

HEALTH LEADERSHIP NETWORK
SEPTEMBER 16, 2010

In attendance: Helaine Christensen, Lake County Public Health; Deb Harris, Network for a Healthy California; Merrill Featherstone, Lake County Tribal Health; Mollie Molin, WIC eCenter; Tammy Alakszay, Lake County Office of Education; Lou Denny, Lake County Community Action Agency; Lucy Neely and Kelly Burwell, NCO Community Gardens Project; Tom Jordan, First 5 Lake; Annie Barnes and Suzanne Abel, Sunrise Special Services; Susan Jen and Jackie Armstrong, Health Leadership Network.

CATCH UPDATE

Susan reported that all but one school district was represented at the 8/12/10 CATCH Training, including teachers, food service directors, principals, superintendents and parents. Coordination Kits, to help sites integrate the various CATCH elements, were provided to training attendees. Elementary and middle school curricula and grab-and-go kits will be delivered to attendees within the next week or so. The training and curriculum kits were paid for by a grant from the California Endowment.

Tammy reported that she has contacted Lucerne and Lower Lake Elementary Schools to schedule CATCH demonstrations and will endeavor to schedule one at Riviera Elementary School to help implement CATCH for the two teachers who attended the 2009 training. She will also be providing an overview of CATCH activities for Upper Lake Middle School.

Susan added that this year's preschool training had to be cancelled because of budget and staffing uncertainties but many afterschool programs are already using CATCH, taking the County another step closer to providing a continuum of health-related activities and practices for its school-age children.

ONLINE ORDERING SYSTEM.

Susan reported that the Farm Bureau is currently testing www.lakecountygrown.com, a very user-friendly website designed to increase access to local produce by helping local institutional, retail and individual buyers see what locally grown fruits and vegetables are available and support local growers. Jackie handed out refrigerator magnets with the web address.

LOCAL FOOD GUIDE.

Susan reported that the HLN is in the process of collecting information for a local food guide that will include a list of community gardens, canning classes, Hunger Task Force contact info, etc. Information about local farms and crops will also be gathered for the guide. Distribution is planned for next spring.

MENDOCINO GARDENS PROJECT.

Lucy and Kelly explained that they work with Miles Gordon and NCO to help start new community gardens in Mendocino County. She added that there are a total of 5 VISTA members: 3 in Ukiah, 1 in Fort Bragg, and 1 in Willits. She said the Gardens Project served as a collective, sharing resources including compost, labor, etc. and a clearing house for seeds. Beyond working in the gardens, VISTA members are

responsible for giving presentations, grant writing and fundraising (e.g., Garden Tours, 5K Walk/Run, Local Food Dinner).

The first garden Kelly showed was developed on an un used ¼-acre parking lot near more than one apartment complex that was converted into 40 100-square-foot plots where people can grow and tend crops of their choice. Lucy said the space was made available by a dentist who also donated \$200/year toward the expense of water that comes from her office adjacent to the garden. Gardeners sign a contract, are given a key to the gate lock, and pay \$20/year to defray water costs above \$200.

Lucy showed photos of another garden at an elementary school and a raised-planter garden at a senior center, explaining that every garden is different. Kelly also mentioned an after school program called BEANS that is taught by teens.

In response to a question about where the volunteers come from, Lucy said that most of the volunteers for the first garden came from the apartment complexes which they canvassed to assess interest. Kelly added that a lot of the volunteers for developing gardens are found through Together We Can, a network of people who make themselves available for short term and/or one-time projects. They also get volunteers through their Facebook page, website (www.gardensproject.org), and presentations.

In response to a question about the funding source for the silos in Willits, Lucy said they were purchased through the Community Action Agency with stimulus funds.

SUNRISE SPECIAL SERVICES.

Annie said that their organization was funded by a grant to outreach minority populations for diabetes prevention and bridge health and social service programs. The agency provides prevention and nutrition education and activities, such as walking clubs. The agency also works with mental health patients and victims of crime to help them achieve housing stability. Additional information can be found at www.sunrisespecialservices.org.

COMMON DATA ELEMENTS.

Susan reviewed HLN's efforts to identify common data elements that could be used to measure the effectiveness of local programs and other efforts to improve population health. Jackie projected a Preliminary Selection of Health Indicators for Tracking, prepared by Cathy Ferron, using existing data available from CHIS and the CA Physical Fitness Report. The goal, Susan said, is to have enough local information to be able to identify best practices and gaps in order to elevate Lake County's status as the 54th (out of the state's 58 counties) for poorest health based on death due to all causes. She added that the county also has higher rates than the state average for suicide among adults, lung cancer and obesity. Identifying local indicators may be helpful in figuring out what changes to make and how to make them.

Lou said that it would be interesting to know how LCCAA's food programs impact local health statistics. In response to Deb's question about the county's disproportionate number of seniors, Susan explained

that the statistics are corrected for age. Deb added that it would be good to look at the detail information in each category. Susan said that she believes there may be a trend among grantors to support programs for youth as opposed to adults because it's so difficult for adults to change life habits.

'CAUSE & CONSEQUENCE' TRAINING.

Susan said that Tribal Health is sponsoring three workshops with Dr. Chasnoff in Lake County next month:

Evening of October 19: Workshop for Childcare Providers

Morning of October 20: Workshop Health Care Providers

Afternoon of October 20: Workshop for Parents

During a 10/19 workshop for child care providers, Dr. Chasnoff will demonstrate how to use his booklet to identify and deal with behaviors resulting from prenatal exposure to drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

From 9 a.m. to noon on Wednesday, October 20, Dr. Chasnoff will review results of his Lake County research and examine specific case studies with doctors, nurses and other health professionals involved in his prenatal screening program.

From 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Dr. Chasnoff will work with parents and caregivers to address their specific problems dealing with childhood behaviors resulting from prenatal exposure. Susan added that many drug-exposed children are routinely misdiagnosed and treated for ADHD and that there are indications that alcohol and cigarettes use during pregnancy is also a big problem.

WIC TRAINING.

Mollie reported that WIC's training with Kitty France and the First 72 Hours of Life was very well attended by doctors, nurses, and some out-of-county folks. She said Kitty pointed out that newborns left with their mothers take an average of only 62 minutes to find their way to her breast and begin nursing. Susan added that breastfeeding has been found to be a major preventer of obesity and diabetes.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.