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Active Living RESEARCH

Lessons Learned from Building
A New Field of Study

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www.activelivingresearch.org

Active Living Research Mission

Stimulate and support research that will identify environmental factors and policies that influence physical activity.

Findings are expected to inform environmental and policy change that will promote active living among all Americans.

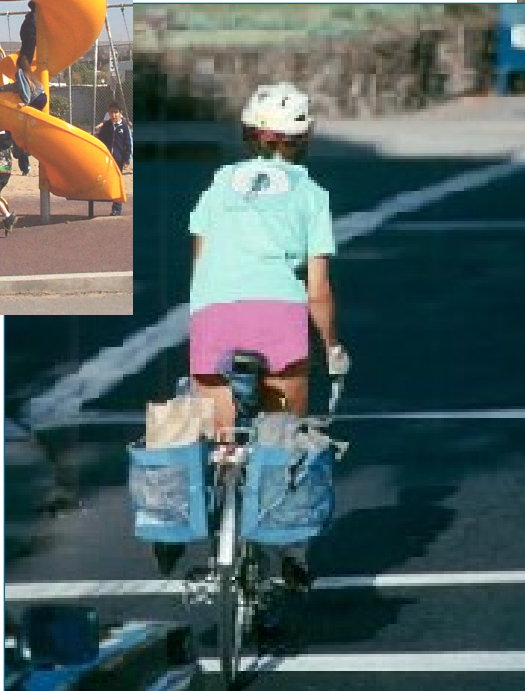


Active Living Research Goals

- Establish a strong research base
 - Administer a \$12.5 million research budget over 5 years
- Build a transdisciplinary field of researchers
- Inform policy change



People are active in a variety of places



Field Building

Cultivating New Relationships

- Architecture
- Environment & Behavior
- Geography
- Landscape Architecture
- Parks & Recreation
- Planning
- Transportation
- Criminology
- Economics/Law/Policy
- Advocates/Policymakers



Building a Transdisciplinary Field: Academic Diplomacy

- Multidisciplinary advisory committee
- Recruiting non-traditional partners of relevance to active living & health through talks at conferences
 - Inviting participation
- Broad distribution of Calls for Proposals
- Seminar grants to organizations to bring speakers from other fields



Building a Transdisciplinary Field: Walk the Talk

- Need for transdisciplinary teams highlighted in Calls for Proposals & pre-application calls
- Proposals reviewed by multiple disciplines
- Academic (and personal) diversity considered in
 - Funding recommendations
 - Conference committee & chair
 - Sponsored publications & symposia
 - Staffing
- Annual Review of Public Health 2006 paper on new transdisciplinary field



Building a Transdisciplinary Field: Annual Conference

- ALR Conference is only venue for all disciplines to interact on equal footing
- Teaches concepts & methods from multiple disciplines & stimulates relationship-building
- 1st conf: Stokols presented on transdisciplinary research
- 3rd conf: panel of editors from multiple fields
- Journal supplements & free-access articles extend value of conference



ALR Conference Evaluation: % rated 4 or 5

Item	2004	2005	2006
Stimulated ideas likely to lead to changes in my research	86	88	74
Learned new concepts from another discipline likely to enhance my work	89	79	84
New contacts might lead to collaboration	94	91	93
Builds capacity to conduct transdisciplinary studies	93	93	88



Evidence of Progress in Creating a Transdisciplinary Field

- Grantee PI's from 20 different disciplines
- 34% of PI's not doing active living research before ALR grant
- 85% of PI's established new collaborations outside their field



Feedback from Grantees

- ***“ALR has broadened my scope into public health issues, helping me to collaborate with folks in that field. It has been tremendously helpful in making those bridges.”***
- ***“ALR provided incentives for researchers from different fields to work together and forge long-term commitments to joint projects.”***
- ***“I was planning park policies and programs before I became interested in physical activity research. Park planning makes much more sense now.”***



ALR's Vision

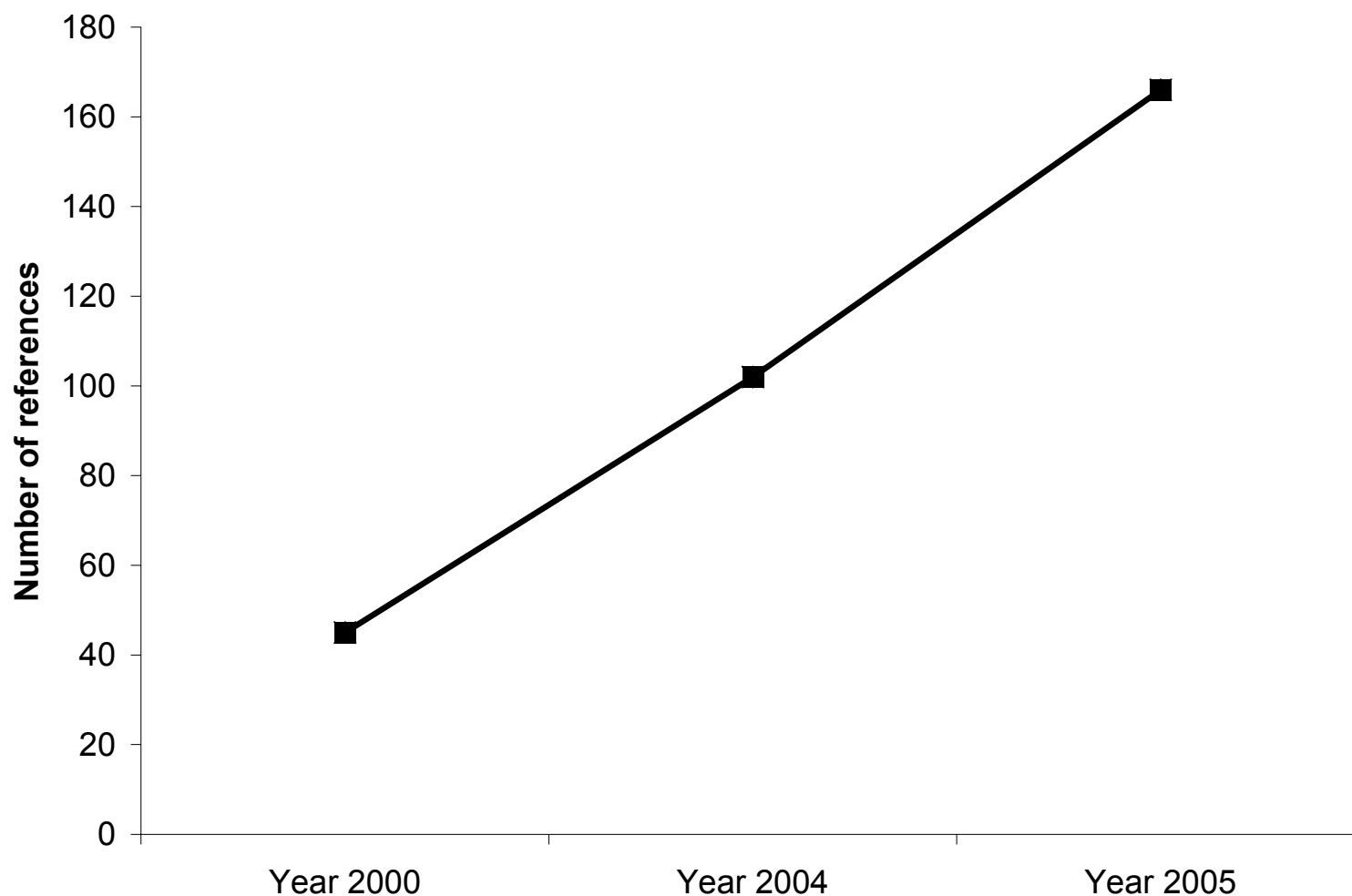
More of this



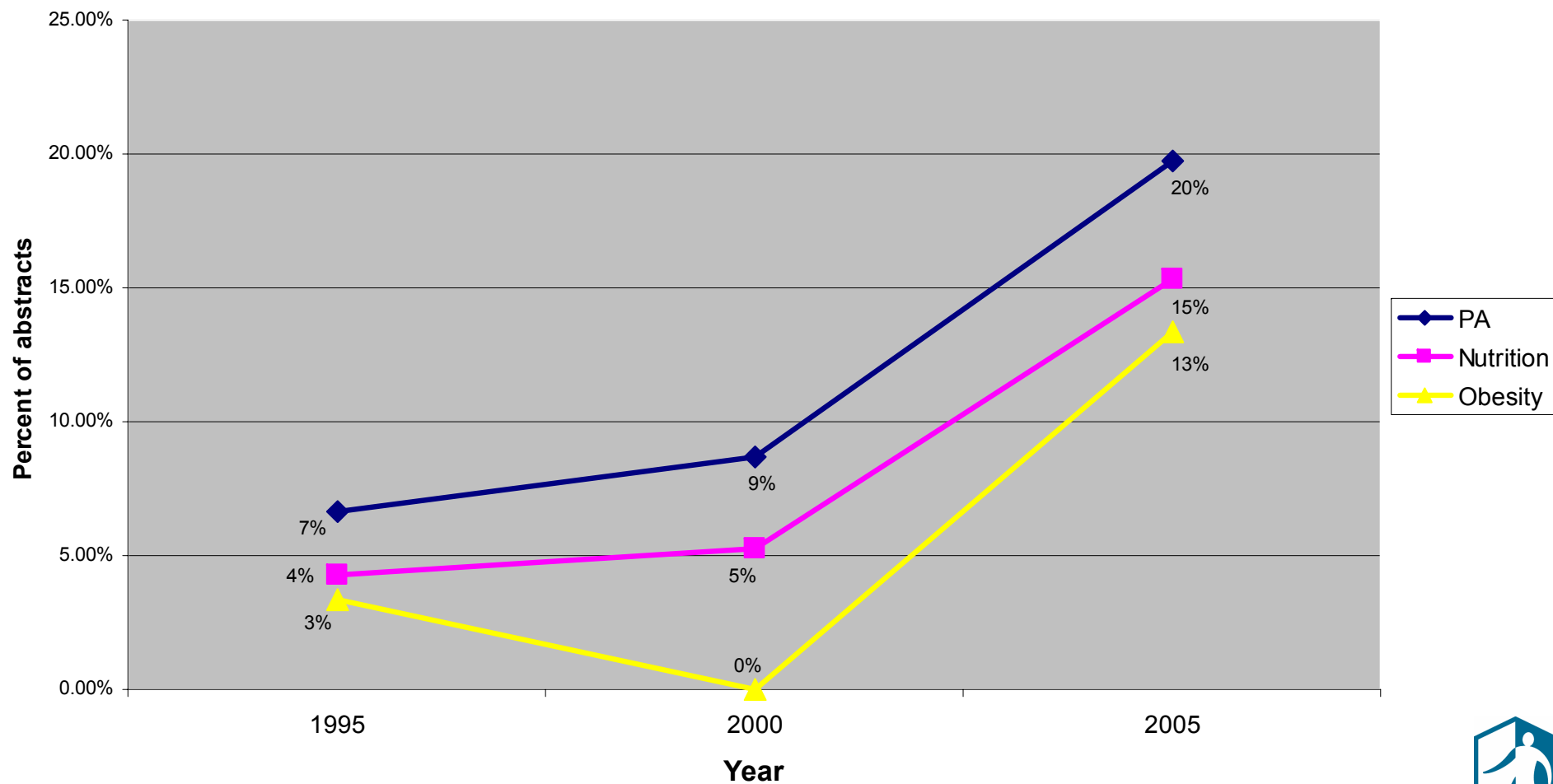
Less of this



Number of articles on physical activity, sedentary behavior and obesity with environment or policy content, 2000-2005



Environment/Policy SBM Abstracts



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