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Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children Program: 30 years of creating access to health care for vulnerable children, families

by from the AAP Department of Community and Chapter Affairs and Quality Improvement

For over 30 years, the Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children Program (HTPCP) has supported innovative, community-based interventions to improve maternal and child health and access to care.

HTPCP is funded by the Division of Maternal and Child Health Workforce Development in the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA's) Maternal and Child Health Bureau. A key feature of HTPCP is its collaboration with the AAP. Since 1989, public health resources at HRSA have joined with pediatric expertise in child health issues at the AAP. Pediatricians have provided care and served as project directors, advisory board members and consultants in HTPCP initiatives.

Recently, HTPCP created several case studies that highlight successes and lessons learned from projects with significant pediatrician involvement.

Empowering Mothers Initiative

Joan Jeung, M.D., M.P.H., FAAP, realized that Mongolian refugee and Burmese immigrant patients at the Asian Health Services in Oakland, Calif., had no representatives in the health care system who spoke their languages. She received funding from HTPCP to hire community health workers who provide health education, interpretation and access to support for these families.

The project has evolved to offer group well-child care visits that include in-depth support for parents and early childhood development education. The initiative also is facilitating cultural and linguistic adaptation of the AAP Bright Futures Guidelines and the Nurturing Parent Program.

Approximately 200 children and their parents have received services. Parents have reported being better equipped to provide nurturing and responsive caregiving to their children. Both parents and community health workers note that the Empowering Mothers Initiative has led to stronger peer-support networks.

According to Dr. Jeung, group well-child visits and culturally and linguistically competent health workers make the program sustainable and scalable.

For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/2kpC9ht>.

House of Teens



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Adolescents participating in the House of Teens program took photos of conditions in their neighborhoods that posed barriers to physical activity and healthy eating such as stores that lacked fruits and vegetables. Then, they shared their stories with elected officials and offered potential solutions. Courtesy of House of Teens.

In 2007, the House of Teens (HOT) started as an after-school health promotion and obesity prevention program in New Britain, Conn. The program is a partnership between Community Health Center Inc. and the YWCA of New Britain.

Robert W. Dudley, M.D., M.Ed., FAAP, at the Community Health Center Inc. provides care to adolescents involved in the program.

"... Every single day, I would tell people, 'Hey, you got to get out and exercise more,'" Dr. Dudley said. "Well, one of the girls took a picture of the stinky dumpster and said, 'This is what's outside my front door. We don't go outside. We can't exercise because it's so smelly. It just isn't going to happen.'"

Through HOT, adolescent girls are guided to document conditions in their neighborhoods with photos (e.g., abandoned parks, convenience stores that lack fruits and vegetables) and present them to elected officials along with recommended solutions. This method, called PhotoVoice, is a key component of community-based participatory research and was used by program staff to engage the teens.

Today, through their efforts, the program has grown exponentially in scope. In addition to being a free-standing center that provides access to a wide range of health care services, it's also a place where teens can voice concerns, work with adult partners, present solutions and see changes happen.

HTPCP funded HOT several times since it began over a decade ago. For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/2lWu7Nx>.

Washington State Reach Out and Read

Reach Out and Read (ROR) is a national evidence-based early literacy program that is embedded in pediatric



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settings. The program promotes and models reading aloud to children at their well-child visits from 6 months to 5 years. Pediatricians stock books in their waiting rooms and often send a book home with their pediatric patients.

Jill M. Sells, M.D., FAAP, an early literacy advocate, was among local stakeholders interested in expanding ROR into school readiness efforts in Washington State. With HTPCP funding, she served as the initial program director for the state's efforts to integrate ROR into early childhood systems and school readiness initiatives. Partners in the Washington State ROR included not only pediatrician leaders, but also early learning and education professionals, social service agencies, government and businesses.

The Washington State ROR created a quality rating and improvement system that helped providers strengthen their programs' effectiveness. There was a 35% increase in the number of local programs that attained the highest quality rating. Parents who participated in Washington State ROR reported that they read more often to their children than nonparticipants.

Since the initial funding from HTPCP in 2009, the Washington State ROR has grown from 70 locations serving 40,000 families to 236 locations serving 130,000 families.

For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/2IBQxTS>.

In its 30-year history, HTPCP has funded nearly 300 community-based programs in 48 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and Guam. The program offers pediatricians an opportunity to deepen their knowledge of and involvement with community-based interventions.

For more information about HTPCP, visit www.aap.org/htpcp.

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