



Medical Education and Research Grant Outcome Report

Name: Healthy Children Strong Families – Supporting Caregivers Improving Lifestyles

Principal Investigator: Alexandra K. Adams, MD, PhD

Phone/Email: 608-265-4671/alex.adams@fammed.wisc.edu

Department: Family Medicine

Program: New Investigator Program

Grant Duration: 08-01-2005 to 07-31-2009 (48 months)

Expenditures: \$92,764 (100%)

Use of Funds (Taxonomy): Applied Public Health Research

Research Keywords: American Indian; Obesity; Head Start; Metabolic Syndrome; Child Caregiver Dyad

► **Description:** Addressing rising obesity rates, especially in children, is a top public health priority in Wisconsin. This project studied the effect of providing health information to the primary caregivers of children among four American Indian Tribes in Wisconsin. Trained mentors worked with 2-5 year old American Indian children and their families to teach and model strategies on achieving healthier lifestyles.

► **Contributions/Results:** Preliminary results indicate that providing health feedback motivated adult caregivers to improve their own health behaviors. Adult participants had lower body weights and a reduction in the time they reported watching television. Body measurements yield a less clear picture in children, but there were reports of less television time. Thirty-seven percent of participants (mean age 32) had metabolic syndrome. A diagnosis of metabolic syndrome was significantly associated with lower scores on the physical component of the SF-12 – a health related quality of life survey. Post-intervention preliminary results indicate that adult caregivers reported feeling more empowered over their own health choices due to the increased availability of information and health feedback.

There also was an increased community-level understanding of how environmental factors affect health outcomes. One tribe responded with the

creation of 30 new vegetable gardens. Another community installed more play areas for children. Final outcome measures are still being collected.

► **Met Objectives:** Partially met objectives

► **Timeline for Application of Results:** 3-5 years

► **New Partnerships or Collaborations:** This project led to a new collaboration with the Oneida Tribe, as well as continuing work with three other participating tribes: Menominee, Bad River and Lac du Flambeau. This project contributed to a larger 5-center NIH U-01 grant for cardiovascular risk reduction in American Indian communities.

► **Matched Dollars (cash or in-kind):** \$0

► **Dissemination:** Monthly newsletters have been produced and distributed to all study participants. There has been some local media coverage, although more is expected when final results are made available.

Peer-reviewed articles have appeared in *Prevention of Chronic Disease*, *Obesity*, *the Wisconsin Medical Journal*, and *The Harvard Health Policy Review*. In addition there have been a number of presentations and posters at conferences in the United States, Canada and Australia. More articles are planned.

► **Additional Funding:** Received \$2.3M over five years from the National Institutes for Health.