



The HHSA Connection

JUNE 2005

SAFE, HEALTHY AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Working for Communities - Promoting Health and Wellness!

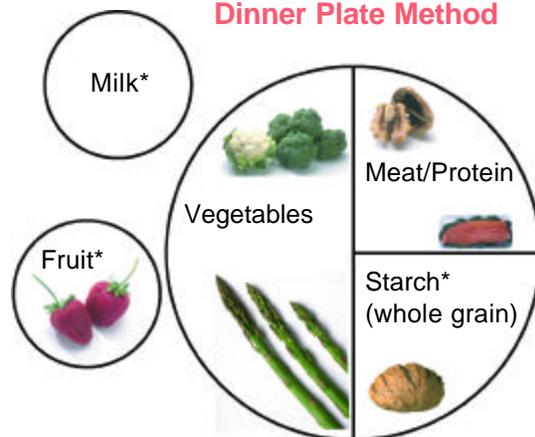
Aim for Your Best Jump Into Action with the New Dietary Guidelines

Do you know what's for dinner tonight? If not, consider the advice from the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. Directly from Capitol Hill, these guidelines are science-based recommendations with the sole purpose of optimizing your health and helping you reduce your risk for chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease, cancer and diabetes.

The three simple principles of balance, variety, and moderation reign once again, however these guidelines give you more insight on how to implement these principles by offering nine general tips:

1. Find out your daily calorie needs and fill that quota with a variety of healthy foods.
2. Manage body weight by balancing calories in with calories out.
3. Challenge yourself by engaging in 30 - 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.
4. Accentuate the vegetable, fruit and low-fat dairy food groups in your daily menu.
5. Reconsider the amount and the type of fats you're consuming.
6. Choose your carbohydrates wisely; opt for whole grains.
7. Eat foods high in potassium and limit your salt intake.
8. If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation.
9. Practice simple food safety rules in the kitchen.

Dinner Plate Method



*Carbohydrates are found in the milk, fruit, and starch groups.

This article is a simplified version of the 81-page government report: www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines.

CLASSY CLASSIFICATIONS: PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE

Something New Every Day

Variety is the Spice of Nursing Life

The perfect mix of patient care and managing a program" is how **Linda Bethel** describes her job as Public Health Nurse IV in Public Health Services' TB Control. "I get to work with different people: professionals, other staff, and the public."

Bethel, who has been with the County for two-and-a-half years, supervises seven outreach workers (social service aides), who watch tuberculosis patients take their medications through directly observed therapy (DOT). She also supervises three intake nurses who take reports from the public about suspect TB cases.

An exciting part of her job is videophone DOT, which TB Control started about a year ago, with installing video phones in appropriate patients' homes, allowing PHNs to do DOT over the telephone. About 15 people are currently participating. It allows TB Control to expand their DOT hours and cuts down on PHNs' travel time.



"Having patient contact helps keep me in touch with why we do what we do," says Bethel.

A Message from Jean Shepard Agency Director

Last month, the Agency converted the majority of public assistance benefit payments over to Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards. By replacing the traditional "welfare checks" with new technology, the County will save money on printing checks and postage, and provide a way to better control the disbursement of aid. The new cards, which look like an ATM card, will deliver both cash assistance and Food Stamps benefits. Plus, lost cards can be replaced, unlike lost cash.

This new EBT system is convenient for clients, while reducing overhead and staff time. It's a great example of innovation, a fresh approach to a long-running program. We can all benefit from new and creative solutions to challenges big and small. Go ahead and share your great ideas with someone. You may just end up changing lives for the better.



Jean Shepard

A Numbers Update

Governor Revises January Budget Proposal

On May 13, 2005, the Governor released the "May Revise" to his January Proposed State Budget for Fiscal Year 2005 - 2006. The May Revise, based on more accurate estimates of available revenues, necessary expenditures, and demographic information, continues the Governor's effort to reduce State spending and end a multi-billion dollar budget deficit. The majority of the proposals that impact the Agency and our clients were introduced in January, including:

- § Eliminate Cost-of-Living increases for CalWORKs and SSI recipients.
- § Reduce CalWORKs grants and the Earned Income Disregard.
- § Revise the State Child Care system.
- § Reduce State financial participation in In-Home Supportive Services provider wages to minimum wage.
- § Reform the Medi-Cal program, adding eligibility tiers and co-payments, expanding Managed Care and creating Long-Term Care Integration programs in San Diego and two other counties.
- § Create the CalRX program, to provide discount drugs to the low-income uninsured.
- § Create an Obesity Initiative to help reduce the incidence of diabetes.

California still has a large budget deficit, but due to better-than-anticipated revenues, caseload reductions, and other influences, it is not as high as anticipated in January.

Most of the large proposed reductions to Agency programs identified in January remain, but the May Revise recommended several changes and additions to the January Proposal, including:

- § Reimburse counties for prior year unpaid claims for the cost of mental health services for special education children.
- § Cancel the planned reduction of the CalWORKs Earned Income Disregard.
- § Delay the CalWORKs grant reduction for 3 months.
- § Provide extra funding for CalWIN implementation, the CalRX program, and Medi-Cal Outreach for federal drug benefit coverage.

Next Steps: The two houses of the State Legislature will meet to discuss, hear testimony, and vote to accept, reject, or modify each suggestion in the Governor's January and May proposals. When they reach a compromise, they will present their recommended budget to the Governor for his signature or veto of each budget item. By State law, the budget is due on June 15; however, this very seldom happens, with discussions and final signature sometimes dragging on until September.

For a bigger picture view, take a look at page 8 of the April 2004 Connection, which shows a State/County budget process timeline.



Let's Get America Covered

San Diego Comes Together to Cover the Medically Uninsured

On May 2, a forty-foot banner hung on the Belmont Park rollercoaster, not announcing park rides as would be expected, but *Cover the Uninsured Week* (CTUW) held May 1-8. Now in its third year, CTUW is the largest nonpartisan community mobilization campaign in history to focus attention on the need to secure reliable, affordable health coverage for all Americans.



CTUW supporters rally under the banner at Belmont Park.

In San Diego, the health care community came together to kick off the effort locally and show support. Agency Director **Jean Shepard** presented the County Board of Supervisors' proclamation for CTUW to **Greg Knoll**, CTUW Regional Committee Chair.



(L to R): California Endowment President and CEO Dr. Robert Ross, Agency Director Jean Shepard, and Consumer Center for Health Education & Advocacy and Legal Aid Society Inc., Executive Director Greg Knoll.

According to the recent California Health Interview Survey, there are more than 53,000 uninsured children in San Diego County who are currently eligible for Medi-Cal or Healthy Families programs. Research shows that nearly half of all uninsured people report having a chronic condition and individuals without health insurance are four times more likely to experience avoidable hospital or emergency room visits.

Many HHS programs and operations contributed to CTUW efforts, including: Maternal, Child, and Family Health Services; San Diego Kids Health Assurance Network (SD KHAN); Health Coverage Access Division; Access to Care for Children Team (ACT); and Family Resource Centers.

For more information, visit the CTUW Web site at <http://www.covertheuninsuredweek.org> or contact ACT Coordinator Susanne Boston at (760) 967-4567.

Health Statistics

Looking at the Numbers

June is National HIV Testing Month

For the last three years (2002-2004, 2004 data is still preliminary), women testing at the Anonymous HIV Counseling and Testing Services had a 0.8 percent HIV infection rate. The age group with the highest rate were women 35 and older with a rate of 1.0 percent. The rate for women 20-34 was 0.7 percent.¹

Until 1999, more than 50 percent of all AIDS cases by racial/ethnic group were white. Since 2000, more than 50 percent of cases per year have been reported among persons of color (African-American, Asian, Pacific Islander, Hispanic and native American).²

For more information, visit the National Association of People with AIDS Web site at www.napwa.org.

To request additional health statistics, please visit the County's Community Health Statistics Unit site, or call (619) 515-4318.

¹ County of San Diego HIV Counseling and Testing Data. State of California, Department of Health Services, Office of AIDS Coordination, 2004.
² County of San Diego HIV/AIDS Epidemiology, 2004

Rapid HIV Testing Available

A new rapid HIV test (results in about 30 minutes) is now available at all of the County's HIV anonymous testing sites and the HIV Mobile Testing Unit. The test uses a small drop of blood from a client's finger or a saliva sample, and is very accurate. While a negative result requires no further testing, additional testing is necessary to confirm a preliminary positive result. Any client seeking HIV testing is now offered a variety of testing options, from standard with results in one week, to the new rapid test.

Because of its speed and convenience, this new rapid test is expected to increase the number of clients who learn their HIV status, access treatment, disclose status to partners, and reduce rates of transmission.

Agency HIV Counseling and Testing:
[Information](#) [Locations](#)

Foster Kids Get Someone Who Speaks their Language

Polinsky's Youth to Youth Program

The *Youth to Youth* program continues to be a vital component of the supportive services for children at the Polinsky Children's Center (PCC). Youth to Youth is a partnership between the Agency, Casey Family Programs, and the Child Abuse Prevention Foundation. Through a contract with the County, Casey Family Programs employs, trains, and supervises 8 - 12 youth advocates, who work with teens and junior teens at PCC. The advocates act as role models and provide peer support and mentoring. All advocates are over the age of 18 and are former foster kids themselves.

In 2004, advocates worked with 414 kids at PCC. Now in its fifth year of operation, the program benefits both current and emancipated foster youth. The goals are:

- Helping foster youth develop successful strategies for coping with the complexities of the foster care system;
- Motivating foster youth to continue their education;
- Promoting active participation in the Independent Living Skills (ILS) program;
- Educating youth about skills necessary for success

after foster care; and

- Helping youth advocates obtain work experience, develop job skills, and broaden their own life skills.

Work readiness skills such as job interviewing, resume writing, application completion and appropriate work attire make up a large part of what the advocates teach. They also provide information and resources related to transitional living programs, college and vocational training programs, and the financial assistance that is available to all alumni of the foster care system.

Youth to Youth has been well received by both residents and staff at PCC. The residents consistently talk about how helpful it is to talk with someone who is closer to them in age and has gone through similar situations.

A typical work day for a youth advocate starts at about 3:00 p.m., when they attend community meetings in the Cottages to introduce the program and themselves. They then spend several hours meeting with youth individually and in small groups. Youth advocates have also been trained by the Family Literacy Foundation, so they can train PCC teens to read stories to the younger children.

This program is truly a win-win situation for all involved. While obtaining work experience, the advocates have an opportunity to "give back" and instill a sense of hope for the future for foster youth.

Central Region

Working for Communities - Promoting Safe and Livable Communities
Working for Kids - Making Sure Our Children Are Cared For and Protected

Play it Safe

Teaming Up to Provide Safety Training

The Northeast Family Resource Center (NE FRC) and Children's Hospital are working together to provide safety training for CalWORKs recipients in the areas of Home Safety; Motor Vehicle/Passenger Safety; Physical Activity Safety and Street Safety. The project, "Safety First" began on April 19 at the NE FRC. Representatives from Children's Hospital were on hand to give a short five-minute risk assessment, which was used to evaluate the clients for such items as car seats, bicycle helmets, elbow/knee pads, smoke detectors, cabinet latches and outlet plug covers. All of these items are provided free of charge to the client.

During the first session staff provided services to many in the community. Safety technicians in the parking lot checked car seats to see if they were installed properly and if they were still in good working condition. They also installed new car seats for those who did not have one or for those with one not up to safety standards. During this session, 32 risk assessment and safety plans were completed, and approximately 16 car seat inspections were conducted and 22 car seats were distributed to clients. The project is set to run through June 30, 2005.



Precious cargo is worth protecting.

Who Ya Gonna Call?

The Redetermination Help Team!

The Agency aims to increase the public's access to health care and prevent eligible families from losing their Medi-Cal health insurance coverage. One way to accomplish this is to increase the number of eligible children and their families enrolled in the Medi-Cal Program. The North Regions address this with the Redetermination Help Team.

An annual review of eligibility status, or "redetermination," is mandatory to maintain Medi-Cal benefits. In order to help families who are at risk of losing coverage, the Help Team does outreach on those cases that have closed or are set to close for incomplete or no paperwork. Help Team members:

§ Offer assistance to clients in completing the Medi-Cal redetermination process and explaining the steps of the continuing and ongoing process;



Collaborative Planning

Mission Valley Family Resource Center Assistant Manager **Deanna Zotalis**, Catholic Charities Family Services Director **Sean Minogue**, Catholic Charities Case Manager **Tiana Reinhardt**, Bayside Community Center Executive Director **Grover Diemert**, and Deputy Director **Nick Macchione** (above) discuss the North Central Business Plan with community partners at the Community Engagement Action Forum (CEAF) collaborative meeting. Agency co-chairs presented priority areas for the four North Central Business Plan Initiatives: Healthy Communities and Lifestyles, Safer Living Environments, Self-Sufficiency in Individuals and Families, and Continuous Improvement of Internal Efficiency and Customer Service.

Also present (but not pictured) was Policy Advisor to Chairwoman **Pam Slater-Price**, **Danae Ramirez**, who informed the collaborative of Chairwoman Slater-Price's and Supervisor **Ron Roberts'** San Diego Childhood Obesity Action Plan for the County and an upcoming expert work group meeting to formulate objectives.



Mission Valley Help Team: Delia Magana, Kathleen Kremer, and Rick Vicedo (Supervisor)

- § Offer alternatives in providing necessary verifications;
- § Conduct phone interviews, home visits, and office appointments;
- § Perform intense follow-up activities with families in order to decrease the number of cases closing for no or incomplete redetermination; and
- § Work well as a team with the assigned Medi-Cal granted workers in the Family Resource Centers.

Currently, there are five Help Team members assigned to the North Regions. Their activities are continually reviewed to ensure that actions will be most beneficial in reaching the Agency's goal of helping families to promote health and wellness.

North Inland and Coastal Regions

Shining Brightly

Thanks to the "Tooth Fairy" (HHS North Inland Region's Community Health Promotion Specialist **Jill Griswold**, right) and many collaborative partners, 201 children were screened at a free dental sealant/fluoride varnish clinic held in Escondido, on Saturday, April 16.

Dental sealants and fluoride varnish are a safe and painless procedure to help prevent cavities in children. The event is a follow-up to the "Something to Smile About" campaign initiated by Board of Supervisors Chairwoman **Pam Slater-Price**. Chairwoman Slater-Price and the County provided funding for this event, in collaboration with the North County Dental Task Force, San Diego County Dental Hygienists' Society, San Diego County Dental Society, San Diego County Smiles Program, Share the Care Dental Program and Southwestern College Dental Hygiene Program.



Positive Internment

April Lyons, BSW Intern, Reflects

Reprinted from *Neighborhoods 4 Kids*, the East Region's newsletter to keep foster parents and staff connected.

Of all the agencies big and small, East Region is the best of all. At least the interns think so. This past year, East Region hosted 13 undergraduate and graduate student interns from San Diego State University.

With the help of East Region social workers, field instructors and supervisors, they got a glimpse of the real life of a social worker's career.

MSW intern **Shawn Frank** describes East Region's social workers as compassionate. He says, "the compassion from many of the workers and supervisors has been unparalleled in the East Region, making this place a wonderful environment to work and learn."

Another MSW intern, **Ebony Zanders**, describes the agency as diverse. "There are so many diverse areas of expertise among the social workers," she explains, "but they all come together for the cause of helping families and preventing child abuse."



Standing, left to right: Paola Tapia, Stephanie Caballes, Cesar Rendon, Mike Jones (intern supervisor), Laurel Bredthauer, Shawn Frank, Ebony Zanders. Sitting, left to right: Genny Wrocklage, Dayan Washington, Dawn Schoonhoven.

MSW intern **Dawn Schoonhoven** noticed the innovation of this agency. She says, "The staff seem to work hard to find creative and innovative ways to deliver child welfare services to clients."

With the guidance of these workers, the interns worked one-on-one with clients, providing interventions and services before closing their cases at the end of the year. The interns thank their field instructors - **Mike Jones, Jessica Newmyer, Aaron Mickaelian, and Nicol Tarvin** - as well as the task supervisors and staff members who taught them more than any book or class could. So, with a jump and a shout, the interns are out!

HHSA Overview - Agency Human Resources Working for Operational Excellence!

The *HHSA Connection* division overview feature continues with Agency Human Resources.

Ever wonder who plans and coordinates your training? Reviews your time entries? What happens to your Performance Appraisals?

[Agency Human Resources](#) (HR) has a trained and diverse workforce that performs many functions we take for granted every day. The mission of Agency HR is to provide effective, efficient and high quality services to its customers - the more than 5000 Agency employees who benefit daily from Agency HR services.

Agency Human Resources - a Support Division Providing Assistance to Employees by Building and Sustaining a Dynamic Workforce.

Although separate from the County's Department of Human Resources (DHR), Agency HR works closely with DHR. In fact, each County Group has

their own human resources department that includes services such as: [payroll](#), [training and development](#), [personnel management](#), hiring, backgrounds, recruiting, internal investigations, [surveys](#) and a host of other functions.

Agency HR routinely assists staff with services such as: mandatory and voluntary training, family medical leave, educational leave requests, and expiration of professional licenses. In addition, they calculate and distribute Quality First bonuses, notify employees when they need to take vacations so they don't lose the time and most importantly, manage timekeeping to insure that employees are paid correctly.

Agency HR staff have a range of professional experience and expertise, as well as diversity in culture and languages. A poster board, displayed in Agency HR, exhibits postcards from countries around the world that staff have either visited or emigrated from. Agency HR is located in the Mills Building, also known as Trolley Towers.

San Pasqual Academy News Briefs

The San Pasqual Academy, an innovative residential school for San Diego foster teens, is a continual source of inspirational stories. Located in Escondido, the campus is home to about 130 students, who each live on-site, in homes with two house parents and up to five other kids. In addition to a full-time course load, the students take part in numerous extracurricular activities that broaden their horizons, and help prepare them for the future. Just a few examples from this winter and spring include:

- As part of the Ready-to-Learn program, eight Academy students attended a weekend peer mentoring camp at Camp Fox on Palomar Mountain. Three of the eight students served as peer resource leaders and led other students from around the county in some of the weekend activities.
- **Greg Bailey**, one of the house parents and a former Theater Arts major in college, started a weekly drama group on campus. The students have expressed tremendous enthusiasm about the addition of this activity. A production is sure to follow in the near future!
- The San Diego Chargers donated \$75,000 to the Academy's athletic department at a press conference on the campus. They also announced the winners of their scholarship program - one of the winners is a junior at the Academy. The event was covered by KGTV Channel 10, KFMB Channel 8, XETV Channel 6, the Union Tribune and the North County Times.
- Evening activities such as sewing, cooking, pool, ping-pong, shuffleboard, poetry readings, and watching movies continue to bring together the Academy students with volunteer seniors in the inter-generational program, San Pasqual Academy Neighbors (SPAN).
- Students participated in a number of workshops: Free Application for Federal Student Aid Application (FAFSA) and Essay Writing workshop; Income Tax Workshop offered by the Controller from ACCESS, Inc.; Child Abuse Prevention Foundation (CAPF) Scholarship Workshop; and CAPF Scholarship, Cal Grant and FAFSA workshop.
- Three students attended the Wild Animal Park Job Fair, and all three were hired for weekend shifts in the Merchandising department.
- On May 12, First District Supervisor **Greg Cox** and **Patty Kay Danon**, Assistant Deputy Director for San Pasqual Academy, appeared on KPBS Radio's "These Days" program, which broadcast live from the Academy. Academy principal **Tom Allison** was also featured, as were several current and former students.

For more information about life on campus, take a look at the latest [San Pasqual Academy Bulletin](#).

Have Some News? Proud of a co-worker? Please submit article ideas, or kudos items (and photos) to your section editor listed in the box to the right, or to Jennifer Mallory, via Outlook e-mail (Jennifer.Mallory@sdcounty.ca.gov).

Compliance Office: (619) 515-4244 Toll-Free Hotline: (866) 549-0004
An ethical workplace is your right...and your responsibility.

Director's Call-In - Share your ideas and concerns with HHSA Director Jean Shepard on the **first Friday of each month, from 8:00 a.m. - noon, at (619) 515-6555.**

HHSA Events Calendar - check out goings-on, or, advise your web contact to post events.



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