

Baby Hot Wheels

Overview



- **Program Objective:** Provide a convenient, free-of-charge physical activity opportunity to new parents who can get in shape and meet others without hiring a child care provider
- **MTF:** NAVSUB Base New London
- **Implementation Dates:** March 2014 - Present
- **To reach local point of contacts, visit [MilitaryInstallations](#)**
- **Total Force Fitness Domains:** Physical, Social, Medical, Behavioral

Program Description



- Free on-base fitness class with a qualified instructor for parents with stroller-age children, including circuit training, strength training, and core workouts
- An average of 15-25 adults (with 1-2 children each) meet 2x per week outside on the track during March-November and 1x per week inside a gym during December-February
- Program began in response to requests about classes for new moms to get back in shape , especially opportunities that include children
- Marketed through flyers, posters, and handouts at all facilities, the SUBASE Facebook page, and the base newspaper, "The Dolphin"

Evidence of Program Effectiveness



- In **Spring 2014, 20-25 adults** (with 1-2 children each) attended regularly 2x per week
- During the **summer, 12-15 adults** (with 1-2 children each) regularly attended at least 15 of 24 group classes
- In the **fall, 15-20 adults** (with 1-2 children each) attended regularly 2x per week
- Participants are now taking other fitness classes and making use of the new Family Fitness Center
- Several academic studies demonstrate the positive effect postnatal exercise has on physical , social and mental health

Costs and Required Resources



- Approx. 9 hours /week of planning and teaching by an onsite certified trainer (approx. \$13 -\$16/hr)
- Equipment and facilities are covered through the athletic budget
- No advertising or marketing fees

Lessons Learned



- **Weather-dependence** makes it difficult to continue at full-force year round and requires flexibility (e.g. in the hottest months the class moved from 0930 to 0830)
- **Develop a relationship with the MTF** to facilitate referrals from providers and dietitians
- Link HBI efforts (e.g. having Share our Strength commissary tours or Dietitian talks post workout) to **multiply positive impacts** and expand the reach of the program
- Having **onsite instructors/trainers allows for the classes to remain free**. If the fitness center was required to contract out for instructors it would likely have to charge for participation

Baby Hot Wheels Overview and Evidence of Effectiveness

Program Overview

Sample Class Schedule:

1. **Dynamic warm-up:** Walk briskly around the track 1-2x
2. **Cardio/strength:** Walk/run intervals, jogging/ running, circuit training stations alternating cardio with resistance training, walking lunges with stroller, squats with stroller
3. **Conix box:** TRX (suspension training), resistance training with bands, stability and Bosu ball training, light weight training with free weights
4. **Core training:** abdominal, lower back, and hip flexor flexibility
5. **Cool down and relaxation**

Some class periods include added program content:

- Dietitian visits to the class
- Commissary tours
- Wellness/nutrition handouts, including recipe makeovers and healthy cooking tips

Value of Postpartum Fitness Programs

- Published studies suggest that **postpartum exercise has the capacity to improve aerobic fitness and psychological well-being** ¹
- Vigorous exercisers demonstrated a consistent pattern of **better scores on measures of postpartum adaptation and were more likely than nonexercisers to participate in fun activities**, such as socializing, hobbies, and entertainment ²
- Women who participated in an exercise support program were **less likely to have high depression scores** after childbirth when compared with the control group ³
- Mothers participating Stroll Your Way To Well Being®, a community stroller-walking program, reported benefits to be the **opportunity to exercise, socialize and share information about baby issues**. 70% of mothers were still walking 16 months after the program's commencement ⁴
- Mothers participating in a stroller-walking intervention group **improved their fitness levels and reduced their level of depressive symptomatology** significantly more than mothers solely in a social support group ⁵

¹ Effect of Postpartum Exercise on Mothers and their Offspring: A Review of the Literature

² Physical Activity and Postpartum Well-Being

³ Effectiveness of an Exercise Support Program in Reducing the Severity of Postnatal Depression in Taiwanese Women

⁴ Pramwalking as postnatal exercise and support

⁵ The effectiveness of a pram-walking exercise program in reducing depressive symptomatology for postnatal women

What the Participants are Saying

"The friendships I've made are a huge relief for me, since my husband is deployed. Some of us have scheduled playdates after class, now that we have met new people."⁶

"The instructors are very knowledgeable and guide us safely through each class. It's fun and I look forward to it each week!"⁶



<http://www.dolphin-news.com/articles/2014/05/15/life/doc53738dbdbe820756944310.txt>

"My body bounced right back by being able to attend this class after my six week post baby checkup. I am so thankful we have this class at this base."⁶

⁶ Comments made by participants to Baby Hot Wheels instructor