At ages 3-5, kids learn the ABCs, counting and more. But how many preschoolers are taught the building blocks of eating well and regular exercise?

*Juntos y Saludables* (Get Healthy Together) is a two-year obesity and diabetes prevention project in three San Antonio preschools that teach primarily Mexican-American children. Get Healthy Together is offered by the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio and UT San Antonio (UTSA) through the institutions’ joint San Antonio Life Sciences Institute, which received $8 million from the Texas Legislature to fund this and other projects.

Get Healthy Together is testing whether it can indoctrinate students – for life – with healthy behaviors via positive interactions with parents, teachers and school workers.

“We believe this project will help preschool children build healthy habits that will last into grade school, adolescence and adulthood, as well as increase parents’ awareness of good nutrition and physical activity for themselves and their kids,” said Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez, director of the IHPR and co-principal investigator of the two-year project with Dr. Zenong Yin of UTSA.

Dr. Ramirez, through her leadership of *Salud America!*, a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation research network to prevent obesity among Latino children, was able to help Get Healthy Together use a bilingual curriculum for children 3-5, developed by The Children’s Workshop and featuring Sesame Street characters, songs and dances.

As part of Get Healthy Together, Cookie Monster and UTSA graduate students dressed as fruit to talk about healthy eating and exercise May 18 at the Burleson Early Childhood Center in San Antonio.
Director’s Corner

From IHPR Director Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez

Seeing the harms of smoking through the eyes of children can be sobering.

That’s why we at the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) have created an attractive photo book featuring results of our innovative “Photovoice Smoke-Free” project. For the project, eight San Antonio high-school students took photos and wrote captions to visually describe the problem of tobacco to policy- and decision-makers.

The project, sponsored by the San Antonio Tobacco Prevention and Control Coalition, paired our IHPR tobacco prevention researchers with students in the Youth Against Gang Activity program of the Family Service Association, a San Antonio nonprofit agency.

For several Saturdays over the fall 2009 semester, the students studied photography, walked their neighborhoods and took pictures.

Then they met to discuss their photos, write captions and create presentation boards.

We believe that the students, who unveiled their presentation boards at a ceremony Jan. 22, 2010, at the Alameda Koehler Auditorium in San Antonio, were empowered to take social action in their community and identified important local tobacco issues.

So we are proud to share this photo book, a special commemorative publication that recognizes these students’ efforts to make San Antonio smoke-free. For a hard copy of the photo book, e-mail us at ihpr@uthscsa.edu.

Also check out my recent column on World No Tobacco Day.

Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez
Director, IHPR

IHPR Faculty Profile: Kip Gallion

On campus at the College of San Mateo, Calif., in 1982, Kip Gallion studied broadcast media. Off campus, he was a radio news reporter and disc-spinning DJ.

But the entertainment value of media wasn’t his sole focus.

Wanting to improve people’s lives through media, he switched majors and got a degree in applied communications. He found his niche – health communication – when he moved to Texas in the late 1980s to produce media messages to prompt better health among the underserved on a project led by Dr. Alfred McAlister, a top health communication researcher. He worked alongside Dr. Amelie Ramirez, a then-aspiring health researcher.

“Health communication is the art and technique of informing, influencing, and motivating individual, institutional, and public audiences about important health issues,” Gallion said. “It involves constantly evolving challenges, opportunities for collective creativity and responds to the tremendous health needs of the public.”

Gallion, who currently is deputy director of the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR), has gone on to build an established career in health communications.

Over the years, he’s performed media production and coordination for many health groups and research teams at the Houston and San Antonio campuses of The UT Health Science Center. His work to promote cancer control, diabetes risk and tobacco cessation has been recognized in scientific literature and lauded with media industry awards.

At the IHPR, he assists the director, Dr. Ramirez, in daily operations and oversees research projects and their print, radio and TV media components. He helps develop different culturally tailored media strategies, technologies and messages to promote positive health behavior changes, such as new public service ads to promote Latino cancer screening and new avenues to spread positive messages, like the social media realm of Twitter.

“I want the IHPR to continue to be on the vanguard of health promotion research,” Gallion said.

Fun Facts

Hometown: Atherton, Calif.

Family: Wife, Yanick; Children, Samantha, Max and Allie

Hobbies: Gardening, landscaping, home improvement, kayak fishing, bird hunting, cooking

Favorite food(s): “My own barbecue and dim sum”

Favorite movie(s): The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai Across the 8th Dimension

Favorite book(s): Kim and The Jungle Book
IHPR report: San Antonio smoking ordinance won’t snuff out restaurant/bar industry

If San Antonio ends up prohibiting smoking in indoor workplaces, its restaurants and bars aren’t likely to lose patrons to the few and geographically separated establishments outside the city limits that do allow smoking, according to a new analysis by the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio.

The analysis identified and mapped the 165 licensed-to-serve alcohol establishments in 30 incorporated towns outside San Antonio, but within Bexar County.

The vast majority (117) of those establishments already are smoke-free.

The remaining 48 that do allow smoking are geographically separated from each other and, even if weighed as a whole, don’t have the capacity to sustain an influx of smoking customers if San Antonio bans smoking in its bars and restaurants, an action that polls show customers if San Antonio bans smoking in its bars and restaurants, an action that polls show.

“Data show that a comprehensive smoking ordinance would not have a detrimental effect on San Antonio’s bar and restaurant industry,” said lead author Courtney Denton, research associate with the IHPR, whose researchers did the report on behalf of the San Antonio Tobacco Prevention and Control Coalition. “We believe the ordinance could actually benefit the industry, help smokers kick the habit and improve air quality.”

View the report here.

The report comes on the heels of a press conference May 7, 2010, in which San Antonio Mayor Julián Castro said he would push for a stronger anti-smoking ordinance.

Studies have shown that comprehensive smoke-free ordinances reduce non-smokers’ exposure to secondhand smoke, reduce adult smokers’ average daily cigarette consumption and increase their quit attempts.

But how would this affect restaurants and bars? To answer, the IHPR report identified all alcohol-serving establishments outside the city limits in Bexar County. Researchers called each establishment to see if they allowed smoking. Results were mapped using a GIS analysis.

Establishments that allow smoking did not exist in sufficient number (48) or location to significantly divert customers away from San Antonio, according to the analysis.

Polls also show that 23 percent of registered San Antonio voters would actually go out to local restaurants and bars more (and 61 percent the same) if smoking was prohibited.

IHPR Articles and Presentations

Articles/Reports:


Presentations:

- Sandra L. San Miguel de Majors. “Cancer within the Hispanic/Latino Community.” Comprehensive Cancer Control Leadership Institute, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, Los Angeles, California, June 7-10, 2010.
IHPR increases accrual to pediatric cancer trials by 48% in South Texas’ Valley region

Many decry the fact that less than 5 percent of U.S. adults with cancer join clinical trials, but a deeper challenge emerges when you put faces to these numbers.

Whites account for 90 percent of trial participants – only 5.6 percent are Latino.

That’s why the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) and its national Latino cancer research network, Redes En Acción, are using patient navigation to boost pediatric cancer clinical trial recruitment in South Texas. The project is funded by a grant to Redes from the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

Cynthia Wittenburg, the project’s bilingual navigator based at the IHPR’s satellite office at the Regional Academic Health Center, has worked hard to outreach in and educate the Latino community, as well as enroll children into trials.

The effort has paid off. The project spurred a 48-percent increase in the number of Latino children accrued to pediatric cancer clinical trials from 2008 to 2009 in South Texas’ Lower Rio Grande Valley, which has high rates of child leukemia.

“This was a most impressive result,” IHPR and Redes Director Dr. Amelie Ramirez said. “It speaks to the importance of community involvement combined with navigation to help increase enrollment among some of our most vulnerable populations.”

Read more here about this and other NCI activities to boost minority enrollment into cancer clinical trials.

IHPR News Briefs

Girl Scouts taking next steps in IHPR project on physical activity

Girl Scouts, parents and community members gathered in San Antonio recently to review girls’ photos of barriers and enablers to physical activity (such as the ones shown below), and discuss ways to inspire adolescent girls to be more physically active – all a part of an IHPR project to boost the girls’ health now and throughout their lives. The project features input from girls ages 11-14 from the San Antonio and Edgewood independent school districts, their parents, community leaders, Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas and the Edgewood Family Network. IHPR researchers Dr. Deborah Parra-Medina and Laura Esparza plan to use the girls’ photos and other information from the community to devise new strategies to get girls moving. They plan to incorporate low-cost mobile and wireless technology, like text-messaging. Read more about the effort here.

IHPR’s Ramirez at AACR: Latino cancer burden needs to be addressed

Latinos tend to suffer a heavier burden of certain health problems, such as higher obesity rates and worse outcomes of certain cancer types, said IHPR Director Dr. Amelie Ramirez. Dr. Ramirez recently addressed Latino cancer issues as the 2010 American Association for Cancer Research (AACR)-Minorities in Cancer Research Jane Cooke Wright Lecturer. “The challenge is that, as a group, Latinos have less education, higher poverty rates, less access to healthcare and lower rates of insurance,” she said. “They also bring unique cultural customs that we need to understand to improve their access to care and response to treatment. We need to level the playing field to provide this population with better screening for early detection and better access to quality of care.” Watch Dr. Ramirez’ entire presentation on Latino cancer here and learn about the five key studies presented at the AACR conference.

Report: Redes meeting tackles key Latino cancer issues

Perspectives on key Latino cancer issues from the brightest minds in the field are featured in a new report from the 10th Annual Redes En Acción National Steering Committee Meeting. The meeting, held recently in San Antonio, celebrated the 10th year of Redes, a national Latino cancer research network funded by the National Cancer Institute and headquartered at the IHPR. Redes has tested novel interventions to improve access to care and screening, trained the next generation of Latino cancer researchers and raised awareness of Latino cancer. You can also watch Redes’ overview video here.
IHPR’s “Did You Know/¿Sabía Usted?”
Latino childhood obesity video wins awards

A dramatic video that uses shocking statistics and actual child voices to document the multi-faceted epidemic of Latino childhood obesity is earning prestigious film awards and thousands of YouTube views for the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio.

The video, titled “Did You Know/¿Sabía Usted?” and developed by the IHPR’s Salud America! program, has won awards from the 2010 New York Festivals International Television & Film Awards, 2010 Aegis Video & Film Production Awards and the 31st Annual Telly Awards:

- Winner, “Training/Education,” Aegis Video & Film Production Awards, May 1
- Bronze, “TV Programs, Segments or Promotional Pieces – Use of Graphics,” Telly Awards, Feb. 14

More than 4,000 people have watched the video on YouTube.

The video was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation through Salud America! The RWJF Research Network to Prevent Obesity Among Latino Children.

Researchers from Salud America!, which is based at the IHPR, developed the content for the video, which explains why Latino youths suffer disproportionately from obesity and are at greater risk of related health problems, such as diabetes.

The video, unveiled at the Salud America! Scientific Summit on Sept. 10, 2009, was directed by Sprocket Productions, a San Antonio film and video production company.

“We’re extremely excited about the recognition for this video because it will increase the number of people who see it and gain knowledge of the many challenges of Latino childhood obesity,” said Amelie G. Ramirez, DrPH, director of Salud America! and the IHPR. “And if more people understand the challenges, we believe that will drive new support and resources to identify needed solutions to reverse this growing epidemic.”

IHPR’s Dr. Ramirez named co-chair of San Antonio Mayor’s Fitness Council

In the wake of the city’s $15.6 million federal grant to fight childhood obesity, San Antonio Mayor Julián Castro has named IHPR Director Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez a co-chair of his new Mayor’s Fitness Council, which will develop ways to spur improved community nutrition and activity. The council, which met for the first time in late May, also is co-chaired by Wane McGarity, a former Dallas Cowboy and current H-E-B health promoter, and Tony Canty of Labatt Food Service and the YMCA of Greater San Antonio. The council will develop and implement initiatives in these five main areas: media and community outreach/education; corporate and organizational wellness; healthy schools; nutrition and fresh food; and fitness, recreation and active transportation. “I’m really looking forward to seeing the kind of changes this council can help make to reverse the obesity epidemic, especially among our children and underserved populations,” Dr. Ramirez said. Read more about the Mayor’s Fitness Council and its other members here.

IHPR sponsors pediatric obesity symposium

The IHPR co-sponsored the 2010 Pediatric Obesity Symposium on May 8, 2010, in New Braunfels, Texas, to bring together childhood obesity experts to discuss how to best tackle the epidemic in their communities. The symposium also was sponsored by the Institute for Integration of Medicine & Science at the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio. Two IHPR researchers, Drs. Deborah Parra-Medina and Cynthia Mojica, presented research and strategies at the symposium. Dr. Parra-Medina is pictured above with a certificate of appreciation for the IHPR’s symposium sponsorship.
IHPR investigator gets grant to increase Latina cancer screening in San Antonio

Dr. Cynthia Mojica, a research instructor at the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, has been awarded a $299,000 research grant from the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT).

Dr. Mojica’s project, Salud San Antonio!, will position four community health workers (or promotoras) at four community health groups to deliver cancer education/outreach to increase screening rates and knowledge of breast, cervical and colorectal cancer among Latinas in 10 zip codes in San Antonio’s West/ South sides.

These zip codes contain a large Latino population with a $26,824 median household income, and they have been identified as high-risk areas for health problems.

“We believe Salud San Antonio! will increase much-needed knowledge and screening behavior among Latinas,” said Dr. Mojica. “If successful, this educational model can be exported to other high-risk Latino populations in South Texas and beyond.”

Latinas tend to suffer high rates of certain cancers, yet they don’t get the recommended preventative screening as often as other groups.

So Dr. Mojica’s promotoras will conduct outreach and small group sessions to educate Latinas on risk factors, screening tests and the benefits of early detection. Women considered “rarely or never screened” will be encouraged to obtain a mammogram, Pap test or blood stool test from a list of clinics that offer no- or low-cost services.

Mojica’s project and the 11 others funded by CPRIT were the very first round of prevention grants in the organization’s 10-year, $3 billion mission to fight cancer.

“I am very pleased with the quality of these 12 awards,” said CPRIT Chief Prevention Officer Dr. Rebecca Garcia. “CPRIT’s prevention efforts are encouraging unique and innovative partnerships among service providers, academic institutions, and community organizations that will...improve the health of many Texans.”

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News Briefs

Rise of skin cancer in Texas Hispanics concerns dermatologists

Doctors say the number of darker-skinned patients with skin lesions is rising, both under the hot Texas sun and nationally. Melanoma, one of the most common types of skin cancer, is increasing among Hispanics overall and women in particular, said Dr. Bahar F. Firoz of The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio. Because sun exposure and sunburns have been linked to higher rates of skin cancer, the rate of melanoma increase in Texas Hispanics may be related to the Texas sun, Dr. Firoz said. Read tips on preventing cancer here.

Texas researcher finds higher than expected obesity among Latinas

Researchers have concluded that half of white women and more than two-thirds of U.S. Hispanic women may be obese by an international standard, according to a news report. U.S. body mass index (BMI) values may not account for ethnic differences, and almost half of reproductive-age women found “not obese” by BMI would be considered obese by World Health Organization standards – which are regarded as a more accurate measure, but more costly to achieve, said lead author Dr. Mahbubur Rahman of the UT Medical Branch in Galveston.

Reports warn of ripple effects from Texas Latinos’ wage gap

Only a small percentage of Texas’ Hispanics are on the road to upward economic mobility and arrival in the middle class, the Houston Chronicle reports. This wage gap and widespread poverty could pull down the standard of living for all Texans.

Latino dropouts less likely to get GED

Latino high school dropouts are far less likely to receive a GED than their white or black counterparts, according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center, Hispanic Business reports. The study, which details Latinos’ low education attainment levels, is grim news in Texas’ Rio Grande Valley, where linguistic barriers deter hundreds from attaining a GED.
Health disparity gap widening for Latino, other minority kids

Minority children have higher mortality rates, less access to physicians and fewer immunizations than do white children, according to a report in the April Pediatrics, American Medical News reports.

Researchers analyzed 111 studies published between 1950 and the first week of March 2007 that examined racial/ethnic disparities for U.S. children up to age 18.

The review found gaps in health care persisted or worsened for the nation’s four major minority groups identified for the study: African Americans, American Indians/Alaska Natives, Asians/Pacific Islanders and Latinos. About 43 percent of the nation’s children are minorities. Latinos are the largest of these groups.

Colorectal cancer screening tests are more likely to be done among whites than among minorities, according to the report. Of those who did have screening, African Americans and Hispanics were less likely to have multiple tests.

Latinos lack access to colon cancer screening

Colorectal cancer screening tests are harder to find in U.S. areas with large Latino populations, new research in the journal Cancer suggests, HealthDay reports. This could explain why Latinos are less likely to get screened than whites, study authors say.

Colon polyps more common in Latino men than women

Among Latinos, men are twice as likely as women to have colon polyps and also are more likely to have multiple polyps, a Puerto Rico study has found, HealthDay reports. Polyps, growths in the large intestine, may already be cancerous or can become cancerous.

Foreign-born Latina moms have “pressuring” infant feeding style

Foreign-born, less educated Latina moms tend to believe that moms should always make babies finish a bottle, according to a study in Academic Pediatrics. About 72 percent of 368 Latina moms believed that infant crying indicates hunger, and 53 percent believed in making babies finish bottles.

Breast cancer risks not same for Hispanic women

Some risk factors known to increase the odds of breast cancer in white women have less impact on Latinos, HealthDay reports. Although Latinos are less likely to get breast cancer than whites, they are more likely to die from the disease.

New study to examine Latina breast cancer

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has awarded $10 million to Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center to research and prevent breast cancer disparities in Latinas. The Hutchinson Center is among 10 institutions nationwide to receive funding as part of the NIH Centers for Population Health and Health Disparities program.

Both parents’ race may affect pregnancy-related diabetes risk

Asian and Hispanic women may have a heightened risk of developing pregnancy-related diabetes, and so may women with partners of those same backgrounds, Reuters Health reports.

Weight rises for Latino pregnant women

All pregnant women’s body mass index (BMI) is rising, WebMD reports. From 1990 to 2005, Latina mothers had a greater increase in pregnancy weight gain than whites and blacks, and Latinas’ maternal BMI was higher.

Latinas’ 10 biggest health challenges

Latinas face many health issues, including diabetes, cancer, arthritis, lupus and others, Terra reports. Dr. Jane L. Delgado of the National Alliance for Hispanic Health says part of the issue stems from Latinas “always putting our needs dead last.”

Latinos are a fourth of all U.S. births

U.S. minority groups are close to having more children than non-Hispanic whites. Latinos lead the way with 25.8 percent of all births in the 12 months ending July 2009, Bloomberg reports.

Doctors don’t discuss diet as much with Latino, black patients

Only about half of obese Americans, and even fewer Latinos and blacks, were advised by their doctors to cut down on fatty foods, according to the 2009 National Healthcare Disparities Report, the L.A. Times reports.

News Briefs

New series examines Latino health barriers

Newsweek has a series examining many aspects of Latino health barriers, including access-to-care, language, black-market doctors and a stark Latino doctor shortage.

A snapshot of Latino health problems

Latinos and minorities are paying a high price for health care disparities: diminished health and, quite literally, lives lost, the New York Times-Union reports. Hispanic women, for example, have the highest rates of new cases of cervical cancer.

Prescription drug costs more likely to deter Latinos

More than 20 percent of Hispanics said that they did not fill a prescription from their doctor because of the cost of the drug, compared with a little less than 13 percent of non-Hispanics, which can interfere with optimal care, Medical News Today reports.

Latino well-being highest in New Jersey, lowest in Alabama

Latinos living in New Jersey had higher levels of well-being than those in any other state, living eight years longer and making $7,000 more annually than Latinos in Alabama, where Latino well-being ranked lowest, the Wall Street Journal reports.

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IHPR researcher helps LIVESTRONG expand outreach to Latino cancer survivors

The Lance Armstrong Foundation’s LIVESTRONG campaign is expanding its outreach to Latino cancer survivors with enhanced multi-media Spanish-language resources, developed with help from Sandra San Miguel de Majors, a researcher at the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio.

LIVESTRONG aims to help more Latinos affected by cancer by increasing visibility and access to bilingual resources on the Internet, cellular devices and media outlets.

The campaign Web site, for example, underwent major enhancements, adding new videos, audio features and links to Facebook and Twitter, thanks to content developed in part by San Miguel de Majors.

San Miguel de Majors also developed scripts for educational Webisodes and radio ads.

She also is overseeing efforts to promote LAF’s online training curriculum for promotores, community members trained to educate their peers in healthy behaviors and increase access to resources for cancer survivors. She led a workshop June 14 at LAF’s Austin headquarters to train promotores from across the nation.

“Being fully bicultural with 14 years experience in health promotion and working with the Latino community, I was proud to be selected to co-lead the LIVESTRONG National Hispanic/Latino Media Campaign and to lead future efforts to reach this population,” San Miguel de Majors said. “The Latino population, a fast-growing mosaic of cultures, suffers a tremendous cancer burden, and these new multi-media resources are designed to help more Latinos survive and thrive.”

Cancer is the second leading cause of death of Latinos. Latino cancer rates are projected to surge by 142 percent by 2030, compared to 45 percent for the overall population.

Latinos have lower survival rates for many cancers, which may reflect less access to timely, quality treatment.

The ecological model developed by psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner revealed a complex interrelationship between health and culture: culture influences media choice and, in turn, health behaviors. With Bronfenbrenner’s model in mind, LIVESTRONG set out for the crossroads of culture and health to reduce disparities for Latinos with cancer.

As part of its effort, LIVESTRONG is joined by Latina telenovela actress and breast cancer survivor Lorena Rojas. Rojas penned an editorial that will run in 80 Hispanic newspapers and recorded radio ads that will air on Latino stations nationwide.

Rojas is especially promoting LIVESTRONG SurvivorCare.

SurvivorCare, available online and by phone at 866-927-7205, offers free professional support in English and Spanish for any person affected by cancer to help:

• Cope with emotional concerns through counseling and support;
• Address financial, insurance and job concerns;
• Match to clinical trials and new treatments in development; and more.

San Miguel de Majors, who coordinates several IHPR research projects, also is helping promote use of the LIVESTRONG SurvivorCare program through her work.

She is overseeing the training of five LAF-supported promotores who will be positioned at the regional sites of Redes En Acción, a national Latino cancer research network led by the IHPR and funded by the National Cancer Institute. The promotores then will work to increase Latino cancer survivors’ access to the LAF program.

“The IHPR, Redes and LIVESTRONG are dedicated to improving the Latino cancer survivorship experience,” said San Miguel de Majors. “We want to ensure that Latinos get access to timely, high-quality cancer treatment, and go on to live long, fruitful lives.”
Resources

Spanish-language ‘novela’ on breast cancer myths
SHARE, a non-profit organization, has created a novela to dispel myths like “breast cancer is a death sentence.” Se Valiente...Son Tus Senos tells the story of “Ivette,” a Latina hairdresser who faces a breast cancer scare and learns how to be proactive about her health.

Interactive county maps on U.S. Latino population
Pew Research Center’s Pew Hispanic Center has updated its interactive maps and databases on the Latino population in the nation’s more than 3,100 counties.

Health literacy training for public health professionals
To help public health professionals address limited health literacy, the CDC has launched a free “Health Literacy for Public Health Professionals Online Training” program that offers continuing education credits.

Consumer health info in Spanish

PSAs on Latino cancer prevention
View the six new PSAs touting Latino cancer prevention in English or Spanish at the Institute for Health Promotion Research’s SaludToday Web site here. To request broadcast-quality formats of the PSAs, email us: here.

Campaign, video helps Latino parents prep collegians
To raise awareness among Hispanic parents about the vital role they play in encouraging their kids to go to college, The Ad Council, in partnership with the Hispanic Scholarship Fund, have launched a national multimedia public service ad campaign.

Infant feeding videos in Spanish
An early childhood obesity prevention program created videos in many languages to help mothers, fathers, and other caregivers feed their babies a healthy diet.

News Briefs

Latino child obesity continues to rise
Latino childhood obesity rates continue to rise in the U.S., especially among Latino boys. About 26.8 percent of Mexican-American boys were obese in 2007-08, compared to 14 percent in 1988-1994, according to the CDC’s latest numbers.

Latino kids more likely to be bullies
Hispanic and black kids had a higher risk of being bullies than white kids, as did those whose mothers reported mental health issues, according to a new study, HealthDay reports.

Arthritis hits Latinos, blacks hardest
Latino and black Americans suffer more arthritis-related pain and physical limitations than whites, according to a CDC study, HealthDay reports.

Latino discrimination high
More Americans say Latinos face frequent discrimination than say the same for any other racial/ethnic group, according to a 2009 Pew Research survey. An Associated Press-Univision poll found that 61 percent of people said Hispanics face significant discrimination, compared with 52 percent for blacks. Also, relatively darker-skinned Latinos earned, on average, $2,500 less a year than their lighter-skinned counterparts, UPI reports.

$75 million initiative to fight racism
To address racial inequities, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation has launched a five-year, $75 million initiative – America Healing – to improve life outcomes for vulnerable children and their families by promoting racial healing and eliminating barriers to opportunities.

Examining Hispanic-Latino genetic mixing through migration
Researchers analyzed the genomes of people of Hispanic-Latino origin to understand the genetic ancestry of the mixed population of North America, which can offer insight to the genetic basis of complex diseases, according to scientists at a recent conference.

Latinos, blacks get less info about ADHD
Michigan State University researchers say Latino and black families don’t get enough information about treatments for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), a common childhood ailment.

U.S. Spanish-speaking population up 211% since 1980
A U.S. Census report found that the number of people ages 5 and up who speak a language different from English at home more than doubled in the last three decades and has increased at a rate four times greater than the growth rate of the population in general.

Latinas often delay healthcare, even if ill and insured
Confirming an unfortunate trend, a new study found that about 70 percent of a group of mostly Caribbean Latinas in Albany, N.Y., reported they put off getting health care. This is even though 80 percent had insurance and 60 percent had a prior condition.

Latinos developing vision loss at higher rates
The Los Angeles Latino Eye Study is finding high rates of eye disease, including diabetic retinopathy and cataracts, and Latinos developing blindness at the highest rate of any ethnic group in the country, study investigators say, TopNews reports.

Campaign raises awareness of Latinos’ high risk for lupus
In an effort to further engage Latinas, who are at the greatest risk for lupus, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) Office on Women’s Health (OWH) and The Ad Council are distributing new radio public service ads.
Seminars in translational research
Seminars in Translational Research unite investigators from The UT Health Science Center and UTSA in basic, clinical and social sciences to highlight stages of the scientific translation of research discoveries. Find details of these seminars here.

Continuing education audio conferences
The Teleconference Network of Texas at the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio has developed audio conferences on topics like blood banking, nutrition, health education and training, social work and more. Register by calling 1-800-982-8888.

Summer institute on evidence-based research
The 2010 Summer Institute on Evidence-based Practice, Frontline Improvement – How to Do It, How to Lead It, How to Inform It, is scheduled for July 8-10, 2010, in San Antonio.

Border health conference
The United States-México Border Health Commission will conduct its annual meeting July 19-20, 2010, in El Paso, Texas. For the commission’s event listing, go here.

NAHN annual conference
The National Association of Hispanic Nurses 35th Annual Conference, Transforming Policy to Support Healthy Communities for Latinos, is July 22-24, 2010 in Washington, D.C.

Latinas Contra Cancer will host the 2010 National Latino Cancer Summit, Science Meets Service, Moving Forward Together, in San Francisco, Calif., on July 27-29, 2010. IHPR Director Dr. Amelie Ramirez will present at the summit.

Seminars in translational research
Seminars in Translational Research unite investigators from The UT Health Science Center and UTSA in basic, clinical and social sciences to highlight stages of the scientific translation of research discoveries. Find details of these seminars here.

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Latinas Contra Cancer will host the 2010 National Latino Cancer Summit, Science Meets Service, Moving Forward Together, in San Francisco, Calif., on July 27-29, 2010. IHPR Director Dr. Amelie Ramirez will present at the summit.

Cookie Monster helps bring healthy habits to kids
On May 18, 2010, Sesame Street’s Cookie Monster helped children and parents from the Burleson Early Childhood Education Center and Stafford Early Childhood Education Center celebrate a school year of the curriculum. These two Edgewood Independent School District centers in San Antonio hosted all project interventions, including activity cards on outdoor play and nutrition, parent education seminars on obesity, teaching training and staff wellness programs.

Cookie Monster, a known cookie-gobbler who now touts cookies as a “sometimes” snack, got a warm reception from the Stafford students.

The kids danced to music and named their favorite “anytime” foods—strawberries, etc.

Rachel Mata, parent of a 4-year-old at Stafford, said the program helped her overcome fears of serving new foods to her son because he might not eat it.

“Now he knows about lots of different foods [through the program]. He likes blueberries, pineapple, strawberries, where before we’d stick to just apples and bananas,” Mata said.

School leaders also lauded the program.

“We have a lot of first-year teachers, so it was great to give them suggestions on fun dances and activities to get the kids more active,” said Erin Keyser, instructional facilitator at Stafford. “It pays off in the classroom. The students benefit from activity and knowledge of exercise and healthy foods.”

Children and parents from the Cardenas Early Childhood Education Center got a visit from Cookie, too. Cardenas was the control school where, to allow the research team to compare outcomes, a learning curriculum without health messages was taught.

Watch some TV news reports about Cookie’s visit.

About the E-newsletter
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