Task 1 Y-Change

Megan E. Gallo

Old Dominion University

**The YMCA**

The agency that I am choosing to evaluate is the YMCA of South Hampton Roads. The YMCA is centered for “youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.” The YMCA is a center for many things, not just exercising and fitness like most people assume it is. After further research, I found out that the YMCA offers tutoring programs, afterschool care, and social development programs (tied in with fitness). The YMCA has forces throughout the entire United States and has been around for almost 160 years. The YMCA has influenced the creation of many sports such as basketball, volleyball, and racquetball. Many outside programs were also supported through the YMCA such as Boy Scouts of America, and Camp Fire Girls (YMCA,2017). In 1885 the first YMCA of South Hampton Roads was started right here in Norfolk(YMCA,2017), and from there on YMCA started to flourish and many others were built along the way. Just think of how many you pass on your way home from work or school every day.

**Mission and Purpose**

The Y’s purpose and mission revolve around social change. Every day the Y works to strengthen the community with personnel that will “work side by side with our neighbors to make sure that everyone, regardless of age, income or background, has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive” (YMCA,2017). The Y also stands by four main points to deliver the positive change which are, “the Y is community centered, the Y brings people together, the Y nurtures potential, and the Y has local presence and global reach” (YMCA,2017). The program that I chose to look at within the Y is called Y-Change. Y-Change is open to all age groups and even split up so that you are with people of your age so it is easier for you to make a connection with fellow members along your journey. Y-Change was designed to help you “create a healthy lifestyle and support you every step of the way” (YMCA,2017). Not only does is help you meet your physical and nutritional needs, but it also provides group support.

**Population**

A great thing about the YMCA is that it is open to anyone! There are many Y’s throughout the community which makes it easy to find one that fits your busy schedule. Also, as stated before, the Y has programs for everyone so the population of people will range from infants to elderly. Y-Change also has multiple different program variations for different age groups such as Y-Change Kids, Y-Change Teens, Y-Change Family, and Y-Change Active Aging. The great thing about the Y, it can form to fit anyone looking to be healthy and active.

**Geographic Location**

The geographic location of the YMCA can vary because there are now so many locations, but I specifically will be looking at South Hampton Roads YMCA’s and more specifically the Greenbrier location. Greenbrier is located in Chesapeake, Virginia. This area of Chesapeake consists of mostly middle-class families.

**Why the Y**

I chose the evaluate the YMCA because of the professional aspirations and my own personal fitness goals. Many people won’t be able to look at me and tell that my professional aspirations are to be a career firefighter. While being a firefighter requires a great amount of book learning and training, half of the battle involves physical fitness. One of the most important jobs of a firefighter is his/her own physical fitness and health. The YMCA offers great programs to help people start their own goals for fitness and nutrition, which I have a passion for as well. Another reason why I chose the YMCA and more specifically the Y-Change program is because of my own journey to a better healthier lifestyle. During my senior year of high school, I lacked confidence about the way I looked. My lack of confidence was due to my poor nutrition and poor physical fitness, so I created my own goals and nutrition plan and I am on my way to a healthier me. I feel that the Y-Change program is doing the same for a variety of people and even provides a support group system, which is something that I never had but probably needed. I would like everyone to understand the importance of knowing your body, your physical fitness, and having a healthy nutrition plan.

**Sources**

YMCA of South Hampton Roads. (2017). Y-Change. Retrieved September 10, 2017, from http://www.ymcashr.org/programs/info/y-change