For girls growing up on San Antonio’s West Side, exercise may not be as simple as a walk in the park. They encounter stray dogs and face traffic without sidewalks. Ball fields are often in use by boys, leaving girls reluctant to seek a turn. And parents, fearing crime or unwanted attention, can be uneasy about letting girls roam unsupervised.

That’s why researchers at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio are testing a new program to increase girls’ opportunities to become more active.

The program, “Be Fit with Friends (BFF)” gives girls many options – from basic fitness equipment like jump ropes to volunteer opportunities to online social media, fitness video games and text messaging – to help overcome barriers to physical activity.

Thirty Girl Scouts from West Side troops began trying out BFF in February, and researchers hope to include more this fall.

“We want to build a sustainable program that takes advantage of tools and resources that already exist to help girls add physical activity to their lives,” said Dr. Deborah Parra-Medina, a researcher at the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at the Health Science Center. “We think this can open up girls’ and parents’ minds to engaging in physical activity on an ongoing basis.”

BFF, which partners with Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas, reaches girls in these ways:

- During troop meetings, Girls Scouts will learn physical activity basics, such as the difference between moderate and vigorous exercise or the importance of warming up.
- Also at meetings, Girl Scouts will try several “mobile PA (physical activity) units.” One holds playground toys like jump ropes. Another has yoga equipment. Others have videogames for Nintendo Wii or Kinect for Xbox 360 that simulate sports and dancing.

Continued on Page 10
From IHPR Director
Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez

Cancer is something that affects many of us in the Hispanic community.

Have you or a family member been diagnosed with cancer? Do you want to explore different treatment options, or do you want to be a part of the search for new ways to prevent and screen for cancer?

If so, clinical trials may be a great choice for you.

Clinical trials are research studies in which people help doctors find new prevention, screening, and treatment options. When someone participates in a trial, they are helping search for the best ways to prevent and treat the same cancers that may affect them, their friends, families, and others. Most importantly, clinical trials lead to medical discoveries that could enhance treatment and improve chances of recovery for a loved one.

For Hispanics, it’s especially important that we participate in research so that doctors can learn more about the types of cancer that affect our community and what treatments are most effective.

Of course, participating in a clinical trial can have both risks and benefits; I would ask those interested be sure to discuss any questions or concerns with their health care provider, as well as what insurance may or may not cover. As with any aspect of cancer, the more someone knows, the better they can make decisions with their provider about what course of action is right for them.

Resources are available, in English and Spanish, so people can learn everything they need to know about participating in a clinical trial.

I would encourage those interested to visit the National Cancer Institute Web site to learn more about clinical trials, or call 1-800-4-CANCER.

Amelie Ramirez
Director, IHPR

Laura Rubalcava

Laura Rubalcava knows the pain that weight prejudice can cause.

She witnessed several family members struggle with obesity and get teased or treated rudely at school, work, stores — even doctor’s offices.

She wanted to help them and people like them feel better.

So Rubalcava earned a master’s degree in community counseling and provided families with nutrition and wellness counseling at a San Antonio weight-loss center.

“Seeing and hearing success stories from those who I have helped, motivates me to continue working in public health,” Rubalcava said. “I want to continue helping people and growing as a researcher and clinician in the field of public health.”

Today she’s improving people’s lives as a health educator and research associate at the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio.

Rubalcava, who joined the IHPR in 2010, is a part of its Nutrition and Exercise Start Today (NEST) study, a family-based intervention targeting overweight and obese Latino children ages 5-14 attending a rural pediatric clinic in New Braunfels, Texas.

At the clinic, she counsels families, ensures appropriate and timely follow-up of her clients, and maintains accurate and up-to-date research and clinical records.

Her efforts have helped NEST meet its objectives in a timely manner.

“Laura is extremely well-liked and well-respected by the NEST clinic staff, nurses, physicians, as she’s established an excellent rapport with the children and parents that she counsels,” said Dr. Cynthia Mojica, IHPR researcher and NEST investigator.

Rubalcava also prepared a poster presentation on the NEST study at the 2010 Texas Obesity Research Conference. Her NEST abstract, An Obesity Management Intervention for Hispanic Children in a Pediatric Clinic, was subsequently accepted for publication.

“We look forward to many more strong contributions from Laura,” Mojica said. “She’s a great counselor, and she’s got a great start in her effort to improving people’s lives.”

Laura Rubalcava

IHPR health educator Laura Rubalcava demonstrates a Salsa dance move, along with dance partner Demonte Alexander, during a lesson she taught at the IHPR’s 2nd Annual Salud America! Scientific Summit on Sept. 22-24, 2010, in San Antonio.

Fun Facts
Hometown: San Antonio
Family: Father, mother, sister, brother, two nieces
Hobbies: Teaching, performing Salsa dances, hanging out with nieces, going to Spurs basketball games, doing Zumba
Favorite food(s): Korean, Vietnamese, fresh fruits and vegetables
Favorite movie(s): Food Matters, Food, Inc., Twilight saga
IHPR Researcher among CPRIT Prevention Research Grant Recipients

Dr. Deborah Parra-Medina of the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) has received a new grant to launch a peer education and outreach program encouraging use of the HPV vaccine to prevent cervical cancer among Latina mothers and daughters living in Texas-Mexico border communities.

The grant, for $297,173, is one of two awards for UT Health Science Center at San Antonio researchers from the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) announced recently. The other is $890,659 for Dr. Stacey Young-McCaughan to expand the known benefits of exercise to more cancer survivors.

“I am proud and excited about these major grant awards from CPRIT, recognizing the superb quality of prevention science here at the CTRC (Cancer Therapy and Research Center) and the UT Health Science Center,” said CTRC Director Dr. Ian M. Thompson, Jr. “Our physicians and scientists of the CTRC are convinced that one of our greatest priorities is cancer prevention and using interventions like exercise to reduce the burden of this disease.”

The focus of this round of CPRIT funding is to make evidence-based cancer prevention practices more widely available, said Young-McCaughan, a professor in the School of Medicine’s psychiatry department.

Young-McCaughan’s research and that of many others shows tangible benefits of regular exercise for cancer survivors, she said, but making it a widespread practice is a big task.

“That’s always the hardest part of research,” she said. “Once you figure out what the correct answer is, you have to replicate it nine bajillion times.”

“What we want to do is take what we know from the research and offer that program to patients diagnosed with cancer in Bexar County — but if people are willing to come from farther out, we want to see them, too.”

Participants will get complete physical assessments and have fitness programs designed for them, that they can practice either at the facility or in their homes. They’ll also be asked to come in for further assessments, both to make sure they’re doing well and give feedback to researchers. That feedback means the program will continue to produce more research data on the links between cancer prevention and health.

Parra-Medina’s program will train “promotoras,” or community health workers, who will be assisted by female college students to educate Latina mothers and daughters about cervical cancer risk factors and the HPV vaccine, which prevents cervical cancer.

“We really need to promote the use of the vaccine in populations at risk, and in the Rio Grande Valley we have very high rates of cervical cancer,” Parra-Medina said.

IHPR Articles and Presentations

**Articles**


**Presentations**


**Brief**

**IHPR Researcher Recognized for “Tai Chi” Study**

IHPR researcher and master’s in public health student Dorothy Long Parma’s study, “Using Tai Chi Ch’uan to Improve Mobility in Independent-Living Seniors,” was one of four selected as “outstanding projects” at the annual Community Service Learning Conference April 7 at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio. Long Parma was selected from among the 43 student grantees funded by the Center for Medical Humanities and Ethics at the Health Science Center. She and her team — Laura Reyes, a first-year master’s in public health student, and mentor Dr. Nameer Kima, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology — tested “Tai Chi,” a slow, low-impact traditional Chinese martial art, among seniors at a local apartment complex. They found that over the 8-week study, participants achieved appropriate moderate-intensity physical activity levels for their age group and reported subjective mobility improvement.

**A group of seniors at the Chandler Apartments in San Antonio partake in “Tai Chi” martial arts as part of IHPR researcher Dorothy Long Parma’s study.**

**Research**

IHPR Articles and Presentations


**Presentations**


**Brief**

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**A group of seniors at the Chandler Apartments in San Antonio partake in “Tai Chi” martial arts as part of IHPR researcher Dorothy Long Parma’s study.**
SALSI/CTRC Continues Speaker Series on Health Disparities

The new San Antonio Life Sciences Institute (SALSI) and Cancer Therapy and Research Center (CTRC) Distinguished Health Disparities Lecture Series is continuing to bring some of the top U.S. health disparities experts to San Antonio to offer the latest trends, tools and advancements in the fight against cancer health disparities.

The IHPR coordinates the series with support from SALSI, CTRC and UTSA.

The lecture series occurs periodically at the CTRC from now to August 2011.

UPCOMING SPEAKERS

*Note: All lectures are at 4 p.m. at the Mabee Conference Center at the CTRC, 7979 Wurzbach Road, San Antonio:

5/5/11
Dr. Karen Emmons,
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
“Behavior Change/Policy Change Interventions for Behavioral Cancer Risk Factors”

6/9/11
Dr. Timothy Rebbeck
Abramson Cancer Center
“Why Do Men of African Descent Have Unfavorable Prostate Cancer Outcomes?”

7/21/11
Dr. Meredith Minkler,
University of California, Berkeley
“Improving Health Disparities Research Through Community-Based Participatory Approaches: Realizing the Potential While Addressing the Challenges”

IHPR News Briefs

IHPR Project Coordinator Selected for Training Program

IHPR project coordinator Dr. Daisy Morales-Campos was among those chosen for a unique training program at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio that instructs in all aspects of cancer to produce an appreciation of basic science, translational and clinical areas of research. The training program was made possible by a grant from the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) to the Health Science Center. Trainees are expected to commit to full-time research training for a year, which started on Jan. 1, 2011. Trainees regularly attend program seminars and journal clubs and take specified courses. They also will present their research at an annual retreat and at national meetings each year, while also applying for independent research funding.

IHPR Staffers Welcome Newborns

Rebecca Vega, an IHPR accountant, and her husband welcomed their third child, 6-pound, 10-ounce Natalie Alexandria (pictured with her mother), at 1:03 p.m., Thursday, March 31, 2011. Natalie joins sisters Sarah and Jacqueline. Desiree Acosta, an IHPR research area specialist, and her husband welcomed their first child, 8-pound, 7-ounce Marisol Melissa (also pictured) at 11:07 p.m., Monday, April 25, 2011.
LIVESTRONG Opens ‘Cancer Navigation Center’

The LIVESTRONG Cancer Navigation Center recently opened in Austin, Texas, to help cancer survivors navigate an often complex health system and organize their paperwork, records, and even their emotions.

The new center, located at 2201 E. Sixth Street and open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., provides a range of free services for anyone affected by cancer. This includes people diagnosed with cancer, their families, friends, loved ones and the health care professionals who work with them.

The center helps people with any cancer type and at any stage of treatment. Assistance is available in both English and Spanish.

Watch a clip of the center’s senior manager of navigation, Melissa Sileo, about why patient navigation is important and how it can help people with cancer focus on that main goal of fighting the disease.

LIVESTRONG also offers national navigation services and support online or by phone at 866-927-7205 in English and Spanish for any person affected by cancer. The support aims to help survivors: cope with emotional concerns through counseling and support; address financial, insurance and job concerns; match to clinical trials and new treatments in development; locate and access local resources; and more.

LIVESTRONG also revamped its Spanish-language Web site, adding new videos, audio features and links to Facebook and Twitter messages thanks to content developed in part by researchers at the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio.

News Briefs

IHPR’s Amelie Ramirez Named Among ‘Faces of LIVESTRONG’

Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez, director of the Institute for Health Promotion Research at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, is among the cancer research leaders, survivors, advocates and donors featured on the cover of the new edition of the LIVESTRONG Quarterly magazine. Ramirez, a LIVESTRONG board member, and others share their inside stories of what it means to join up and feel the power of local, national, and global connection for cancer survivorship.

Cancer Survival among Latinos and the Hispanic Paradox

Given that little is known about cancer survival among Hispanic/Latino subgroups, a new study reveals that cancer death rates are generally higher among all Hispanics than whites—6% higher for Cubans, 11% for Puerto Ricans, 13% for U.S.-born Mexicans and 24% for foreign-born Mexicans. The study, by University of Nevada Las Vegas researchers and published in Cancer Causes and Control, suggests that survival disparities may be missed by studies that address Hispanics as a whole.

Number of U.S. Cancer Survivors Grows to Nearly 12 Million

The number of U.S. cancer survivors increased from 3 million in 1971 to 11.7 million in 2007, according to a new study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Cancer Institute. There were 3 million cancer survivors in 1971 and 9.8 million in 2001. Of the 11.7 million people living with cancer in 2007: 7 million were age 65 or older; 6.3 million were women; and 4.7 million were diagnosed 10 years earlier or more.
San Antonio Makes Big Push to Thwart Latino Childhood Obesity

Efforts to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic are reaching new heights all across San Antonio, a city with a large Latino population.

City officials, for instance, have rolled out SAbalance, a new Web site and social media campaign to increase awareness of local health and wellness opportunities.

Mayor Julián Castro has placed public health and education on the front-burner of the city’s agenda. He also appointed a Mayor’s Fitness Council. IHPR Director Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez, who leads a locally based national research network on Latino childhood obesity, is a tri-chair of the council.

And it’s not just the city.

Restaurants, schools, students and even lawmakers are getting into the mix, too.

The local Egg & I restaurants are the latest to join ¡Por Vida!, a San Antonio restaurant recognition program that helps adults and children make healthier food choices by identifying menu items that meet certain nutritional guidelines. Launched in October 2010, ¡Por Vida! restaurants must offer menu items that have fewer than 700 calories, 23 grams of fat, etc.

Many schools around town are introducing healthier fare, too.

For example, the Northside Independent School District’s Child Nutrition Department has spent $1.5 million over the last two years to provide more fresh fruits and salads, and new entrée options with less sodium and fat, in order to improve access to healthy foods.

“If you take this food away from the cafeteria, you would think it was restaurant-quality food,” Thomas Wherry, director of the Northside Child Nutrition Department, said on the district’s Web site. “The foods we buy are good quality, similar to what you would find at H-E-B or better.”

Meanwhile, local Latino nursing students will become trainer-influencers to steer Hispanic youth and their families away from the damaging effects of obesity.

This Muevete USA program began in March.

“I know, as a Latina, that our children will have problems as adults if we let them continue to be obese,” said project director Dr. Norma Martinez Rogers of The UT Health Science Center San Antonio. “We have to teach our children how to eat healthy, and through Muevete USA we are teaching an ideal population, Hispanic nursing students, to be pivotal players in that process.”

State Sen. Eddie Lucio Jr., D-Brownsville, also is proposing a penny-per-ounce tax on soft drinks.

At a recent Senate Finance hearing on April 18, 2011, he suggested his measure could bring in billions of dollars to the state, while curbing consumption of sugary drinks linked to childhood obesity and diabetes, the Texas Tribune reports.

News Briefs

Hispanics Now Majority in Texas Schools

More than half of public school students in Texas are from Hispanic families, the Texas Education Agency says, UPI reports. In the past year, Hispanics have gone from being 49% of students to 50.2%.

Report: Texas’ Obesity Crisis

Today, 66.7% of adult Texans are overweight or obese, up from 64.1% in 2005, accounting for a large jump in the costs borne by Texas employers, according to the new Gaining Costs, Losing Time: The Obesity Crisis in Texas report from the Texas State Comptroller of Public Affairs. Hispanic and black adults had the highest obesity rates in 2009.

Report: Texas’ Health, Education

The Texas Legislative Study Group’s report, Texas on the Brink: Fifth Edition, examines a variety of parameters, ranging from education, health care, the environment, and quality of life and compares Texas with other U.S. state rankings.

Report: Impact of Cancer in Texas

A Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas report indicates that cancer cost Texas $25.3 billion in 2010 in annual direct medical costs and morbidity and mortality losses. This is a 15.8% increase since 2007. The report details how investment in research, screening and related activities to reduce cancer in Texas not only changes lives but also generates important economic benefits.

South Texas Region Has Highest Uninsured Rates

Nearly half of adults (46.1%) living in the largely Latino area of McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, Texas, had no healthcare coverage last year—nearly three times the national average—and the highest percentage across the 188 U.S. metropolitan areas that Gallup and Healthways surveyed, the Gallup Web site reports.
U.S. Hispanic Population Reaches 50 million, or 1 in 6 People

Hispanics accounted for more than half of the U.S. population increase over the last decade, exceeding estimates in most states as they crossed a new census milestone: 50 million, or 1 in 6 Americans, the Associated Press reports.

Meanwhile, more than 9 million Americans checked two or more race categories on their 2010 census forms, up 32% from 2000, a sign of burgeoning multiracial growth in an increasingly minority nation.

The Census Bureau on Thursday released its first set of national-level findings from the 2010 count on race and migration, detailing a decade in which rapid minority growth, aging whites and the housing boom and bust were the predominant story lines.

Analysts said the results confirmed a demographic transformation under way that is upending traditional notions of racial minorities, political swing districts, even city and suburb.

After initial fears of low participation, the 2010 count of the Hispanic population came in 900,000 higher than expected, matching or surpassing census estimates in 37 states, according to the Pew Hispanic Center, a nonpartisan think tank.

In all, racial and ethnic minorities made up about 90% of the total U.S. growth since 2000, part of a historic trend in which minorities are expected to become the majority by midcentury.

“Hispanics and immigrant minorities are providing a much needed tonic for an older, largely white population which is moving into middle age and retirement,” William Frey, a demographer at the Brookings Institution who analyzed many of the census figures, told the Associated Press. “They will form the bulk of our labor force growth in the next decade as they continue to disperse into larger parts of the country.”

More on Minority Boom

Hispanics, Asians to Be Majority of U.S. Children Sooner
Half of California’s Children Are Hispanic
Young Hispanics in Texas Poised to Pick Up Aging Tab
Hispanic Population Growth Is Changing Suburbs
New Mexico Still Most ‘Hispanic’ State
Op-Ed: Demographics Alone Won’t Adequately Lift Latinos
The Latino Age Wave

Most Hispanics Don’t Get Preventive Health Services

Critical gaps exist between older Americans who receive potentially life-saving preventive services and those who do not, according to a new federal report. About 47% of Hispanics reported not being screened for colorectal cancer, compared to 34% of whites. More than 50% of Hispanics report never receiving a pneumococcal vaccination.

Cultural Sensitivity Is Key to Quality Care

Awareness and sensitivity to a patient’s cultural background can improve physician-patient communication and positively affect patient health, according to a new committee opinion from The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, HealthCanal reports.

Low Health Literacy Linked to Higher Risk of Death

Low health literacy in older Americans is linked to poorer health status and a higher risk of death, especially among Latinos and other minorities, according to a new federal report. More than 75 million English-speaking adults have limited health literacy.

Hispanics Most Likely to Trust Celebrities for Vaccine Info

For American parents, doctors are the most trusted source of information about the safety of children’s vaccines, HealthDay reports. White and Hispanic parents were more likely than black parents to trust family and friends “a lot” or “some,” and Hispanics were more likely than blacks or whites to trust celebrities “a lot” or “some.”

‘Medical Homes’ Help Kids Get Comprehensive Care

Children who have a “medical home”—that is, a pediatrician or nurse they see regularly who offers comprehensive care—are more likely to have their medical and dental needs met, HealthDay reports. Hispanic children were the least likely to have a medical home, followed closely by black children.

Speaking Same Language Means Better Health Care Quality

Wayne State University researchers have found that when patients and providers speak the same language, patients report less confusion and better health care quality. The findings were based on data from the Pew Hispanic Center/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Latino Health Survey.

Poll: Doctors Have Little Access to Resources for Spanish-Speakers

About 80% of physicians believed that having multilingual patient resources available was at least somewhat important, but 65% felt that their current available patient resources were fair, poor or non-existent, according to a poll by QuantiaMD. About 81% of respondents indicated that Spanish was the most needed language for new resources.

Arthritis Limits Hispanics’ Activity Levels More

About 3.1 million Hispanics have arthritis—fewer than blacks and whites. But Hispanics’ activities are much more limited due to arthritis than other population groups, according to a new federal study. Puerto Ricans had the highest age-adjusted prevalence of arthritis-attributable activity limitations (48.5%) and Cubans/Cuban Americans the lowest (21.1%).

More Latino, Black Women Suffer Osteoarthritis and Obesity

Older Americans are losing up to nearly four healthy years because they are obese, have knee osteoarthritis or are dealing with both conditions, according to a new study. Researchers say data shows that 55% of black women and 50% of Hispanic women are either obese, have knee OA, or both, compared with just 38% of white women.
Hispanic and black women newly diagnosed with breast cancer often face delays in care of more than a month, a large study has found, according to a news report.

The study, which appears in the Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved, found that 62.4% of African-American women and 59.3% of Hispanic women received a diagnosis of stage II or stage III breast cancer compared with 48.9% of white women.

Delays in treatment were apparent, as African-American and Hispanic women had higher risks of 30-, 60- and 90-day delays compared to white women.

The risk of a 60-day treatment delay was 76% higher among black patients with private insurance than that of white patients with comparable insurance.

Hispanics with private insurance had a 57% higher risk of a 60-day delay than whites.

Meanwhile, Latinas also more commonly worry about breast cancer’s return.

Nearly half of Hispanic women in a new study who spoke little English expressed much worry about their breast cancers returning, while white and black women expressed far less concern, WebMD reports.

Many survivors worry about recurrence, possibly due to communication difficulties, even though the odds of survival for a woman treated for early-stage breast cancer are good.

Worry can affect decisions about treatment, screening, symptom reporting and overall quality of life.

“Women who had a very optimistic prognosis, based on their cancer stage and node involvement, were often the ones who worried the most,” study leader Dr. Nancy K. Janz, of the University of Michigan, told WebMD.

**News Briefs**

**Liver Cancer Rapidly Increasing in Latino Men in California**

Rates of liver cancer in U.S.-born Hispanic men in California have increased by 87%, Hispanic Speaking News reports. These men are at a significantly higher risk of liver cancer than California Hispanic men born outside of the U.S.

**Latinos Face Tough Health Issues**

A new federal report has uncovered striking health disparities between racial/ethnic U.S. groups, and Hispanics tended to fall into some of the worst categories, according to a new report Fox News Latino reports. For example: Hispanic girls (77.4 per 1,000) were three times more likely than whites (26.7) and blacks (62.7) to end up pregnant, and Mexican-Americans have the least success in controlling high blood pressure.

**Foreign-Born Latinos Healthier, Live Longer**

Foreign-born Latinos in New Jersey are healthier, have fewer vices and live longer than those born in the U.S., mirroring a national trend, Fox News Latino reports. The study found that foreign-born Latinos were healthier than U.S.-born Latinos, with lower obesity rates and less smoking, binge drinking and drug use.

**Mexican Immigrants Prone to Depression**

Young adult Mexican migrants in the U.S. are much more likely to suffer depression and anxiety disorders than family members of migrants who remain in Mexico, HealthDay reports. Also, the percentage of white adolescents who received any major depression treatment was higher (40%) than blacks (32%), Hispanics (31%), and Asians (19%), according to a new study.

**TB Still a Disease to Fear among Latinos**

Although TB cases and rates decreased among foreign- and U.S.-born persons, foreign-born persons and racial/ethnic minorities were affected disproportionately by TB in the U.S. TB rates among Hispanics, non-Hispanic blacks, and Asians were seven, eight, and 25 times greater, respectively, than among whites, Latina Lista reports.

**Minority Kids with Heart Defects More Likely to Die in Childhood**

Overall, U.S. black infants were 32% more likely to die in the first five years of life than white infants, HealthDay reports. Hispanic infants with hypoplastic left heart syndrome — a rare condition — were more likely to die than white or black infants.

**Hispanics Have Among the Highest Diabetes Rates**

The number of Americans with diabetes increased from 23.6 million in 2008 to 26 million, and minority groups continue to suffer higher diabetes rates, according to a federal report. Among adults, diabetes rates were 16.1% for American Indians/Alaska Natives, 12.6% for blacks, 11.8% for Hispanics, 8.4% for Asian Americans, and 7.1% for whites.
Spanish-language version of the award-winning Time to Talk CARDIO program in English or Spanish that can help patients and health professionals have more productive conversations about heart health.

**Bilingual Web Site: Diabetes**
Joslin Diabetes Center, an affiliate of Harvard Medical School, has revamped its bilingual Web site on diabetes as part of its efforts to stem the metabolic disorder among Latinos.

**Bilingual Widget: HIV/AIDS Prevention Glossary**
The Office of Minority Health’s HIV/AIDS Prevention Bilingual Glossary provides linguistic support to individuals and organizations working with Spanish-speaking populations in the U.S. The terms included are commonly used in public health and HIV/AIDS prevention in the U.S. Web sites can add the glossary widget in English or Spanish.

**Fact Sheet: Hispanic Health Issues**
The Center for American Progress’ new fact sheet, *Health Disparities by Race and Ethnicity*, spells out health issues facing the nation’s minority groups, such as that only 68% of Hispanics had health insurance coverage in 2009.

**Bilingual Program: Healthcare 411**
Healthcare 411 is a new English or Spanish Web site that offers useful health information for consumers and providers, including the latest health care news and research findings via videos, articles, podcasts, presentations and more.

**Bilingual Program: Hora de Hablar CARDIO**
Time to Talk CARDIO has launched *Hora de Hablar CARDIO*, a culturally translated health care, offers culturally appropriate bilingual health education materials.

**Spanish Web Site: Healthy Lifestyles**
We Can! (Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition), a national movement to promote a healthy weight for kids, provides parents and communities with many Spanish-language materials, tools, and other information on its Web site to encourage a healthy and physically active lifestyle.

**Spanish Web Site: Tobacco Cessation**
A free Web-based teen smoking-cessation and prevention program, *ASPIRE*, now speaks Spanish. ASPIRE (A Smoking Prevention Interactive Experience) aims to prevent middle-school and high-school teens from smoking or help them quit before it becomes a lifelong addiction.

**Report: Communicating with Latinos**
The CDC has released “Research to Practice: Building Our Understanding,” a series of reports focused on health communication with various audiences and marketing practices to help communities implement policy, systems and environmental change strategies for healthy lifestyles. The first report focuses on communication with Latinos.

**Report: ‘Why Place and Race Matter’**
PolicyLink, a national research institute, released *Why Place and Race Matter*, a report that makes the case that addressing long-term racial inequities is critical to crafting effective strategies to build healthy, vibrant communities.

**Report: Latinos and Mobile Health**
Emerging trends in the health-related use of cell phones include the proliferation of mobile health applications for the care and monitoring of patients with chronic diseases and the rise in cell phone usage by U.S. Latinos and African Americans, according to a new study.
BFF Program

- To connect girls to community resources, weekend activities are planned, such as volunteering at the San Antonio Food Bank’s Spurs Community Garden.
- Each girl will receive two step-counting devices for herself and a parent.
- On their cell phones, girls will receive motivational text messages, vote on favorite activities and more. There’s also a Facebook group where girls can post photos, see an events calendar, watch instructional videos on YouTube and interact with each other.
- The Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering at The University of Texas at San Antonio created the infrastructure for the text-messaging portion of BFF.

“This multi-year study is an example of how agencies can come together and affect change for the betterment of communities,” said Anna Maria Chávez, CEO for Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas.

West Side girls were key to creating BFF

A year ago, a different group of Girl Scouts used cameras to document obstacles to physical activity in their neighborhoods. Laura Esparza, an IHPR project coordinator, said the girls “expressed concerns about stray dogs, traffic and broken, uneven or missing sidewalks.”

Added Parra-Medina: “And strangers — particularly if they were male.”

As researchers considered how to use technology in BFF, they surveyed 102 girls. Older girls typically had their own cell phones, while younger girls shared with family members or did not have cell phone access. The most popular social-networking sites were Facebook and YouTube. Girls had videogame consoles at home but rarely used them.

Researchers also talked to parents, who were protective of daughters.

“Some parents say, ‘The girls appear more mature than they are. They attract unwanted attention. They don’t have the skills to be able to manage different situations,’” Parra-Medina said. “So the parental response is to protect. They don’t want the girls out and about unsupervised.”

Parents were largely unaware of community programs for girls that were accessible and affordable. Meanwhile, agencies from the project’s Community Advisory Board said they had programs and could be flexible on cost, but they need participation to continue them.

The barriers identified through the photo project and information gleaned from the girls’ survey results helped spotlight opportunities for girls to get physical activity.

“We believe the girls and our community overall helped us design our ‘Be Fit with Friends’ program in a way that will give local girls a whole new perspective: that they can indeed find fun ways to engage in physical activity and overcome potential barriers,” Parra-Medina said.

About the E-newsletter

This E-newsletter is produced quarterly by the Institute for Health Promotion Research. Please send news items or story ideas to IHPR@uthscsa.edu.

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