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Healthy Youth Development Prevention Research Center e-Update

Spring 2007

Greetings Community Advisory Network members, PRC staff, and friends of the Healthy Youth Development PRC network.

The University of Minnesota's Healthy Youth Development - Prevention Research Center (HYD-PRC) collaborates with state and local organizations and communities to provide training, conduct research, and disseminate findings related to best practices in healthy youth development.

We hope you like this bi-monthly electronic update which will provide HYD-PRC supporters with regular information on the valuable work of the Healthy Youth Development PRC. Promoting healthy youth development requires sound research and the leadership to utilize it.

New Staff welcome...

*Nancy Leland, PRC Evaluation Team Leader
Nancy brings more than 15 years of maternal, child, and adolescent health research to her position. Nancy received her Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley in Social Welfare. She has served as Senior Research Coordinator with Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Minnesota where she conducted and coordinated health services research and evaluation projects, including pregnancy outcomes and content of prenatal care.*

*Annie Ericson, Evaluation Coordinator, Lead Peace-Plus Project,
Annie brings a unique combination of skills and perspectives to this position, including teaching experience, clear insights into what it takes to work effectively with students and families from ethnically diverse backgrounds, and experience in conducting community-partnered evaluation projects. Annie has taught in a tri-lingual school in Portland OR, and at El Colegio Charter School in Minneapolis.*

Latest Happenings-

- [PRC Fellows: Rachel Widome and Ronda Marie Chakolis](#)
- [Lead Peace and Lead Peace Plus in Minneapolis Schools](#)
- ['s UP: Students Uplifting Peers in South Minneapolis](#)
- [TAPPP: Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting Program](#)
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PRC Fellows: Rachel Widome and Ronda Marie Chakolis

Rachel-

After earning her Ph.D. in epidemiology from the University of Minnesota, Rachel Widome joined the PRC as a postdoctoral fellow in September 2006. Dr. Widome is a social epidemiologist who is interested in understanding the causes of health disparities and exploring social factors that influence health. Since joining the PRC, she has been very involved with the Lead Peace evaluation study development and administration. Currently Rachel is working on using the data from the Lead Peace survey to build a measure of social capital in adolescents.

Ronda-

Currently, Ronda Marie Chakolis serves as a sexual health group facilitator for the LEAD PEACE program at Nellie Stone Johnson and a member of the Northside Youth Collaborative. The collaborative has used the "Five C's" and fundamental principles from the healthy youth development frameworks. Her primary duties as a member of the collaborative is to train youth facilitators for a forum to be held on April 26th at the Minneapolis Urban League. These youth will be trained to facilitate a discussion with community members regarding how to invest in and actively partner with North Minneapolis youth.

Lead Peace and Lead Peace Plus in Minneapolis Schools

Progress on the Lead Peace project continues with on-going service learning and health classes. First round benchmark survey information has been collected from students in three partner schools (conducted Fall 2006). Preparation for Spring 2007 student follow-up surveys is currently underway.

As the PRC's primary community research demonstration project, the Lead Peace Program continues to break new ground and secure positive relationships. To make sure the Lead Peace survey instrument was appropriate for students and the community, PRC staff discussed content with parents and young adults from the neighborhood in two small focus groups. The group of young people suggested using local youth to explain and introduce the survey to the middle-school students. This good advice inspired the PRC to hire five new survey administrators, many from the preliminary focus group.

To make sure that all parents understood the Lead Peace program and survey, Hmong and Spanish speakers made phone calls to check-in with parents and answer their questions. In addition to the Lead Peace program at Nellie Stone Johnson (NSJ) School, this middle school service learning program was offered this year at Cityview School. Ayolanda Mack from the Nia Imani Youth Center at Kwanzaa Church is coordinating the program at Cityview School.

A new crop of outstanding Lead Peace service learning projects are underway at Nellie Stone Johnson. This year's roster includes more video work on topics like racism and teasing; fundraising; supporting Kids Against Hunger by packaging meals; teaching younger students about peaceful ways to resolve disagreements; and more.

The "plus" in Nellie Stone Johnson's Lead Peace program - taking advantage of opportunities to link students to community - continues to grow. As part of career day -- planned and facilitated by Pam Russ and Richard Spratt (Village Social Services) and Debra Stone (PRC) -- students met and visited with Roberta Jones, Hennepin

County District Attorney. Five NSJ students spent a day with PRC fellow Ronda Marie Chakolis and PRC research assistant Molly Secor-Turner, learning about their home bases in the UMN Schools of Pharmacy and Nursing.

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's UP: Students Uplifting Peers in South Minneapolis

's Up is a program in the Phillips community of Minneapolis which trains 13 - 17 year old young adults to do peer training and outreach about real-life issues including sexuality, job-skills, and fostering healthy relationships. Research Assistants Jim Winkle and Dan Edelstein coordinate this dynamic program. Eight youth from the Phillips neighborhood are enrolled in the training session that is currently underway.

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TAPPP: Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting Program

TAPPP continues in Minneapolis schools. In partnership with Barb Kyle from Minneapolis Public Schools, the Adult Family Life Demonstration grant, administered by the US Dept. of Health & Human Services-Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs, will allow for rigorous evaluation of the Broadway School and other Minneapolis schools' teen parent programs.

The five-year effort will enable evaluation of the Broadway School's programming for teen parents and compare their outcomes to a comparison group.

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CDC's Annual PRC Meeting: Achieving Dissemination Success

The CDC's annual Prevention Research Center meeting took place March 12 - 14 in Atlanta. The meeting was an opportunity for the 33 PRC's to share information and best practices on the importance and dissemination of prevention research.

Highlights of the meeting included:

- Michael Resnick moderated a panel of journalists including health and wellness reporters from the Washington Post and USA Today. The panel discussed the process by which the media covers health research and public health topics.
- A keynote address by Lawrence Green, UC- San Francisco. Dr. Green discussed the past and future of health research in the US.
- Panelists from various PRC's spoke about the need to make research dissemination applicable and relevant to diverse communities.
- CAN member Rosemarie Rodriguez-Hager attended the CDC meeting and accompanying workshops.

Minnesota Parent Survey: Support for Comprehensive Sex Education

The Healthy Youth Prevention Research Center recently conducted a statewide survey of 1,600 parents of youth and adolescents. Preliminary results indicate that:

- 89.3% of parents favored teaching both abstinence and pregnancy prevention.
- For nearly all specific sexuality and reproductive health topics, a majority believed instruction should begin in middle school grades.
- 9.8% favored abstinence-only education

The data collection phase of the project is finished and research team leader Marla Eisenberg is drafting the first manuscript for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Marla and the rest of the Healthy Youth Development PRC team are excited about parental support for comprehensive sexuality education.

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Prime Time: Effective Teen Pregnancy Research and Outreach

Prime Time is a clinic-based intervention study with goals of reducing risky sexual behavior, violence involvement and school disconnection among 13-17 year-old girls accessing clinic services in Minneapolis or St. Paul. Led by Kara Beckman, Prime Time staff have spent the last several months laying the groundwork for the study, hiring staff, finalizing data collection tools, developing relationships with collaborating clinics and securing research approvals. The team is now ready to begin study recruitment at the Minneapolis clinic sites-Teen Age Medical Services (TAMS) and Broadway Family Practice Clinic.

Shari Plowman, evaluation coordinator for Prime Time, has finished pilot-testing the Audio- Computer Assisted Self-Interview (ACASI) program, which will be used throughout the project.

Welcome new staff...

-Sally Nixon, Prime Time Case Manager

Sally will be working with teen girls through the Broadway Community Clinic in North Minneapolis. Sally brings extensive experience working with homeless youth in Minneapolis and St. Paul, as well as nutrition education outreach and health promotion efforts in Philadelphia.

-Maria Arboleda, Prime Time Case Manager

Maria has worked with adolescents in Minneapolis and St. Paul for much of her career, most recently in Minneapolis' school-based clinics and with the Aqui Para Ti program. She will be working with girls in the intervention program who utilize TAMS in South Minneapolis.

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