

Closing the Gap on Austin Hispanic Obesity

Hispanic Austin Leadership 2009-2010

Healthcare Team

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	Page 3
Project Details	
Team Member Roles and Responsibilities.....	Page 4
Schedule and Events.....	Page 5
Impact of Project.....	Page 8
Community Resources.....	Page 9
Project Budget.....	Page 11
References.....	Page 12
Acknowledgements.....	Page 13

Executive Summary

Obesity in America is on the rise and over the past 30 years we have seen a tremendous increase in case studies involving children and low income groups, specifically minority ones. Obesity can lead to many other serious health issues including Type 2 Diabetes, stroke, heart disease, cancer and in many cases, death.

It is currently estimated that 66 million Americans are obese or overweight.¹ Childhood obesity has more than tripled over the last three decades. A recent study from the *Center for Disease Control* shows that childhood obesity among children between the ages of 6 to 11 has jumped from 6.5 % in 1980 to 19.6% in 2008. During this same period, we have also seen this crisis increase in young adolescents between 12 to 19 years of age by 262%.² This type of dramatic increase in a short amount of time is certainly an epidemic we can no longer afford to ignore.

To this effect, it is critical that childhood obesity be monitored closely among the Hispanic community since this group is starting to show signs of having the highest rates of obesity among any ethnic group.³ This, coupled with the fact the Hispanics are the fastest growing minority group in our nation can add to an already serious health crisis affecting our nation.

One important question to start with is "*Are Hispanic families aware of this crisis?*" To answer this, the HAL (Hispanic Austin Leadership) Health Team has moved forward by bring awareness to Hispanic families living in high overweight and obese Austin communities, and illustrating to them how their children may be at risk for serious health problems unless immediate health-conscious changes are put into place, starting at the family dinner table. Each parent needs to take responsibility of what his or her child is eating.

As a guide to these parents, the HAL Health Group created and offered a FREE cookbook title "*Platillos Latinos*" to show them that we can begin this transformation with small changes. We do not have to automatically give up our unique flavors and food every day or learn to shop with a completely different shopping list. We can continue to enjoy our wonderful traditional Hispanic meals but with small changes. Additionally, a PSA (public service announcement) was put together to grab the attention of Latino families. The purpose of the PSA was to encourage families to be more aware of the children's overall diet and nutrition regiment. Our project goal is to close the gap on obesity by providing simple tips on how to get there.

Project Details

Team Member Roles and Responsibilities

Juan Llerena – Project Manager/ Finance Officer – The project manager had the overall responsibility for the successful planning, execution, monitoring, control and closure of the project.

Adrian Salazar – Marketing/Communications/Sales – This person was responsible for contacting various organizations and leaders in our community that would be beneficial to the healthcare team’s project and goals. This person also ensured our project had reliable funding and sponsors and that people in our community were made aware of our project.

Joe Requio Jr. – Finance Officer – The finance officer was responsible for maintaining the team budget and assisting the Marketing/Communications/ Sales person on finding funding for the project.

Angelica Aguilar – Research/At Large – The Researcher was responsible for collecting data that pertaining to the specific topic at hand. The researcher’s responsibility was also to ensure that the group was aware of organizations that could benefit the team’s mission.

Schedule of Events

September

Attended Travis County Health Expo

- Research on what the leading healthcare topics are

HAL Team Meeting

- Topic Discussion

October

HAL Team Meeting

- Discussion of Upcoming events
- Topic picked by healthcare group-Childhood Obesity/ Research shared

HAL Team Meeting

- Project Discussion

November

Attended Children's Optimal Health Summit/Dell Children's Hospital

- Participated in a summit exploring specific Austin areas associate with childhood obesity and possible reasons for the obesity epidemic

HAL Team Meeting

- Discussed summit
- Project chosen – Cookbook
- Nutritionist contacted

December

Research on childhood obesity, researching traditional Latin dishes and translating all content of the cookbook.

HAL Team Meeting

- Discussed final drafts of Recipes
- Recipes submitted to Nutritionist

January

Research on childhood obesity, researching traditional Latin dishes and translating all content of the cookbook.

Meeting with Dell's Children Optimal Health

- Project Discussion

Attended Grant Meeting at the MACC/ Meet with Tracy Lunoff AISD

- Project Discussion

February

Final Cookbook printed

Meeting with Sustainable Foods

- Project Discussion on Cookbook with Sustainable Foods

HAL Class Meeting

- Topic on Healthcare

HAL Team Meeting

- Group Tasting

March

HAL Team Meeting

- Project Discussion
- Task Updates

Univision Census Event

- Surveyed families

HAL Team Meeting

- Project Discussion/ Prep for upcoming meeting

Meeting with AISD

- Project Discussion

Team Meeting

- Discuss last minute items before project, overview of project

April

Team Meeting

- PSA shoot

Team Meeting

- Talent show at Fiesta Mart, distribution of more surveys

Impact of Project

After interviewing families in central east Austin, the health care team discovered that many families knew Latinos were at a great risk of obesity. Many families stated that when they lived in their native country, they were more active. They would eat the traditional foods but would walk to many places. When moving to the U.S, the eating habits did not change but the level of physical activity did. With the decrease in activity they noticed a change in weight and health

overall. This issue not only poses a hurdle in recent arrivals but many Latino families living in the Austin area. Many families are busy with their day to day lives that often we aren't willing to change are eating habits and our physical activity levels are low. The families we spoke with indicated that Latino families are willing to try new ways of eating and exercising, but did want to keep a sense of culture.

The purpose of the cook book was to bring awareness to families that they do not have to spend or shop much different than before. That small changes can make a big difference. The response we received from our surveys was that many people shopped according to price and what they were familiar with, not necessarily what was healthy for them. *"Platillos Latinos"* brings this awareness to families. In addition, the book contains many physical activity suggestions that the whole family can partake in that does not take a lot of time or money. With 125 copies of these cookbooks, we expect that this will make a big impact on the families we distributed them to.

The PSA was created to further raise awareness to families that it is important to pay attention to what their children are eating. Their physical health as well as their diet is very important to the success of our children and their future. It also raises awareness that parents need to be responsible for the children's overall health. Recent research done by The Children's Optimal Health group shows that the Dove Springs area, which is largely Hispanic, is one the most heavily populated area where obesity rates amount middle school children are high. The goal is to have those families view the PSA. When the PSA is picked up, this will have a tremendous amount of impact on families not only in the Dove Springs area but also reaching thousands of families in all over the Austin area.

Community Resources

Diane Resnick

Sr. Vice-President, Community Care
Seton Family of Hospitals

Kit Abney Spelce

Director –insure.a.kid

Acting Director – Children’s Optimal Health

Matt Balthazar

Project Coordinator

Children’s Optimal Health / insure-a-kid

Luz Lopez-Gerrero

Health Plan Provider Agent/CHIP Outreach Representative

Seton Family of Hospitals

Susan Leibrock

Community Relations Director

Sustainable Food Center

Joy Casnovsky

The Happy Kitchen/La Cocina Alegre Program Director

Sustainable Food Center

Valeria Marrow

The Happy Kitchen/La Cocina Alegre Program Coordinator

Sustainable Food Center

Tracy Diggs Lunoff, M.Ed.

Coordinator of School Health

Office of Educational Support Services (AISD)

Laura Gruber

Dietician

Austin Wellness & Nutrition

Morgan Printing

Rosie Castillo

Director of Social Ministries

Diocese of Austin - San Jose Catholic Church

Olga Ruedas

Parish Secretary

Diocese of Austin – Dolores Catholic Church

Marty Passmore

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Fely Garcia

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KAKW-Univision 62, Austin

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Ruben Robledo
Operations Manager
KAKW-Univision 62, Austin

Genaro Perez
Production Producer
KAKW-Univision 62, Austin

Janette Miller
HAP Subsidy Analyst
Southwest Housing Compliance Corporation

Emily Hines
*"2010 Michael & Susan Dell Center for Advancement of Healthy Living Lectureship Award
and Social and Environmental Solutions to Obesity Conference"*
University of Texas at Austin

Kelly Brownell, PhD
"Addressing Nutrition and Obesity Issues by Changing Defaults"
Yale University

Kenneth Warner, PhD
"Puffs and Pounds: Lessons from Tobacco Control for Combating the Obesity Epidemic"
University of Michigan

Project Budget

Healthcare Budget

Revenue

Chamber Donation	\$500.00
The Llerena Group	\$1,000.00
U.S Security Association	\$100.00
Univision	\$1,200.00
Total Revenue	\$2,800.00
Expenses	
Nutritionist	\$250.00
Cookbooks	\$1,200.00
Advertising –PSA	\$1,200.00
HEB Gift Certificates	\$100.00
Total Expenses	\$2,750.00
Net Profit	\$ 50.00

References

1. Center for Disease Control and Prevention.(2009). Childhood Overweight and Obesity. Retrieved January 7, 2010, from www.cdc.gov
2. National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. (2010). Childhood Obesity. Retrieved March 26, 2010, from www.cdc.gov

3. Salud America!. (2010). Latino Childhood Obesity. Retrieved January 7, 2010, from www.salud-america.org

4. Salud America!. (2010). Fighting Latino childhood obesity with prevention research. Retrieved January 7, 2010, from www.salud-america.org

5. Center for Disease Control and Prevention.(2009). Nutrition and the Health of Young People. Retrieved January 7, 2010,from www.cdc.gov

6. Children’s Optimal Health. (2009). Children’s Optimal Health: Child Obesity by Neighborhood and Middle School. www.childrensoptimalhealth.org

7. 2010 Healthcare Survey: Hispanic Austin Leadership Healthcare Team

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Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Myndi Garrett

Board Member

Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Andrew Martinez

President / CEO

Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Pilar Sanchez

Chair/ Director of Complaine Oversight

GAHCC/ Housing Authority of the City of Austin

Luz-Lopez Guerrero

Health Plan Provider Agent/CHIP Outreach Representative

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