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CHL News: Vol 2. Issue 4. Oct-Dec 2012

JANUARY 2, 2013 BY ADMIN

'Hafa Adai' from Guam!

Reflecting on the CHL program's activities and accomplishments throughout 2012, I take this opportunity to extend my appreciation for all the hard work and dedication that each member of CHL team has given to the overall success of this program. I have to say that I am proud to be a part of a team that makes every effort to carry out its commitment to elevate the capacity of the Pacific region to build and sustain a healthy food and physical environments, which will in turn help maintain healthy weight and prevent obesity among young children here in the Pacific.



As we enter into 2013, I look forward to another year of great activities and accomplishments. As we say here in Guam and CNMI, "Biba CHL!"

Rachael Leon Guerrero

CHL Program, Co-Investigator, Guam

Alaska

CHL Alaska

The Children's Healthy Living program in Alaska has been very busy since the fall semester started—first with our training and standardization for measurements and then with enrolling families to gather the baseline data. Dr. Rachel Novotny and Dr. Marie Fialkowski were in Fairbanks in mid-October for the training sessions. We were able to hold the training in new clinical space just renovated by the Center for Alaska Native Health Research, who were very gracious hosts. Thanks especially to all our very patient (and rather puzzled) volunteers, who allowed us to measure them over and over and over.

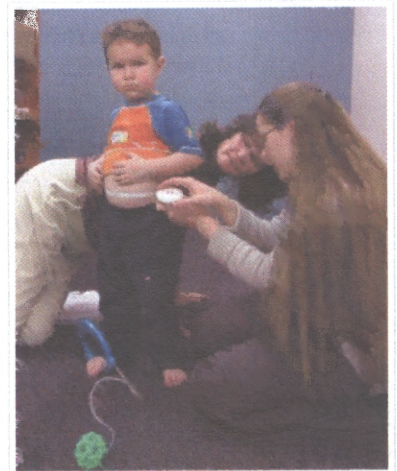


Aila (CHL trainee Ron Standlee-Strom's daughter) draws a happy face for Alaska PI Bret Luick as he prepares to fit an accelerometer on her non-dominant hand

In early November, we started our baseline measurement campaign with a Family Fun night at the Thivalaska Head Start program in Fairbanks, followed by similar events at the 3 CCS Head Start programs in the Matanuska-Susitna valley, the Kenaitze Head Start in Kenai, and the Thivalaska program in North Pole (a suburb of Fairbanks, where Santa lives). We cannot say enough about the terrific staff and families at all of these programs—they have been so welcoming and helpful. Parents are very interested in their children's health, and we have had some great conversations about food, sleep, and activity.

The CHL Alaska measurement staff have also been terrific—flying in small planes, hauling equipment through the snow, working nights and weekends, and getting home late the night before Thanksgiving—all without complaint. At this point, we have data from 167 children from 3 of our 4 communities. We are looking forward to a bit of a break with the holidays and then to starting the new year off with some recruitment

in Anchorage.



Alaska measurement staff Sally Levensgood and Kristine Niles measure waist circumference on Clifford (son of Martha Westphal, a staff member of the UAF School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences)

American Samoa

CHL American Samoa

Early Childhood Education/Head Start (ECE/HS) is a division within the American Samoa Department of Education. It is under the supervision of the Deputy Director. ECE/HS is funded through Head Start and local appropriations. This year 1,334 children, 3- and 4-years of age are enrolled. The 22 centers house 50 classrooms that provide the children with a safe, nurturing, engaging, enjoyable, and secure learning environment. The goal is to help them gain the awareness, skills, and confidence necessary to succeed in their present environment and to deal with later responsibilities in school and in life. Each child is treated as an individual in an inclusive community that values, respects, and is responsive to diversity. The varied experience provided by ECE/HS supports the continuum of

each child's growth physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development.

ECE/HS's well-trained and dedicated teachers and administrators try to instill these ideals into the child's home life as well. A cadre of former teachers serve as family advocates to address the needs of families requesting assistance in improving the home environment. The advocates know which agencies can best address the families' questions and concerns, especially those regarding the welfare of youngsters.

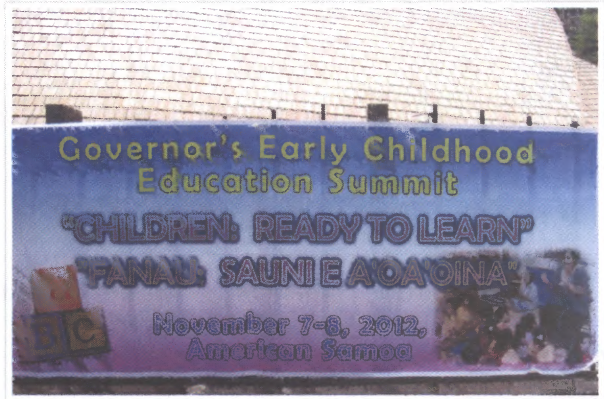


Real-world experience with children helps CHL and its partners develop the best educational programs.

The American Samoa ECE/HS program is playing a pivotal role in assisting the American Samoa CHL staff in the recruitment and baseline measurements of students in our six jurisdictions.

Such team effort is important and necessary in supporting the

Territory's attack on this insidious epidemic that affects both old and young alike. Our goal is to not only stem the rise in overweight and obesity among our youngest citizens, but to offer the world a model program that is both effective and sustainable in reversing the trend.



The Governor of American Samoa hosts an early childhood meeting.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

CHL Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands



CNMI student nurses are taught measurement techniques by Drs. Novotny (middle) and Fialkowski (far right).

The CNMI Children's Healthy Living (CHL) Team partnered with the Northern Marianas College (NMC) Nursing Department to recruit nursing students to be the CHL measurement team. Thirty four (34) nursing students attended the measurement training with Dr. Rachel Novotny and Dr. Marie Fialkowski and twelve (12) students were standardized and certified to measure and record data. The remaining students will assist with instructing parents with the food and activity logs, placement of acticals, screening for *Acanthosis nigricans* (AN), and completing necessary forms.

In addition, the CNMI CHL team met with the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa along with the three (3) parish priests, in preparation for the measurement component of the project. The three (3) ministers head the parishes within our community intervention sites. The purpose of the meeting was to engage the faith-based communities to ensure the success of the CHL Project. The Apostolic Administrator along with the parish clerics expressed their commitment to partnering with the CNMI CHL team. To date, we have utilized the church for recruitment through announcements made after mass as well as using the social halls to conduct measurements.



CNMI church leaders work with CHL to improve the health of their communities. L to R: Fr. Ryan Jimenez, Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa; Fr. Nonyo Recaido, Parish Priest of Santa Remedio Church; Fr. Isaac "Ike" Ayuyu, Parish Priest of Santa Soledad Church; and Fr. Raul Salgado, Parish Priest of San Roque Church.

Freely Associated States of Micronesia

CHL Freely Associated States

The FAS team has expanded to five members with the addition of our newest member, Joleen Riklon from the Marshall Islands. The Pohnpei LAC was formally established in November, and held its first meeting on November 13, 2012 in Kolonia. Recruitment for the second cohort of trainees continues throughout the FAS region, and selection of CHL scholarship recipients will occur after the New Year. The FAS team has been working on two initiatives.

The first is an initiative to enhance the capacity of community colleges in the FAS to deliver formal training in nutrition. CHL FAS is planning to hold a workshop at the end of January in Palau to discuss this initiative with other stakeholders in the region. The second initiative will be the implementation of a prevalence survey in the FAS region to better understand the health status and behaviors of children. The FAS team is working closely with CHL investigators to develop the survey tools and sampling framework and is planning to hold a planning meeting in Pohnpei in February.



The FAS team comes together. L to R – Jonathan Deenik, Erihner Johnson, Joleen Riklon, Julia Alfred, Rally Jim.

Guam

CHL Guam

In the past month, the Guam CHL prepared for the first round of data collection, continued with staff standardization training and kicked off its first round of baseline measurements at select Head Start programs in the southern region of the island. A second round of Measurement Standardization Training was held on November 28, with additional staff being trained. CHL extension associates and assistants Duane Dominguez, Alicia Borja, Remylynn Yamanaka, Ryennette De Castro and Mashae Aguon participated in the training. On island for the training were CHL principal investigator and project lead Dr. Rachel Novotny and CHL Hawaii members Dr. Lynne Wilkens and Dr. Carol Boushey.

The standardization training and subsequent certification is required for CHL personnel involved in data collection, which is an essential aspect of gathering baseline data at control, intervention and temporal communities at select villages. Training focused on anthropometric measurements that included proper ways of measuring waist, height and weight of young children. The training was held on the campus of the University of Guam, College of Natural and Applied Sciences. Eight children (ranging in ages from 2-5) and their parents volunteered to be part of the training.

In addition to the measurement training, the first round of data collection occurred on Dec. 5 & 6 at the Head Start centers in Yona and Talafofo. Measurements will be collected at the village level at the Yona Community Center on December 29 with data collection continuing until March 2013 in Dededo, Agat, Santa Rita, Sinajana and Yigo among participating Head Start centers, elementary schools and village community centers.



A young child is measured for baseline information in Guam.

Hawai'i

CHL Hawai'i

Our recruitment and measurement teams are in full swing as we have started the measurement phase of the program. We expect to have the initial



CHL partners attend an information sharing meeting.

measurements completed by February 2013. A big mahalo to our Head Start partners and community organizations who have been instrumental in helping us with this phase of our program.

Pupukahi i holomua (United to move forward)

As the measurement phase is moving along so have our plans for community activities. We have been busy looking at what is working in our communities that lead to healthy children.

We are very fortunate to have Eric Enos and Luana Busby-Neff as our community liaisons. They both bring decades of experience in leadership, community organization and cultural

knowledge. Their insights and connections with the communities and community partners offer an avenue of opportunity to make a lasting impact on the health of the keiki in the communities. Mahalo no kau hana a pau (thanks for all you do) Eric and Luana!

Together with community members and organizations we will begin our community activities in January 2013. We are looking forward to weaving together all the good things that are happening already in our communities to create healthier families, communities and 'Ai pono (good food).

Hau'oli Lanui
(Happy Holidays)



Eric Enos spends time with children to explain some of Hawaii's historical roots.

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