

HEAT IT UP –Youth Community Health Promoters (YCHiPs)

Health Education Access Through Information Technology Utilization Project

Overview

- HEAT IT UP is a community based participatory research project designed to improve diabetes outcomes among African Americans residing in Overtown, Miami by strengthening therapeutic relationships using information technology. It was initiated in January 2010. There are 25 moderately controlled diabetic participants enrolled in this pilot project. We anticipate doubling that amount in Fall 2010.
- Our partnership includes faculty and staff from the University of Miami School of Medicine Department of Family Medicine and Community Health, Booker T. Washington High School, City of Miami – Elevate Miami, and Miami Dade Community College and Jefferson Reaves Sr. Community Health Center.

Background

- 8.7% of all Floridians and 7.6% of Miami-Dade County residents reported having been diagnosed with diabetes in 2007 that number increased to 9.5% and over 8% respectively in 2008.
- In Miami-Dade County 181,425 people have been diagnosed with diabetes, of which 23% are aged 60 and up.
- Diabetes prevalence rates are highest among Non-Hispanic Blacks (14.1%).
- According to cause of death and hospitalization data, the Black community in Miami-Dade is disproportionately impacted by diabetes with death rates for Blacks averaging twice the rate for Whites and Hispanics.

Project Components:

- ❖ **This project involved the training of four Booker T. Washington high school students (Youth Community Health Promoters, YCHiPs) to provide social and technical support to the participants in HEAT IT UP and conduct diabetes awareness and prevention presentations within the Overtown community.**
- ❖ Project objectives are two tiered, one tier addresses project participants and the other tier is designed to address the Youth Community Health Promoters and these include:
 - Promoting self-esteem and self efficacy
 - Providing educational opportunities and motivation
 - Providing counseling and guidance
- ❖ The students are assigned five –six patients for whom they are responsible for contacting on a weekly basis via telephone. This relationship is invaluable as the students remind the patients to log in to the program consistently and to record their blood sugar readings. They also inquire as to how they have been doing with their self-management goals. If technical support is needed they attempt to resolve, if unable, program staff is notified.
- ❖ Students are provided with health related career exploration through the partnership with Miami-Dade Community College.
- ❖ Through partnership with City of Miami – Elevate Miami, students received free four 2-hour computer training classes.
- ❖ The students receive a \$100.00 monthly stipend to offset the cost of their cellular phones.
- ❖ Through weekly meetings with program staff, students are counseled on myriad topics including: college and career goals, financial management, leadership and decision making.
- ❖ Students receive a 4-hour free diabetes education session from the Diabetes Research Institute to properly prepare them for their community presentation.
- ❖ The students made two community presentations and were able to educate 20 community members over the course of one month.

Policy Implications

1. **The work on this project supports the *Eliminating Disparities in Diabetes Prevention Access and Care Act***
2. Increase funding for youth development programs, particularly in urban areas.

Community-Based Participatory Intervention to Reduce HIV/AIDS Risk among Rural African American Youth in North Carolina

Project Description

- Project GRACE (Growing, Reaching, Advocating for Change & Empowerment), funded by the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities and the University of North Carolina Center for AIDS Research, is an academic-community partnership aimed at eliminating health disparities in African American communities through community-based participatory research (CBPR) in Edgecombe and Nash counties, North Carolina.
- Project collaborators include: Better Days Ahead, Carolina Family Centers, Community Enrichment Organization (CEO), Dynasty Health Solutions, Inc., Edgecombe County Health Department, Nash County Health Department, Project Momentum, Inc., St. Paul Baptist Church, SOZO Ministries, The Wright's Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and VISIONS, Inc.

Background: HIV/AIDS rates continue to rise among African Americans in Edgecombe and Nash counties

- Among the 100 counties in North Carolina, Edgecombe ranks 3rd and Nash ranks 16th according to their rate of new HIV cases. Edgecombe ranks 4th and Nash ranks 13th according to their rate of new AIDS cases.
- In Nash County, 82% of people with HIV/AIDS are African American, although only 34% of the county's population is African American.
- In Edgecombe County, 86% of HIV/AIDS cases are African American, although only 58% of the county's population is African American.

HIV/AIDS Prevention Intervention: T.O.R.O. (Teach One Reach One)

- T.O.R.O. is a community-based Lay Health Advisor intervention conducted with youth ages 10-14 and their caregivers. Lay health advisors are members of the community that people naturally turn to when they need help. The evidence-based curriculum focuses on how to prevent HIV/AIDS through behavioral factors, as well as the social and physical environment.
- Youth and their caregivers (who are usually their parent or grandparent) attend Saturday Lay Health Advisor training sessions. Youth learn about how to prevent HIV/AIDS and ways to effectively communicate with their peers. Caregivers learn ways to effectively communicate with youth about how to prevent HIV/AIDS.
- As of May 2010, over 250 youth and their caregivers have actively participated in the T.O.R.O. intervention and over 500 youth and their caregivers will have completed the program by 2013.

Policy Implications

- **Immediately restore funding for NC AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP).** Since closing enrollment to new clients on January 22, 2010, NC has over 500 eligible HIV-infected people on the ADAP waitlist, the longest waitlist in the nation. Lack of access to life-saving medications will thwart HIV prevention efforts.
- **Do not divert funds from afterschool programs.** Weekdays between 3:00pm and 5:00pm are when youth are at an increased risk of experiencing physical inactivity and high-risk sexual behavior. Increase funds for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative (21st CCLC) and for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) to help prevent childhood obesity and HIV/AIDS-related behaviors among youth.

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**Recovering a Sense of Place: Environment & Community in Treatment (ReSPECT)
for Addiction in Baltimore City, Maryland**

Overview

- ReSPECT is a community-based participatory research project that aims to develop more effective strategies of locating drug treatment facilities in the areas of Baltimore City with the greatest unmet need.
- ReSPECT is a partnership between the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Art on Purpose. The partnership combines creative arts and research methods to investigate how Baltimore residents react to the location of drug treatment services in their neighborhoods. ReSPECT seeks to help policymakers, community members, and researchers understand what factors lead to communities' embrace or rejection of nearby drug treatment services.

Background

- Drug use, especially injection drug use, is a major problem facing Baltimore City. A total of 60,000 city residents (8 percent of Baltimore City's population of 650,000) are estimated to be drug dependent. A 2008 study found that the city has the highest need for drug treatment of any geographic area in the United States.
- The city faces significant unmet need for drug treatment services. From 2001-2005, approximately 20,000 people were admitted for primary drug treatment in Baltimore City each year, leaving 12 percent of those in need without treatment during each of those five years.
- Funding for drug treatment and expansion of treatment slots in Baltimore City peaked in 2003. Since then, both funding for drug treatment and the number of available treatment slots have decreased.
- Researchers with the Johns Hopkins Drug Investigations, Violence, and Environmental Studies (DIVE) Laboratory recently conducted a geographic study finding that many Baltimore City neighborhoods with evidence of high levels of injection drug use were far-removed from existing drug treatment portals.
- Currently, treatment services are not located in areas where the need appears greatest. An exclusionary zoning ordinance currently restricts the areas in which treatment services can be established in Baltimore City. In April 2009, the United States Department of Justice and the Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems (bSAS) sued the city over this ordinance under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Fair Housing Act. The case is pending – but even if it succeeds, substantial civic resistance will remain.

Research Efforts

- ReSPECT will train residents of Baltimore City neighborhoods in interview and photography skills. These artist-researchers will interview neighbors on themes of community and neighborhood; crime and safety; and drug use, treatment, and recovery. They will draw on the same themes in photographing their neighborhoods.
- The interviews and photographs will be displayed in neighborhood art exhibitions, to which key policymakers and program officials (including City Council members and other elected officials) will be invited. They will also be the basis for research publications, to be shared in a range of venues, including community events.

Policy Implications

- ReSPECT's research findings will enable bSAS and its partners to better understand Baltimore City residents' questions, ideas, and opinions about drug treatment services, thus informing strategies for stakeholders to work more effectively within communities to provide drug treatment services where they are most needed, and in ways that community members are likely to support.

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Public Health Impacts of Industrial Hog Operations

Project Description:

- Community Health Effects of Industrial Hog Operations (CHEIHO) is a community-based participatory research (CBPR) partnership established in 2001 with funding from the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) to study the health and well-being of people living near industrial hog operations in North Carolina.
- Project partners include scientists at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) Department of Epidemiology and members of the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network (NCEJN), located in Halifax County, North Carolina.

Background:

- Over the past 50 years the production of farm animals for food in America has shifted from decentralized family farms to concentrated industrial systems.
- Today, there are fewer producers raising large numbers of animals in close confinement facilities called concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs).
- Between 1982–2002, the number of CAFOs in the U.S. increased by 230%.
- On an annual basis, a large swine CAFO can generate more than 1 ½ times as much sanitary waste as a large U.S. city (e.g., Philadelphia, PA).
- Waste management consists of flushing feces and urine produced by animals through liquid systems into open pit cesspools and spraying it onto surrounding farmland.
- This practice has been associated with degradation of air ¹ and water ^{2,3} quality and negative impacts on the health and well-being of neighbors ⁴⁻⁸.
- Two recent reports, one by the General Accounting Office (GAO)⁹ and one by the Pew Charitable Trusts *Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production* ¹⁰, summarized existing scientific knowledge about CAFOs and provided evidence of environmental damage and negative health impacts on people living nearby CAFOs.

Combining Knowledge with Action: Public Health Impacts of Hog CAFOs in NC

- Between 1985–1998, North Carolina moved from 15th to 2nd in hog production in the U.S., with hogs (10 mill.) outnumbering the state's human population of ~7.5 mill.¹¹
- Several scientific publications and policy decisions resulting from CHEIHO illustrate the extent of problems associated with the rapid expansion of hog CAFOs in eastern NC between the mid 1980s–late 1990s:
 1. Hog CAFOs in NC are located disproportionately in areas of high poverty and non-White populations, making this a situation of environmental injustice.¹¹
 2. Odorant gasses and dusts from confinement buildings, cesspools, and fields where fecal waste is applied are associated with respiratory problems including reduced lung function, asthma, and upper airway irritation.^{4-8, 12}
 3. Odors associated with hog CAFO air pollutants trigger physical symptoms, interfere with activities of daily living, and reduce the quality of life of people living nearby.¹³
 4. CHEIHO partners presented testimony to the NC Legislature, which led to passage of a moratorium in 1997 and subsequent ban in 2007 of construction of new hog CAFO lagoons and sprayfields in NC.



Policy Implications/Recommendations:

- The results of CHEIHO and the GAO and Pew Charitable Trusts reports provide clear evidence of the environmental damage and negative impacts of hog CAFOs on the health and well-being of people living nearby.
- Specific recommendations to Congress, EPA, and other federal agencies include:
 - Create an inventory of permitted CAFOs in the U.S.
 - Develop a regulatory framework for permitting and enforcement to control air and water emissions from CAFOs (including reversal of an exemption for CAFO air emissions of ammonia and hydrogen sulfide)
 - Support funding for near-CAFO air and water monitoring to ensure compliance
 - Enact a ban on the sub-therapeutic use of antibiotics for animal growth promotion
 - Add sustainable farmers (e.g., pasture raised hog farmers) to the farm bill safety net.

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Heshima (Respect): A Community-Based Participatory Research Project

Organizational Overview

- Sisters Together and Reaching, Inc (STAR) is a non-profit, 501(c)3, faith based organization established in 1991 to address the barriers to adequate care facing HIV infected African-American women and their families in Baltimore City, Maryland and surrounding counties.
- STAR's mission is to provide spiritual support, direct services and prevention education to the HIV infected, affected and at risk communities in a holistic woman *and* man centered environment.
- STAR accomplishes this unique mission through a comprehensive range of services for women and men including prevention education, counseling, testing, and referral services, financial assistance, and individualized case management.
- The *Why Women Cry Conference*—STAR's flagship event—is an annual conference with thousands of participants from the Baltimore/Washington Metropolitan area.
- Recently, STAR has expanded its focus to include adolescents (age 13-24) and has experienced success with its Zawadi Peer Education Initiatives and the *Sex, Lies, and the Ugly Truth Youth Conference*.

Background: The Epidemic

- Although African Americans account for only 13% of the United States population, they account for 49% of HIV cases in the U.S.
- **In the State of Maryland, African Americans comprise 29.4% of the population yet account for 79% of new HIV infections.**
- In 2007, 2,866 new HIV cases were diagnosed in Maryland (54.1 per 100,000 people), of these, 1093 (39%) of the state's new infections were in Baltimore City.
- **Among adolescents, African American youth (ages 13-19) make up more than 90% of prevalent HIV cases in Baltimore City.**

Project Description

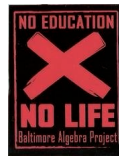
- Based on the experiences with youth, findings from evaluation research, and feedback from participants Heshima—Swahili for respect—is a community-based participatory research (CBPR) project aimed to better understand the risk and resiliency factors associated with sexual risk behavior and the role of intergenerational support networks among African American adolescent females ages 12-19 in Baltimore City.
- Research findings, gathered through a survey and focus groups with youth and their support networks, will be used to inform the development of a culturally relevant intervention to decrease sexual risk behavior and improve overall sexual health and well-being among this population.

Policy Implications

- Findings from this study support the need to provide **additional resources to assist communities with the creation of support services for sexually active youth and their parents.**
- In support of Senate Bill 611 (Responsible Education About Life Act) these findings suggest that **comprehensive sexual education programs must recognize that youth make sexual health decisions within a larger social context** including peer groups, families, and communities, and programs must provide opportunities to enhance decision making skills within these contexts.

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Community Based Participatory Research and Peer-to-Peer Youth Employment To Address Schooling as a Social Determinant of Health in Baltimore City, Maryland

Project Overview

- This initiative is a community based participatory research project (CBPR) investigating *schooling as a social determinant of health* among youth in public schools in Baltimore City, Maryland.
- Our partnership includes Johns Hopkins University, Peer-to-Peer Youth Enterprises, The Baltimore Algebra Project, and Heritage High School. We collaborate with Baltimore City Health Department, Equity Matters (Baltimore's *Place Matters* initiative of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies Health Policy Institute), ProjectHEART, Towson University, and the Maryland Institute College of Art.

Background

- Education is the most salient predictor of lifetime health. In 2002, adults without a high school diploma had an age-adjusted death rate—for all health causes—17% higher than people who completed high school, and nearly three times higher than those who had completed at least 1 year of college.
- African-Americans are disproportionately affected by a lack of education and suffer related health impacts. Nationally, 70.6 % of all students graduate high school, yet only 41.5 % of students graduate in Baltimore City. 87.8% of all Baltimore City Public School students are African American.
- For every 100,000 people in Baltimore City, about 1,000 died of all causes in 2008. Yet the *greatest disparity* in health is between those with only a high school diploma or less compared to people with a bachelor's degree or higher (1,950 persons die, compared with 735).
- Access to rigorous curriculum influences college readiness and high school completion. Gross disparities in access exist in Maryland. While 43% of Asians, 22% of White, 20% of Latino and 19% of Native American 11th and 12th graders took AP exams in 2004, *only 7% of African American students did*.
- Improving disparities in education-related mortality rates could save more lives than medical advances, by a ratio of 8:1.
- The State of Maryland loses about \$193 million in tax revenues each year as a result of the state's high school dropouts; each year's class of dropouts costs Maryland taxpayers \$42 million.

Community Based Participatory Research: Peer-to-Peer Employees as Youth Researchers

- Peer-to-Peer Youth Enterprises is a Baltimore based coalition of organizations that provide jobs for young people. The coalition provides incentives and training for young people to mentor, work with and teach other students in activities such as debate, tutoring, peer education, and video production.
- This project will build on several successful Peer-to-Peer Employment initiatives. In Summer 2010, young people will be hired as peer-to-peer employees through Baltimore City's summer youth employment program, YouthWorks! They will be trained as youth social science researchers, aid in development of the research design and protocols, and then conduct data collection and analyses during the 2010-2011 academic year.
- We will conduct a mixed methods study, incorporating qualitative, quantitative and clinical methods to investigate how schools influence student health (physical, mental, social, sexual & emotional).

Policy Implications

- Congress should support funding for peer-to-peer youth employment models. Such programs not only provide youth employment opportunities, but they compliment efforts to reduce high dropout rates, create alternatives to juvenile incarceration, and promote civic and community engagement.

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YOUR Blessed Health (YBH) HIV/AIDS Prevention and Community Mobilization Flint/Genesee County, Michigan



YOUR Blessed Health Project Overview

- **YOUR Blessed Health (YBH) is a health education program designed to increase the capacity of faith-based organizations and faith leaders on the North and East sides of Flint, Michigan to prevent African American adolescents (11-25) from contracting HIV/AIDS.** YBH includes five components:
 - Knowledge and skill building sessions for youth;
 - Information sessions for adults;
 - Training of pastors' wives and other faith leaders to facilitate YBH;
 - Church events to raise congregants' awareness; and
 - Community-based activities to build relationships between faith-based organizations (FBOs), strengthen interdenominational ties, and connect churches with community services and residents.
- The project is a partnership between YOUR Center, a faith-based community-based organization providing comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment services, the University of Michigan School of Public Health, and local FBOs, including Baptist and Pentecostal churches and one Muslim Mosque.
- YBH is funded by the Ruth Mott Foundation. Since 2006, 46 faith-based organizations and more than 9,000 congregants and community residents have participated in the YBH program through faith-based organization specific activities and community awareness events.

Context: Sexual Health Issues in Flint/Genesee County, Michigan

- In 2007, African Americans living in Genesee County were diagnosed with Gonorrhea and Chlamydia at rates of 13.3 and 8.0 times greater, respectively, than the rates of Whites.
- Between 2003 and 2007, the rate of new HIV/AIDS diagnoses increased at an average rate of 24% each year for adolescents between the ages of 13 and 19
- In 2010, Genesee County had the eighth highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate per 100,000 residents in Michigan.
- In Genesee County, African Americans are 4 times more likely to have HIV/AIDS than Whites.

YOUR Blessed Health Successes

- **Youth** showed significant increases in reproductive knowledge and ability to identify HIV myths after completing the YBH curriculum.
- **Adults** reported significant increases in their ability to identify HIV myths following YBH adult training.
- **Faith leaders** reported high levels of comfort in discussing key sexual behaviors, sexual communication, and sexual abuse and violence.
- **HIV testing** increased in faith based settings.
- **Faith-Based Organizations** hosted a number of events, including a 'Boyz Night In' HIV prevention awareness and skill building event and learned more about HIV/AIDS to effectively change norms within their institutions.
- **Community-wide events**, such as the YOUR Center Women's conference, Red Ribbon Sunday, and World AIDS Day, were televised and attended by a record number of people in the past year.

Expansion of YOUR Blessed Health

- The Ruth Mott Foundation recently funded the third iteration of the YBH program in Flint, in which eight additional faith communities, including one primarily Latino organization, will receive YBH training.
- The partnership has submitted an NIH grant proposal (\$275,000 over 2 years) in order to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of YBH.

Policy Recommendations

- Create incentives for FBOs in Genesee County to provide HIV/AIDS prevention programs and testing opportunities.
- Increase funding in the Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships allocated for HIV prevention and intervention evaluation.