation is required to advise participants of the overall project and to cover housekeeping issues and provide assistance such as childcare, payment, shoes and dress, level of fitness, etc.

Activities involving the whole family including extended family members will encourage women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to attend health information sessions and community development activities.