

California

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Title: Systems and Environmental Change Toolkit

People Involved: Suzanne Haydu, Jenny Wong, MPH (UCD MPH internship), state MCAH staff, local MCAH program staff, and state and local topic experts

Background/Introduction: Funding for California MCAH Programs has dwindled in recent years. To achieve outcomes expected by the Maternal Child Health Bureau Title V funding, nutrition, physical activity and breastfeeding promotion needs to be focused on value for the money spent. Sharing data and endorsement by the local health jurisdictions (LHJs) MCAH Programs to advocate for systems and environmental change that improves nutrition, physical activity, and breastfeeding habits was considered a good way to accomplish this.

Project Goals:

- To develop
 - 1) a Systems and Environmental Change Toolkit,
 - 2) a webinar introducing the concept and toolkit for the local MCAH Directors
- To provide simple reproducible interventions that the local MCAH Directors could replicate.

Methods: A web-based Systems and Environmental Changes toolkit was developed to support optimal nutrition, physical activity, and breastfeeding through fostering partnerships between LHJ's Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health (MCAH) Programs and existing organizations to promote healthy environmental changes. Jenny Wong received a stipend directly from the Association of State and Territorial Health Nutrition Directors for supporting her MPH internship. Jenny's research included reviewing LHJ MCAH annual reports, interviewing MCAH Directors and state and local experts, searching the web and completing a literature search. The final resources for this toolkit were based on being feasible projects for MCAH Program involvement.

Results: A tree model was used in the Toolkit with a branch for each: nutrition, physical activity and breastfeeding, as well a "general" branch. Leaves were used to depict selected topics the MCAH directors might consider. Low hanging fruit was used to depict strategies multiple MCAH programs have already implemented so were considered a course of action that can be undertaken relatively easily as part of a wider range of changes or solutions to a problem. A backgrounder includes selected evidence on the effectiveness of chosen strategies. A webinar provides more background and additional recommendations. The toolkit is posted at <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/NutritionandPhysicalActivity/Pages/SystemsandEnvironmentalChange.aspx> along with the Webinar featuring an overview by Dr. Richard Jackson from UCLA Fielding School of Public Health, a large urban perspective by Dr. Robert Gilchick from Los Angeles MCAH Program, a rural perspective by Sandra Pearce from Mono County MCAH Program and Suzanne Haydu and Jenny Wong providing orientation to the toolkit. Approximately 80 phone lines called in for the Webinar on December 13, 2012 with multiple viewers at each location.

Summary/Discussion: The toolkit is easily reproducible by other states and offers an opportunity for limited Title V funds to be used for advocating for large systems and environmental changes to support nutrition, physical activity, and breastfeeding.