



Community Connections

UCLA/RAND Center for Adolescent Health Promotion
a CDC Prevention Research Center



July 2011



UCLA/RAND Center Recognized for Our Commitment to Community Partnerships**

Working in close partnership with communities to identify and address local health issues is a core value of the Prevention Research Centers (PRCs), which have been funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) since 1986. At the program's 25th anniversary conference in April 2011, 11 PRCs (including the UCLA/RAND Center for Adolescent Health Promotion) were recognized for their commitment by receiving a 2011 Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) Best Practice Award. The National Community Committee, composed of representatives from all 37 Prevention Research Centers' community committees across the country, developed and presented the award. An external peer review panel comprised of community representatives and academics with experience in CBPR evaluated all applications. PRC applications that received a score of 80 points or higher received this year's CBPR award. The 2011 PRC awardees included:

- Emory University
- Morehouse School of Medicine
- San Diego State University
(with University of California at San Diego)
- UCLA/RAND Center for Adolescent Health Promotion
- University of Arizona
- University of Maryland
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- University of Rochester
- University of South Carolina
- University of Washington
- West Virginia University

The award recognizes the PRCs and their community partners for the use of CBPR principles and practices in their research projects. Elements of CBPR considered in selecting PRCs include formal involvement of community partners in research project design, budgeting, and evaluation, and in governance and evaluation of the partnership. Also considered in the selection process were the inclusion of community members as co-authors in policy position papers, peer-reviewed journal articles, and presentations. The intention of the award is to strengthen all the centers' work with community partners by drawing attention to exemplary relationships. CDC's PRC Program funds 37 centers in 27 states. In 2010, the PRC network reached nearly 30 million people in 103 partner communities. For more information about the National Community Committee, see www.cdc.gov/prc/community-voice/index.htm. For information about the PRC Program, see www.cdc.gov/prc.

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UCLA/RAND Prevention Research Center Mission

Our mission is to conduct prevention research that: (1) address the needs of children, adolescents, young adults, and their families; (2) builds empowering relationships with community partners in Los Angeles and beyond; and (3) directly benefits communities and/or transforms local, state, and national policies.

Community Partner News

2011 Community Advisory Board (CAB) Executive Committee

CAB Chair

Douglas L. Semark, PhD
Executive Director, Gang Alternatives Program (GAP)
www.gangfree.org

CAB Representative to the CDC PRC National Community Committee

Michael Ballue, BSBA, CADC II
Executive Director, National Council on Alcoholism &
Drug Dependence of the South Bay
www.ncaddsb.com

CAPP Community Research Associate

Sheila Lamb, LCSW, PPS
Psychiatric Social Worker, School Mental Health,
Los Angeles Unified School District

Key Events

Childhood Obesity Conference. June 28-30 at the San Diego's Manchester Grand Hyatt. Co-hosted by the California Endowment, state departments of public health and education and others dedicated to combating pediatric obesity. For more information, visit: <http://www.childhood-obesity.net>. CAB members Paz Velasquez and Sheila Lamb represented our Center at this conference and will report back their findings at the next CAB meeting.

Usher Youth World Leadership Conference. July 20-22, 2011 in Atlanta, Georgia. With funding from the UCLA Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Equity, our Center will sponsor three youth CAB members (Nikki Bell, Jacklyn Suarez, Virginia Velasquez) and one parent chaperone (Dana Bart-Bell) to attend a 3-day youth leadership conference. Our youth representatives will attend conference sessions on physical activity and nutrition, and will write up a short report on their experiences and what they learned.

CDC Site Visit to the UCLA/RAND Prevention Research Center. Winter 2012. The Director of the CDC PRC Program and our program officer will conduct a site visit to our Center to meet with our academic and community partners to learn more about our core research project (P-SNaX) and other Center projects and activities.

Welcome to New CAB Members

Kim Richards, Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Club of Carson (BGCC), joined the CAB in Fall 2010. BGCC provides a variety of programs and services, with a focus on academic achievement and job readiness. Core programs focus on: health and life skills; leadership development; sports, fitness, and recreation; arts and crafts; and educational and career development. For more details about BGCC, see www.bgccarson.org.

Mary Hammer, Director of Family Support and Community Development at the South Bay Center for Community Development (SBCCD), joined the CAB in June 2011. The Family Support Program has developed a strong collaboration with 76 social service agencies and organizations throughout the South Bay to provide supportive services and activities to families throughout Service Planning Area 8 (SPA 8). Core activities include: job training and counseling; health, parenting; and other education programs; parent-child and family centered activities; and basic support services. For more information, see www.sbaycenter.com.

Government Policy Liaisons Appointed to the CAB

Elise Swanson is Deputy Chief of Staff for External Affairs and a Senior Policy Analyst for Councilwoman Janice Hahn representing Los Angeles District 15. Councilwoman Hahn selected Ms. Swanson to serve as a policy liaison between her office and the UCLA/RAND PRC for the next three years.

Paz Velasquez, Executive Director of The Youth, Family, School, and Community – Partnership in Action (YFSC-PIA), was appointed by James Dear, Mayor of Carson, to serve as a policy liaison between his office and the UCLA/RAND PRC. Ms. Velasquez is active in a variety of local initiatives designed to empower community members to improve the quality of life for the diverse residents of Carson. Serving as an alternate policy liaison to the CAB is Evelyn Andamo, Program Director of the Carson Adult Day Health Care Center.

Youth Community Advisory Board (YCAB) News



Currently, our Youth CAB is composed of 15 high school students representing five schools in LA County including Carson High School, Harbor Teachers Preparatory Academy, Santa Monica High School, and Torrance High School. Each student is asked to remain on the Youth CAB for at least 2-3 years and to help recruit new students when they graduate from high school.



Youth CAB members take part in different Center research projects each year. They are given opportunities to voice their ideas and opinions about different adolescent health issues (such as teen stress, obesity, etc.) in a small group setting (15-20 youth) and to improve their leadership, communication, and critical thinking skills. Our youth CAB members meet and work with UCLA and RAND faculty, Center staff, and UCLA undergraduate and graduate students at

least 4-6 times a year after school. Youth CAB meetings are currently held at the RAND Santa Monica office. CAB member, Paz Velasquez serves as a liaison between the CAB and Youth CAB and has played an instrumental role in recruiting South Bay students to serve on the Youth CAB. Paz and other parent volunteers also provide transportation for South Bay students to attend Youth CAB meetings and other Center functions.

The Center's Community Liaison (**Jennifer Hawes-Dawson**) and two Youth Liaisons (**Dr. Raymond Perry** and **Dr. Rebecca Dudovitz**) oversee the activities of the Youth CAB and serve as mentors to the high school students. This year the Youth CAB identified "adolescent stress" as a major health issue facing youth. The students under Dr. Perry and Dr. Dudovitz's guidance created asset maps to visually display resources available at the community, family, and individual level to help teens cope with stress in healthy ways.

Our Youth Liaisons, Drs. Perry and Dudovitz, are third-year fellows in the UCLA Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars Program.



Dr. Raymond Perry completed his pediatric residency at University of Chicago. He attended medical school at Emory University, and received his undergraduate degree in physiology from University of Maryland-College Park. His primary interests are in

adolescent health. During residency, he completed research on perspectives of health and healthcare among African-American adolescent males. He plans to continue research focusing on underserved adolescent males, their health awareness, and their barriers to healthcare.



Dr. Rebecca Dudovitz completed her pediatrics residency at UCLA in the Community Health and Advocacy Training (CHAT) Program, where she is currently doing a year as chief resident. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of California, at Davis with a major

in philosophy. Afterwards, she attended UCLA medical school where she earned her MD. Her research interests are in improving the assessment and management of school function issues in the primary care setting. She also partnered with a rural population in Ghana to increase bed net use and prevent malaria using a participatory research approach.

Youth Perspective on Teen Stress



The youth CAB really came together this year, as teens from Carson and Santa Monica worked to raise awareness of teen stress as a community-wide health issue. From our meetings and discussions, it is clear that stress is a priority issue for YCAB members and their peers. We learned about different strategies for taking on health problems and the YCAB members wanted to positively impact their respective communities by creating a tool to improve how teens cope with stress. Dealing with school, work, extracurricular activities, preparing for college, and social pressures from friends and family were identified as significant stressors for teens. YCAB members learned how to recognize

stress, how it affects teens, and healthy coping strategies. They learned about asset mapping as a strategy for building healthier communities and then put it into practice by identifying resources within themselves, their families and their communities. Finally, they used all their knowledge and energy to create a resource guide pamphlet for other teens coping with stress.

The resource guide features background information on stress and how it related to teens. The guide differentiates good and bad stressors, and describes how bad stress can impact other aspects of one's life by affecting a person's mood, body, relationships, school performance, and other activities. When people don't use healthy coping strategies, sometimes stress can cause physical symptoms, such as headaches, muscle aches, stomach aches, feeling sad or frustrated, not being able to sleep well, getting angry or annoyed more easily, feeling tired, or not being able to concentrate.

Healthy coping strategies identified by YCAB members include relaxation techniques, such as breathing exercises, taking a nap, watching television, and engaging in physical activity. Talking to family members, friends, or other trusted people in teens' lives (school teachers or counselors, church leaders, coaches, etc.) is another important means of dealing with stress.

The teens' resource guide includes maps of Santa Monica and Carson with community "assets" where people can engage in these stress-relieving activities. They highlighted parks, libraries, museums, shopping malls, and other sites of interest. In addition, they identified a number of online assets available to teens from any geographic community that includes mental health hotlines and websites relating to stress, healthy coping, and finding psychosocial support.



The resource guide will be distributed to schools and community centers recommended by the YCAB members, so that more youth can benefit from the work they've done.

Finally, we are very excited to close out the year with a great opportunity for YCAB members. With support from the UCLA Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Equity, three YCAB participants will be attending the Usher World Leadership Forum in Atlanta, GA from July 20-22, 2011. The teens will be accompanied by one parent and will represent the group at the teen leadership summit. Participants will gain skills necessary for becoming local and global leaders, and they will engage in activities dealing with community health topics. We are grateful to the UCLA/RAND Center for Adolescent Health Promotion for encouraging the ongoing work of the teens in YCAB, and for supporting their continued growth as community leaders and health advocates.

Prepared by:

Rebecca Dudovitz, MD, MSHS and Raymond Perry, MD, MSHS

YCAB Liaisons/UCLA Department of Pediatrics/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholars Program

Center News

Funding Opportunity for Community Partners: REACH U.S.

At the end of June 2011, the CDC-funded REACH U.S. Project, a Center of Excellence in the Elimination of Disparities (P.I.s:



Antronette Yancey, MD, MPH, Roshan Bastani, PhD) released an RFA to solicit proposals from community partners for their 2011-2012 project cycle. In this fourth and final year, the UCLA Legacy Project grants are intended to focus on innovative and promising strategies to disseminate and institutionalize **Instant Recess (IR)**, an evidence-based strategy to integrate 10 minutes of physical activity into daily routines within organizations. One-time awards of **\$25,000** each will be given to up to 6 applicants whose proposals have the greatest potential for disseminating IR. Proposals must be received by **August 12, 2011**.

Questions or to apply, please contact:

Joyce Guinyard, UCLA REACH U.S. Project Director, at: joyceguinyard@ucla.edu

CAPP Research Seed Grants



In September 2011, the Community-Academic Policy Partnership Project (P.I.: Paul Chung, MD, MS) will release an RFA to solicit proposals from CAB organizations for the second round of CAPP seed research grants. One-year grants in the **\$10,000-\$30,000** range will be awarded to 1-3 projects to enhance the research capacity of our community partners. Eligible proposals must fit the overall mission of our Center, and must be non-profit private 501(c)(3) or public community organizations that are either current CAB organizations or sponsored by a current CAB organization.

12th Annual UCLA Health Disparities Symposium



The UCLA Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Equity, School of Public Health, and Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center are pleased to announce the 12th Annual UCLA Health Disparities Symposium. This free, day-long event will bring together members of the community, health workforce, and academia to discuss the current state of health reform and its implications.

- **Date:** October 20, 2011, 8am-4pm
- **Location:** Center at Cathedral Plaza
555 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
- **Topic:** Impact of health care reform on our diverse communities
- **Contact:** Roena Vega, roena.vega@ucla.edu

Family Mediation for At-Risk Youth

We are evaluating the effects of parent-child mediation, which is designed to improve family functioning, on academic- and health-related attitudes and behaviors among at-risk youth. This new project is funded by NIH-National Institute on Drug Abuse (P.I.: Joan Tucker, PhD) and is being conducted in collaboration with **Centinela Youth Services**.

Questions? Comments?

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