

Background

Goals set forth by Healthy People 2020 include increasing the health and well-being of people with disabilities.¹ Compared to individuals without disability, those with disability are less likely to be involved in various programs and activities in different areas of health promotion.^{2,3} Excluding individuals with disabilities from programs that are designed to prevent primary and secondary conditions may drastically impact their health.

In order to work toward this Healthy People 2020 goal, it is imperative to understand the current research base for health promotion and disability. In order to increase access, encourage participation, and promote healthy behaviors for individuals with disabilities in the community we must recognize areas where health promotion efforts have worked and where future research is required.

Methods

Towards this goal, a systematic literature review of health promotion and disability according to Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) was conducted. The following Boolean search terms were searched in the PubMed, CINAHL, and PsycINFO databases:

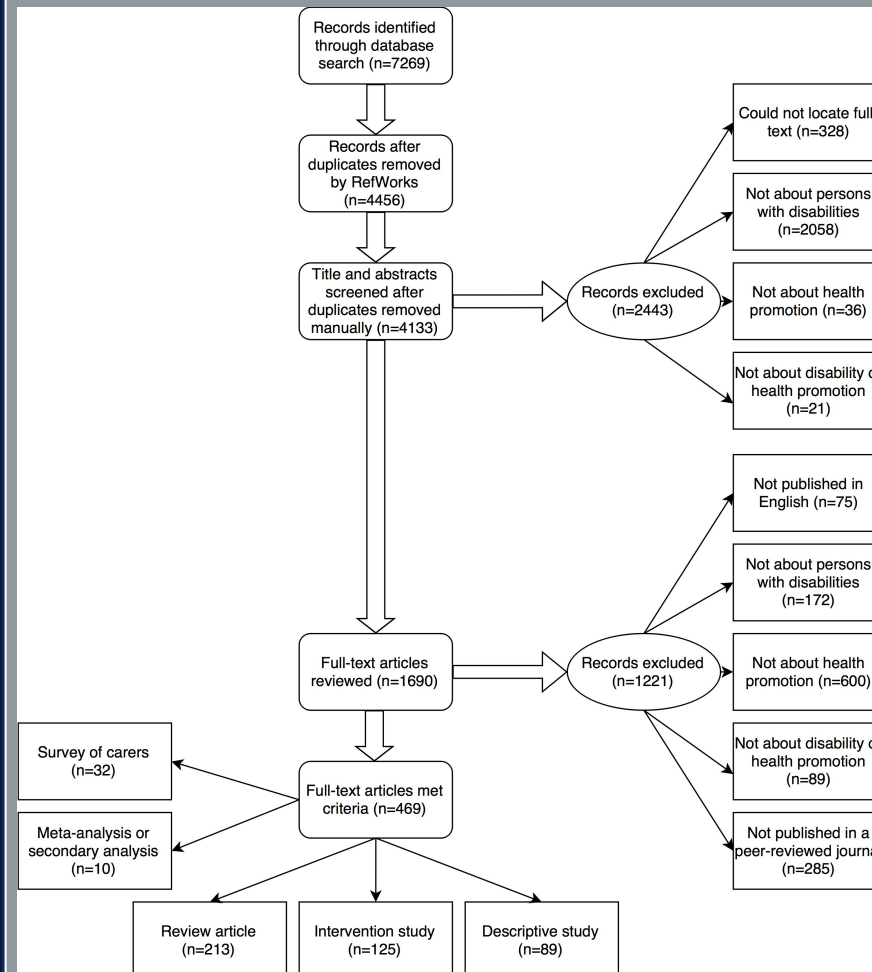
"health promotion" OR "health education" OR "wellness program" OR "health program" OR "health curriculum")
AND
(disabl* OR disabilit* OR "handicap" OR "mental retardation" or autis* OR "down syndrome")

Articles were included if they met the following inclusion criteria: were published in English, were published in a peer reviewed journal, were about persons with disability and about health promotion. Articles that did not meet one or more criterion were coded to reflect the reason(s) for exclusion and not considered for further analysis. The titles and abstracts were screened by the authors and if at least one coder indicated the article met the criteria, it was included in the full-text review. Each article in the full-text review was given a unique code. A coding sheet was created in Qualtrics, an online survey program, to collect the data on each article. Data was collected on the topic of the article, the target disability population, and the methodology employed. If the article presented original data for an intervention or a quantitative/qualitative survey (a descriptive study), then information on the sample's demographics were coded.

Results

All information was independent coded by each author. The authors then met to discuss disagreement in the coding, which led to 100% agreement on the coding of the articles.

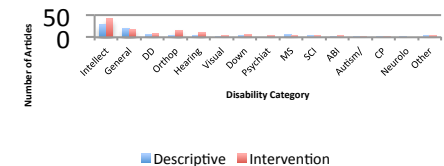
The initial search terms were entered into RefWorks, a citation management program, which yielded 7269 articles. As depicted in the following flow chart, 4456 articles remained after duplicates were removed. After a manual removal of 323 entries, 4133 titles and abstracts were screened with the inclusion criteria yielding 1690 articles whose full-text was reviewed. Of these, 469 met the inclusion criteria.



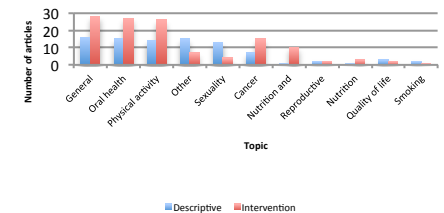
As depicted in the following graph, a plurality (45%) of articles that met criteria were review articles, which were either literature reviews or descriptions of actual or potential programs that did not provide data on participants with disabilities. An additional 32 articles were survey of carer's attitudes (professionals or family members) or knowledge of health promotion.

Results (cont'd)

Number of descriptive or intervention studies by disability category



Number of descriptive and intervention articles by topic area



Conclusions/References

Health promotion activities enable and empower people to improve their health⁴. Programs designed to improve health need to target people with disabilities. The majority of the literature published in this area is not intervention-based. Just over 26% of articles were various health promotion interventions for people with disabilities. Of those interventions, over half (64%) targeted either general health, oral health, or physical activity. While these are important aspects of health and wellness, they do not account for overall health. People with disabilities have basic health needs that are not being met with prevention and promotion strategies. If public health is to achieve Healthy People 2020 initiatives, more targeted attention needs to focus on health promotion of people with disabilities across all aspects of health.

1. Healthy People 2020 [Internet]. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Available from: <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/disability-and-health/objectives/>

2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). *CDC Promoting the Health of People with Disabilities*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/od/odc/ohrt/ohrt-program508.pdf>

3. World Health Organization. (2015). *Disability and health*. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs352/en/>

4. World Health Organization. (2015). *Health topics: health promotion*. Retrieved from https://www.who.int/topics/health_promotion/en/