

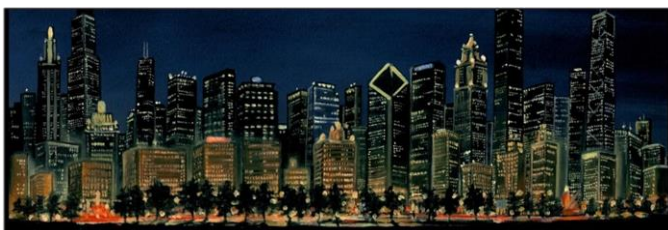


DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

**COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Master of Public Health Program

**EIGHTH ANNUAL
GRADUATE FORUM**



WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6TH, 2018

3:00-5:00PM

**DePaul University
Cortelyou Commons
2324 North Fremont Street
Chicago, IL 60614**

1. Introducing a Trauma Informed Social and Emotional Developmental Screening Referral Process

Le'Chaun Kendall

Introduction. The purpose behind the practice of psychological assessments with children has become more prevalent and has continued to be a huge concern for society as children age with social and emotional delays. Psychological assessments are only effective when the child identified with an emotional and social delay is connected with a reliable source that promotes age-appropriate growth and development. This project involved the development of a recommended formal referral process, using a Trauma Informed Approach.

Approach. Two phases of interviews were conducted with early childcare systems. In the first phase twenty in-depth interviews were completed using a standardized open-ended interview approach to gain understanding of existing referral systems in Illinois. In the second phase of interviews, individual interviews were completed using a structured interview guide approach to understand the difficulties of referring a child.

Outcomes. A list of recommended tools for referring children to social and emotional intervention services were generated for child-serving systems and outlines Trauma Informed Care (TIC) trained staff, parent engagement and child monitoring as top priority.

Conclusion. The development of a formal referral process for early childhood care providers was generated to ensure a promising future for children with social and emotional delays.

2. Fostering Healthier Youth through Standardizing Policies and Procedures within Sexual Health Services in a School Based Setting

Lacey Johnson

Introduction. Adolescents in Chicago have limited access to reproductive health services resulting in high rates of sexually transmitted infections due to social determinants of health. To address this issue, the Chicago Department of Public Health offers in-school sexual health programs through the Chicago Healthy Adolescents and Teens (CHAT) Program. Because successful in-school programs feature standard operating procedures, this project involved the development of a policies and procedures manual for the CHAT Program.

Approach. A review of relevant literature and existing policies and procedures was conducted in conjunction with collecting observational data at CHAT programming. Guided focus group discussions were conducted with CHAT Program staff assessing accuracy and usability of the manual. **Outcomes.** Results of the review outlined the strong need for health education interventions to have standard operating procedures in place. A policies and procedures manual was drafted and revised based on focus group feedback. Results showed that the majority of program staff found the manual to be comprehensive, accurate, and relevant. **Conclusion.** The manual's development demonstrated a promising approach to delivering consistent and comprehensive in-school services. Thus, contributing to better sexual health behaviors through education and testing, and ultimately reducing the burden of sexually transmitted infections among Chicago youth.

3. Increasing the Health Awareness around Colorectal Cancer in Black Males Residing in South Shore

Marcus Murray

Introduction. Black males have the highest rate of mortality and morbidity from Chronic Diseases. These diseases are preventable, through education, early screening and access to a healthcare system, many of the health disparities that exist in Black males can be decreased or eliminated. Colorectal Cancer (CRC) is the 2nd leading cause of death from cancer in Black males. In order to increase the health awareness of CRC in Black males here needs to be culturally and gender specific techniques. There must also be a non-traditional, unique approach when attempting to increase the health awareness of Black men. **Approach.** Cultural and gender specific literature was developed to increase the health awareness of CRC in Black males. Based on the literature, the best locations in South Shore, Chicago to engage Black men and disseminate the culturally and gender specific printed health materials were determined. Key stake holders from the South Shore area were identified to establish a partnership, with the intentions of increasing the health awareness of CRC with Black males. **Outcomes.** Culturally and gender specific printed materials were developed. Locations for Black male engagement have been identified. Viable partnerships have been established with five (5) organizations located within South Shore to assist in increasing the health awareness of CRC in Black males residing in South Shore as well as assisting in eliminating the health disparities that exist with Black males. **Conclusion.** The development of the health promotion plan around increasing the health awareness of CRC in Black males can not only educate these men, but also led to early screening and establishing the medical trust needed to have access to healthcare. The unique, non-traditional approach that has been taken to increase the health awareness of CRC in Black males, along with adding the cultural and gender specific aspects can lay a new framework on how to engage Black males.

4. The *fiveSMART*[®] Self-Study Module Series: Developing an Early Childhood Obesity Prevention Curriculum

Sarah Wozniak

Introduction. The Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC) created *fiveSMART*[®], a health message focused on early childhood obesity prevention. This project used the *fiveSMART* message to develop a curriculum for the Chicago Department of Public Health Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) clinics to combat obesity among their clients.

Approach. The curriculum was developed using evidence-based research from *fiveSMART* trainings and handouts. Information was formatted into a WIC Self-Study Module (SSM). Social cognitive theory and the Nutrition Practice Standards of Illinois WIC guided the developmental process.

Outcomes. The *fiveSMART*[®] Self-Study Module (SSM) Series includes five SSMs and provides guidance on early childhood obesity prevention for pregnant mothers, babies, and toddlers in the following areas: sleep, meals and snacks, activity, role modeling and responsiveness, and things to avoid. Each SSM includes a worksheet and handout.

Conclusion. The development of the *fiveSMART*[®] SSM Series demonstrates the importance of having a curriculum with a holistic view of early childhood obesity prevention with the potential to lower obesity rates in WIC families. This project highlights the value behind transforming a health message into a curriculum and using the waiting room as a learning environment.

5. Development of an Online Training to Promote Resiliency in Children

Jacqueline Fegan

Introduction. Reducing the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in children helps mitigate rising chronic health issues in adulthood such as heart disease, stroke, obesity, and substance abuse.

Approach. One training presentation was created for child-facing professionals using strategies labeled the “7 C’s”. It consisted of 19 slides with 26 minutes of accompanying recorded voice audio that gave background information on ACEs, the link to resiliency, and explanations and examples of each “C” component. It was sent via email along with an evaluation survey. Data analysis and thematic analysis were used to evaluate results. **Outcomes.** Twenty-five adults received an email with the link to the presentation and evaluation survey. Seventeen surveys were answered. Results showed that the majority of people felt the presentation was helpful and valuable to their work. The presentation was made publicly available on the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics’ website and shared with other partners. **Conclusion.** The creation of this training presentation gave a promising approach to ensure adults who work with children are given the tools to successfully help children become more competent, confident, independent adults. Furthermore, this approach may contribute to a decrease in chronic negative health outcomes in adulthood.

6. A Qualitative Needs Assessment on Aging LGBTQ Adults in Chicago

Emilie Jaeger

Introduction. While the LGBTQ population has seen several strides in civil rights in recent years, there remains a lack sensitivity among health care providers and in traditional senior care institutions to the unique needs this population requires. A needs assessment conducted by Howard Brown Health in Chicago sought to examine these unique needs for the purposes of program development and improvement to health care services offered to this rapidly increasing patient base. **Approach.** A mixed-methods needs assessment which included fourteen focus groups for the purpose of gathering qualitative data. **Outcomes.** Over three hundred LGBTQ individuals age 50 and older participated in the study, including over 70 in one of the fourteen focus groups. Data gathered from participants aided investigators in program development recommendations to strengthen Howard Brown Health's care model for this population. **Conclusion.** The needs assessment helped Howard Brown Health understand the medical, behavioral and social programmatic needs of this community, which will aid in expanding services offered for the 50 plus LGBTQ population, as well as increase quality of medical care offered in the community and beyond.

7. Effects of Continuous Professional Education in Preconception Care

Demetrius McClay

Introduction. Teenage pregnancy is associated with many negative health and economic consequences. Increased awareness of preconception care can be achieved through public health outreach and improved collaboration between health care professionals. Continuous professional education (CPE) is a structured approach to learning to help ensure competence to knowledge and practical experience. CPE strengthens staff development by promoting staff satisfaction where people maintain their skills related to their professional lives. **Approach.** The Title X Project designed a CPE tool for Rush School Based Health Centers (SBHCs) on clinical guidelines in the National Title X Family Planning program. This health education curriculum was grounded in the Adult Learning Theory (ALT) to promote staff development. The project included a narrated, PowerPoint presentation for staff at Rush SBHCs. A pilot training was conducted to examine participants' satisfaction in a CPE presentation. **Outcomes.** A quantitative, satisfaction survey was administered to 10 healthcare personnel. Results showed that more than 50 percent of participants reported high rankings of satisfaction with the CPE training. **Conclusion.** The Title X project aimed to encourage professional development that can expand reproductive health services to minority adolescents who are at risk for unintended pregnancies.

8. Building Resilience against Trauma and Toxic Stress and the Rankings of Competency for Trauma-informed Care

Regina Council

Introduction. The earliest humans start to experience trauma and toxic stress is at birth. There are ways to resist traumatic experiences and reduce toxic stress which can be dependent upon the knowledge of resilience and finding ways to use resilience to help cope with stressful events in life. This project involved using an open forum approach to promote resilience and to validate based on the rankings of competency for a trauma-informed community.

Approach. There were six groups of young, pregnant and parenting women for the open forum activity. Three questions related to building a resilient family were created. Those questions prompted the comments from the youth. Within each group there were themes from the responses of the youth that aroused highlighting the competency of the participants by their rankings for the five psychosocial categories *physical, emotional, spiritual, psychological, and community impact*.

Outcomes. Forty students discussed their stressful experiences in life and how building resilience helped or would help in their lives based on their responses to the three questions. Results showed that the students were aware of how certain events and experiences in life can affect them.

Conclusion. The project creates the understanding of teenage mothers and the barriers they face; not only through socioeconomic factors but social-emotional factors that influence the way they manage stress and experiences from trauma.

9. Barriers to Care for HIV-Positive Black Men who have sex with Men

Ashley Streb

Introduction. The purpose of this study was to assess barriers to care for HIV-positive Black men who have sex with men (BMSM) patients at the Ruth M. Rothstein CORE Center in Chicago, IL.

Approach. This was a mixed-methods study utilizing both a secondary data analysis from annually collected surveys, as well as an analysis of qualitative data from conducted interviews. The text focuses on structural barriers to care such as stigma, as well as individual and interpersonal barriers to care such as transportation and insurance.

Outcomes. The survey and interview results both reported transportation and insurance as barriers to healthcare. Interview results also reported stigma, disclosure concerns, and lack of knowledge about prevention measures as barriers to care for BMSM.

Conclusion. This study was used to inform policy and care recommendations at the CORE Center so that the clinic can target their interventions towards barriers specific to BMSM.

10. An Assessment of Physical Education and Nutrition Programming in Chicago Public Schools Through Evaluating the Implementation of the Carol M. White Physical Education Program

Rachel Reynolds

Introduction. Schools are in a unique place to address the growing problem of childhood obesity through physical activity and nutrition education in the classroom. This project served as a follow up evaluation to a grant Chicago Public Schools (CPS) received from the Department of Education to improve physical education (PE) and nutrition education. The results from the first evaluation showed the intervention did not yield results as expected, and this follow up evaluation was used to explore and explain factors that contributed to the initial results. **Approach.** Two interview guides were created for CPS Office of Student Health and Wellness employees (OSHW)/PE consultants and CPS PE teachers. These were used to pilot interviews with four OSHW employees/PE consultants and three PE teachers. Key themes emerged from the interviews and were made into framework matrices. **Outcomes.** Interview results show eight key themes for OSHW employees/PE consultants and six key themes for PE teachers. PE teacher motivation, space and scheduling, principal support, and PD days were found to be leading key impacts of PEP for both OSHW employees/PE consultants and PE teachers. **Conclusion.** These results can be used to improve health programming in CPS and can positively impact the health outcomes of Chicago children.

11. A Policy Review of Birth Equity in Six States

Elizabeth Wilson

Introduction. HealthConnect One aims to decrease negative maternal and child health outcomes in high-risk populations by increasing peer-to-peer breastfeeding and doula care among mothers. HealthConnect One is increasing birth equity in its chosen target areas: Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi, Michigan, and New Mexico. It was observed that state and federal policies on breastfeeding, paid family leave, and midwifery care are often an influence on families' access to affordable quality care. This project aimed to evaluate which midwifery policies in these specific states helped or hindered birth equity. **Approach.** Midwifery policies for each of the six states were reviewed and two tables were created. The tables reviewed questions regarding Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM) policies and compared birth outcomes in each state. **Outcomes.** In total, thirty-six policies were reviewed. Two tables were made to present the information: one on CNM policies and one on birth outcomes by state. Results showed that states with less restrictive midwifery policies had higher rates of breastfeeding and better birth outcomes. **Conclusion.** The policy review provides HealthConnect One and Birth Equity Leadership Academy (BELA) members with baseline information on how policies can influence birth equity. This tool can be used to inform them on advocacy and policy within these regions and provide information on where to focus their birth equity projects for the W. K. Kellogg Foundation grant.

12. A Qualitative Examination of Child Care as a Determining Social Factor of Infant Mortality

Amber Miller

Introduction. The availability and affordability of child care is crucial for pregnant mothers. This is especially necessary for their ability to attend doctors' visits. To ensure a healthy and safe pregnancy, it is imperative to receive adequate prenatal care. However, many women are being turned away due to their inability to secure child care. **Approach.** A focus group ($N=12$) was conducted with a team of Maternal and Child professionals who work hand-in-hand with low-income pregnant mothers. **Outcomes.** The focus group aimed to examine the severity of the need for child care among their clients/patients, and how it may affect their ability to attend healthcare visits. Results showed the barriers to finding services are the affordability of services, a shortage of child care services that operate during non-traditional hours (after 6pm, and weekends), and a fear of burdening others and losing children to the Department of Child and Family Services. **Conclusion.** The results from the focus group indicate that more work needs to be done on a systematic level to support healthy pregnancies, and to achieve positive birth outcomes. To best support these women, on-site child care should be available in health care centers, and emergency child care protocols need to be developed.

13. Adverse Health Outcomes of Early Sexual Debut in Chicago Men who have Sex with Men

Shannon Bowers

Introduction. The purpose of this research was to examine if early sexual debut in men who have sex with men (MSM) leads to adverse health outcomes later in life. Early sexual debut in MSM may be associated with engagement in various risk behaviors such as drug use, alcohol abuse, and sexually transmitted infection (STI) diagnosis and thus, may adversely affect health later in life. **Approach.** 519 eligible MSM in Chicago were interviewed anonymously through the National HIV Behavioral Surveillance survey in 2014. Logistic regression analyses were run to identify adverse health outcomes significantly associated with early sexual debut. All results, including crude and adjusted odds ratios, were obtained with SAS v. 9.4 software.

Outcomes. 31% of interview participants experienced their first sexual debuts before the age of 16. Of the adverse health outcomes explored, injection drug use (crude: 2.5 adjusted: 2.3 CI: 1.1-4.4), alcohol abuse ($p > 0.05$), and sexually transmitted infection diagnosis ($p > 0.05$), only injection drug use was found to be significantly associated with early sexual debut.

Conclusion. Further research is needed to examine the reasons why MSM who experience an early sexual debut engage in injection drug use. Interventions for young MSM about sexual health education combined with injection drug use may be helpful in addressing a population that engages in early sexual debut and is at risk for drug use and adverse health outcomes later in life.

14. Assessment of Health Literacy to Inform Development of Health Education Materials

Nataliya Shtym

Introduction. In the recent years, health literacy has gained focus as a significant determinant of health that impacts individual health behavior and health status. The prevalence of low health literacy and its unique link to health outcomes is often assumed but not intentionally measured. Heartland Alliance Health clinic participants, who are primarily low-income, uninsured and experiencing homelessness, may be facing disadvantages from a lack of appropriate health promotion materials for their needs. This project involved implementing a health literacy-measuring tool that went beyond simple reading comprehension, and assessed various health literacy competencies in order to inform a more effective health education approach.

Approach. A validated health literacy assessment instrument “All Aspects of Health Literacy Scale (AAHLS)” was used. **Outcomes.** Fifty health literacy surveys were administered to the clinic participants in the clinic waiting room. The lowest scores were detected in individuals with low educational attainment and insecure housing status.

Conclusion. The results of the survey informed the development of health education materials aimed at the increasing a sense of individual efficacy and opportunities for community engagement especially for homeless individuals and individuals with low educational attainment.

15. Evaluation of Doctor- Burmese Refugee Patient Communication in the Heathland Health

Debra Eluobaju

Introduction. Shortcomings in doctor patient communication remains an issue in medicine today, and leads to adverse health outcomes and dissatisfaction on the part of the patient. These gaps in communication are further exacerbated in situations where patients do not speak the same language, or have the same cultural background as their healthcare provider. **Approach.** To assess gaps in communication between Burmese refugee participants and healthcare providers in the Heartland Health Outreach clinic (HHO), literature regarding patient-doctor communication was reviewed, and observations in the clinic were conducted in the clinic. **Outcome.** Based on both a review of the literature and observations in the clinic, a qualitative research tool in the form of an interview guide was devised. A guide was created for both healthcare providers and refugee participants, it was piloted, then revised and finalized. An interview guide, and project plan is now in place for another researcher to execute interviews in the HHO clinic and completed data analysis. **Conclusion.** A method must be implemented to address gaps in communication in the clinic so that Burmese refugee patients are receiving holistic and comprehensive care to limit the burden of chronic conditions in this community.

16. Strategies to Reduce Barriers Associated with Patient Engagement in Quality Improvement

Tarae Cain

Introduction. The Illinois Perinatal Quality Collaborative (ILPQC) creates initiatives that focus on improving the health outcomes of pregnant women, mothers and infants through quality improvement projects. Currently, ILPQC works closely with pregnant women and mothers that suffer from hypertensive disorders and opioid use disorder. ILPQC created the Patient and Family Advisor program, committed to engaging patients and families in quality improvement projects. ILPQC is interested in getting more patients involved with the program to help combat these diseases. **Approach.** An exploratory focus group was conducted during ILPQC's annual conference with a group of healthcare providers, perinatal professionals and patients. During the focus group, participants identified the most common barriers associated with engaging patients and families in quality improvement projects. After those barriers were identified, four semi-structured interviews were performed with a convenience sample of participants from ILPQC's conference. During each interview, solutions to combat patient engagement barriers were discussed. **Outcomes.** The four interview participants suggested solutions utilizing incentives, support from key staff members and engagement to help overcome barriers in patient engagement. **Conclusion.** The solutions considered were used to create recommendations for the future work of ILPQC and the Patient and Family Advisor program.

17. Retention to Care among PrEP Patients at a West Side Chicago HIV Clinic

Myles Castro

Introduction. The Ruth M. Rothstein CORE Center is an infectious disease clinic serving low income populations with high risk of HIV. Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) can prevent the transmission of HIV with a success rate of up to 99% for HIV-negative individuals. However, retention to care is essential for the success of PrEP. This project aimed to describe the age, gender, and race and ethnicity of PrEP patients at the CORE Center in relation to PrEP retention. **Approach.** PrEP patient data was collected from the CORE Center PrEP database between May 2015 and February 2018. 441 CORE Center PrEP patients were analyzed with majority being male (n=397). Secondary analysis and the Pearson chi-square test were conducted to compare the aggregate frequencies of each variable by PrEP retention status. **Outcomes.** Total PrEP retention to care was 43.2%. Male PrEP retention was 45.1%, and PrEP retention for Blacks, Whites, and Hispanics were under 50%. Those aged 25-34 years had the greatest PrEP retention to care (54.4%). **Conclusion.** Patient PrEP retention remains low across all racial and ethnic, gender, and age groups. A collective effort is needed to improve PrEP retention rates to decrease HIV incidence in the Chicagoland area.

18. Increasing Drug Discount Program at Access Health Centers

Olumide Ayergoro

Introduction. The management of acute and chronic disease depends on the accessibility and affordability of prescription drugs. Despite the introduction of the drug discount program to assist low-income and the uninsured population in affording prescription medications at Access Community Health Network (Access), many vulnerable patients are not utilizing the program. This project examined why some patients are not utilizing the drug discount program at Access health centers. **Approach.** Qualitative Interviews were conducted with 12 patients and 7 providers at Access. A focus group discussion was held with 4 patients and 2 providers at Access. Thematic analysis was utilized to analyze data from all participants. **Outcomes.** Result showed that the lack of resources among providers has hindered the adoption of the drug discount program among the patients at Access. Patients' pharmacy choices and the lack of knowledge impeded the adoption of the drug discount program among patients at Access. Recommendations that will increase the adoption of the drug discount program were given to Access health centers. **Conclusion.** The identification of barriers which hinders the adoption of the drug discount program among patients at Access will ensure that vulnerable patients are adhering to their medications. Furthermore, acute and chronic conditions will be effectively managed.

19. Assessing Volunteer Engagement: A Strategic Approach to Improving School Health Environments through Volunteer Participation

Alfonso Camacho

Introduction. Prevalence of childhood obesity has more than tripled since the 1970s. Addressing the need to improve the health and well-being of children will require multiple levels of influence by using an ecological construct. The purpose of this project is to assess volunteer engagement at Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK) to better understand volunteer needs. The development of surveys directed to volunteers of AFHK and assessment of current volunteer engagement, provides foundational support to future volunteer engagement successes. **Approach.** Two surveys were developed to target all AFHK volunteers assessing individual beliefs, awareness, motivations, and interests in child health. Secondary data analysis was conducted from AFHK's automated system that tracks volunteer engagement by scoring activities from all volunteer contacts. **Outcomes.** Data included a sample of N=18,091 volunteer contacts across all 50 states and 16 constituency groups. Overall mean score of the entire sample size: (M)=534.8 with a standard deviation (SD)=446.8. The Midwest region was found to be the most engaged compared to other regions. **Conclusion.** Understanding their volunteer network and why they support AFHK will promote trust and encourage further involvement and provide AFHK with the ability to concentrate their resources and increase operational efficiency that will ultimately impact children's health.

20. Connecting Vulnerable Populations with Behavioral Health Care and Social Services through a Social Worker in the Library Pilot Program

Samantha Borow

Introduction. Public libraries across the country offer a vital source of information and support for vulnerable populations, such as persons experiencing homelessness and those living with a behavioral health issue. Librarians have become de facto social workers who respond to the needs of these populations with ad hoc referrals and programming; however, they lack the specialized training of a social worker. To better serve these patrons and improve health outcomes, Presence Health is partnering with Chicago Public Libraries to launch a Social Worker in the Library pilot program in the Uptown community. **Approach.** Focus groups were held with a diverse group of stakeholders in order to understand the health care and social service needs of this unique community, barriers to accessing services, and thoughts on how to best design and implement this pilot program. **Outcomes.** A total of 28 stakeholders participated in 8 focus groups. Participants included library branch managers, community partners from health care and social service agencies, and community members. Participants agreed there are an abundance of services available in the community; however, navigating the complex intake and application processes is time consuming and overwhelming. **Conclusion.** The focus groups helped the program planning team better understand the health care and social service needs of the Uptown community and existing barriers to accessing services. The incoming social worker should utilize this knowledge and build on these relationships with community partners to help vulnerable populations improve their health outcomes. This project serves as a guide for planning the expansion of this innovative program to more Chicago Public Library branches.

21. Qualitative Thematic Analysis: Exploring Perceptions & Barriers of Alternative Pain Treatments for Children with Sickle Cell Disease

Kaitie Badalamenti

Introduction. Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) is a genetically inherited blood disorder that continues to disproportionately impact vulnerable populations such as children and people of color. Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital works to serve children and their families managing SCD in and beyond the Chicago area. Due to SCD pain crises creating distress within the body, it is often managed with heavy narcotic pain medication despite having alternative pain treatments available. This project explored perceptions and barriers to alternative forms of pain treatment and provided results to help aid in program improvement. **Approach.** The creation of two interview guides was used to assess perceptions and barriers of non-pharmacological pain treatments. 16 semi-structured interviews were conducted with hospital staff and patients. Analysis yielded key themes that were formed into matrices and results tables. **Outcomes.** Five key themes emerged including Team-Wide Adoption, Patient Compliance & Perceptions, Communication, Method of Literature Distribution, and Age-Related Receptiveness. Findings aided in maximizing the use of non-pharmacological pain treatments. **Conclusion.** Results from the analysis can be used to help improve the use of alternative pain treatments and positively impact the SCD population.

22. Nutrition Curriculum Development for Young Children Attending Programming at a Chicago-Based Organization

Alyssa Rickman

Introduction. Community organizations are an ideal setting to promote healthy eating and exercise behaviors among young children through nutrition education. However, developmental stages differ among children, making standardized nutrition education difficult to access. The ability to identify healthy foods is difficult among young children, specifically 2-year-olds and is a particular issue among Latino children. This project included the development of a 12-week nutrition education curriculum specifically for the 2-year-old age group to address childhood obesity in the Latino community.

Approach. Twelve weeks (two sessions per week) of nutrition curriculum were developed to be implemented weekly in five classrooms designated for 2-year-old children. **Outcomes.** Forty-four students experienced the twelve-week curriculum, and five classroom teachers, the Health & Leadership Director and Health & Leadership Coordinator provided weekly feedback on the curriculum. Implementation of the curriculum was successful as the data showed that 73% of students in the 12-week Super H-itos program improved their capability to identify healthy foods (n=30). **Conclusion.** This curriculum development project has the capacity to improve children's ability to identify healthy foods - a small step towards reducing childhood obesity rates among Latinos.

23. Supporting Physical Education Teachers to Reduce Childhood Obesity

Celie Joblin

Introduction. Childhood obesity is an epidemic that affects the lives of 12.7 million youth in the United States. Physical Education (PE) teachers are key stakeholders in reducing the childhood obesity epidemic and promoting school wellness. PE teachers interact with students daily and have the opportunity to become leaders in promoting physical activity and nutrition. However, teachers are unable to fulfill this role without proper resources, trainings, and support. **Approach.** Research, key informant interviews, a webinar, and surveys were conducted focusing on the professional needs of PE teachers. This was completed with the goal of providing PE teachers with comprehensive resources and support to assist in their efforts within schools. **Outcomes.** The results led to four primary recommendations to address the challenge of meeting the professional needs of PE teachers. The recommendations are to incorporate policy education into trainings using layman’s language and terms, connect training information to instructional content, and shorten trainings outside of typical business hours to respect scheduling constraints of PE teachers. **Conclusion.** The results of the research indicated proper training and support are needed in order to leverage the role that PE teachers can serve in reducing the childhood obesity epidemic.

24. Growing Healthy Futures: Developing an Evaluation Plan for an Organization that Promotes Healthy Lifestyles through School Gardens in Chicago

Kaycee Mendoza

Introduction. School gardens may offer an ideal setting to prevent childhood obesity by providing nutrition education and hands-on learning for students. However, it is difficult to gauge the success of garden programs if there is a lack of evaluation efforts. Thus, this project aims to develop and pilot an evaluation plan for Gardeneers, a community-based organization that builds, maintains, and teaches in school gardens throughout Chicago. **Approach.** A pilot evaluation plan was designed and implemented for Gardeneers to gauge nutritional knowledge, attitudes and beliefs about healthy foods, and fruit and vegetable consumption, from their participating students. **Outcomes.** Pilot pre-test results from 52 Gardeneers students showed that a majority believed eating fruits and vegetables were important for overall health, believed in their own ability to grow their own food, and reported they ate fruits and vegetables at least 3-4 times a week. **Conclusion.** Although this baseline assessment provided considerable information, post-test interviews are required to measure student improvement in nutritional knowledge, attitudes and beliefs about healthy foods, and fruit and vegetable consumption. Furthermore, the completion of the evaluation plan may expose the strengths and weaknesses of the program and may prompt programmatic changes for an improved, effective Gardeneers program.

Students Alphabetical by Last Name

Student Name	Poster
Ayergoro, Olumide	18
Badalamenti, Kaitlyn	21
Borow, Samantha	20
Bowers, Shannon	13
Cain, Tarae	16
Camacho, Alfonso	19
Castro, Myles	17
Council, Regina	8
Eluobaju, Debra	15
Fegan, Jacqueline	5
Jaeger, Emilie	6
Joblin, Celie	23
Johnson, Lacey	2
Kendall, Le'Chaun	1
McClay, Demetrius	7
Mendoza, Kaycee	24
Miller, Amber	12
Murray, Marcus	3
Reynolds, Rachel	10
Rickman, Alyssa	22
Shtym, Nataliya	14
Streb, Ashley	9
Wilson, Elizabeth	11
Wozniak, Sarah	4

Community Partners

- ❖ Access Community Health
- ❖ Action for Healthy Kids
- ❖ Chicago Department of Public Health – Bureau of Maternal, Infant, Child and Adolescent Health
- ❖ Chicago Department of Public Health – Project CHAT
- ❖ CORE Center
- ❖ Erie Neighborhood House
- ❖ Gardeneers
- ❖ HealthConnect One
- ❖ Heartland Health Outreach – Refugee Health Program
- ❖ Heartland Health Outreach – Uptown Clinic
- ❖ Howard Brown Health
- ❖ Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
- ❖ Illinois Department of Public Health – Office of Women’s Health and Family Services
- ❖ Illinois Perinatal Quality Collaborative
- ❖ Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital – Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children
- ❖ Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital – Hematology
- ❖ Presence Health
- ❖ Rush – School Based Health Center at Crane
- ❖ University of Illinois Cancer Center

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MPH Class of 2018

