

A faint, light blue world map is centered in the background of the slide.

Adolescent Leadership to Reduce Breast Cancer Health Disparities



Research & Training Institute, Inc.

Presenter Disclosures

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- (1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:**

No relationships to disclose.



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Lessons from the Youth Lead Lawrence Project

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Latino Breast Cancer Disparities

- **Breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among Hispanic women.**
- Breast cancer incidence is not high among Hispanic women.
- Limited access and use of healthcare services prevent early detection and treatment, which may contribute to poor survival (*20% less than whites diagnosed at the same stage of disease*).
- While multiple barriers are implicated, addressing language and cultural barriers can improve healthcare access and use.

American Cancer Society, Cancer Facts and Figures for Hispanic/Latinos, 2009-2011.

<http://www.cancer.org/acs/groups/content/@nho/documents/document/ffhispaniclatinos20092011.pdf>

Hispanics/Latinas: Developing Effective Cancer Education Print Materials,
publication of the Susan G. Komen for the Cure.

http://ww5.komen.org/uploadedfiles/Content_Binaries/Hispanic.pdf

Why Focus on Adolescents?

- Adolescents can shift their attitudes and adopt healthier behaviors leading to a healthier future.*
- Emerging evidence indicates that reducing breast cancer risk factors during adolescence is recommended.**

* National Cancer Institute, Research Tested Intervention Programs, Fit for Life:
<http://rtips.cancer.gov/rtips/programDetails.do?programId=293932>

Livaudais JC, Napoles-Springer A, Stewart S, Kaplan CP.

[Understanding Latino adolescent risk behaviors: parental and peer influences.](#)

Ethn Dis. 2007 Spring;17(2):298-304.

** Berkey C.S., et al., Prospective Study of Adolescent Alcohol Consumption and Risk of Benign Breast Disease in Young Women

Why Focus on Adolescents?

- Hispanic youth have also been effective health promoters, assisting family members overcome barriers to screening and care.

M. Mosavel and T. Thomas. *Daughter-initiated health advice to mothers: perceptions of African–American and Latina daughters*. HEALTH EDUCATION RESEARCH, Vol.24 no.5 2009: pp 799–810, Advance Access publication 1 April 2009.

Jackson, M. and Heroux, J. *Program To Address Sociocultural Barriers to Health Care in Hispanic Communities. National Program Report*. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Princeton, NJ. 2004.

The CDC [Task Force on Community Preventive Services recommends](#) group education for the purpose of increasing breast cancer screening on the basis of sufficient evidence that these interventions are effective in increasing screening for breast cancer. This includes education by trained lay persons; although the role of youth in conducting outreach to adult family and community members is not documented for breast cancer by the Task Force. Nevertheless, youth have been found to be effective health promoters to improve health decisionmaking and use of preventive services among Latino families.

Project Approach

- Collaborative
- Youth Driven
- Culturally Appropriate and Locally Tailored
- Applied Service Learning
- Bilingual Materials in Plain Language

Hispanics/Latinas: Developing Effective Cancer Education Print Materials, publication of the Susan G. Komen for the Cure.
http://ww5.komen.org/uploadedfiles/Content_Binaries/Hispanic.pdf

National Institutes of Health (NIH), *Clear and Simple: Developing Effective Print Materials for Low-Literate Readers* . <http://www.cancer.gov/cancerinformation/clearandsimple>,

will be consulted for more detailed guidance in producing quality, user-friendly print products.

Positive and Hopeful

Be mindful that a focus on disparities or other negative aspects may be counter-productive (Nicholson, et al.)

More Fear = Less Screening

- Messages Emphasizing Disparity:
 - negative emotional reactions
 - less likely to be screened
- Messages Emphasizing Progress:
 - positive emotional reactions
 - More likely to be screened

Nicholson, Robert; et al. "Unintended Effects of Emphasizing Disparities in Cancer Communication to African-Americans." *Cancer Epidemiology Biomarkers Prev*, 17 (November): 2946-2953, 2008. This research was conducted among African-Americans, not Hispanics, but holds an important cautionary note for communicating health disparities.

Perceptions and Stigma

- You cannot survive cancer
- Better not to know - There is no prevention, no cure
- Most breast cancer is genetic
- Cancer is contagious
- Only women get breast cancer

These perceptions and stigma were stated by students in focus groups, classes, and special sessions. Note: In efforts to address cancer stigma in developing countries, JSI is conducting a study of cancer perceptions and stigma among South Africans that will be released in the near future. Such data will be useful in working with U.S. immigrant populations whose perceptions may be influenced by perceptions in their country of origin.

Cultural Barriers

Discomfort

- Talking about bodies
- Talking about cancer
- Performing self-exams
- Being examined by a provider

For a presentation appropriate for adolescents about these barriers, see Soraya's Story Video – "A New Voice in Breast Cancer Activism: Soraya's Story." (Available at: <http://www.healthline.com/hgy-transcripts/sorayas-story>). Similar discomfort involving personal modesty was also documented among Lawrence adult residents in a 2008 needs assessment conducted by JSI and Health Quarters: *Latinas Rompiendo Barreras de Salud: Latinas Breaking Health Barriers* to engage Latinas in identifying barriers, challenges, and gaps in their reproductive and family planning knowledge and use of services.

<http://www.jsi.com/JSIInternet/Resources/Publications/DownloadDocument.cfm?DBLDOCID=10372&DBLLANGID=3&DOC=Latinas-Breaking-Health-Barriers-Focus-Group-Report.pdf>

Information Barriers

Lack of Familiarity

- With breast cancer facts
- With risk reduction
- With screening and preventive healthcare
- With successful cancer treatment
- Locating affordable healthcare

Ramirez AG, Suarez L, Laufman L, Barroso C, Chalela P. Hispanic women's breast and cervical cancer knowledge, attitudes and screening behaviors. Am J Health Promot 2000; 14(5):292-300.

Additional Barriers

- Fear – undocumented families
- Language
- Economic hardships
- Health services that are not culturally competent...

Hubbel FA, Waitzkin H, Mishra SI, Dombink J, Chavez LR. Access to Medical Care for Documented and Undocumented Latinos in Southern California County. West J Med 1991; 154:415-417.

Reducing Risks

Factors pertinent to teens to potentially reduce risks of breast cancer include:

- Healthy bodyweight (exercise and diet)
- Avoidance of alcohol
- Eliminate second-hand smoke exposure
- Reduce exposure to ionizing radiation such as medical x-rays, carcinogens and endocrine-disrupting chemicals (*while radiation is well researched, the latter remain under investigation*)

See www.Komen.org

Lifestyle factors such as cigarette smoking, lack of physical activity, poor nutrition and obesity contribute to about one-third of U.S. cancer deaths each year ([American Cancer Society](#)). Risk factors vary by type of cancer. Below are research findings specifically on breast cancer risk factors:

Probable risk factors: Bodyweight (moderate risk – although diet & exercise as a teen has not been proven to have an impact on breast cancer risk, physical activity in post menopausal women has been found to be somewhat protective while weight gain poses a moderate risk for older women). One or more drinks of alcohol a day has been associated with a small, preventable increase in risk. Medical radiation treatments in youth have been shown to be a risk factor; although the amount of radiation in exams has declined dramatically over time. Exposures to carcinogens and endocrine-disrupting chemicals in the environment, such as pesticides, are still under investigation and a source of controversy even among researchers. Students can learn to minimize many of these exposures in their homes and workplaces.

Environmental Concerns

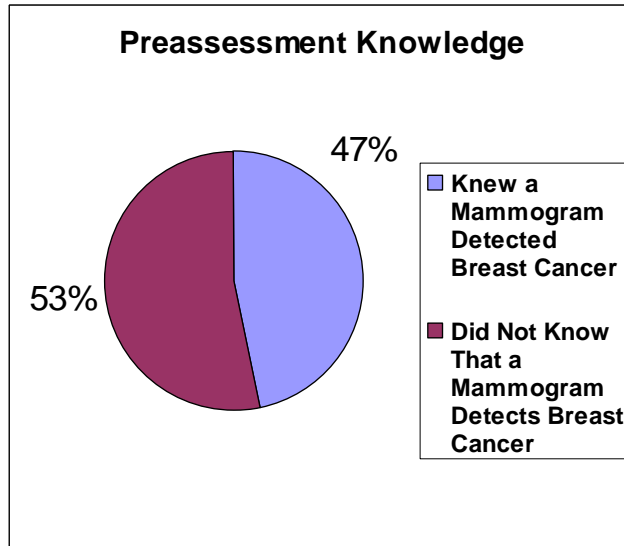
What factors in the environment might be a concern for the health of Lawrence residents?

- Air pollution – cars, train, airplanes
- Factories
- Nail Salon
- “Food you eat – because of the fat and calories which make you gain weight”
- “Smoking”
- “Drugs” (illegal)
- “Exhaust from airplanes, cars”

Only four of approximately 50 students in the pre-test discussion and focus groups answered. None were aware of estrogenic substances. Many more answers were solicited after specific environmental health sessions and exercises.

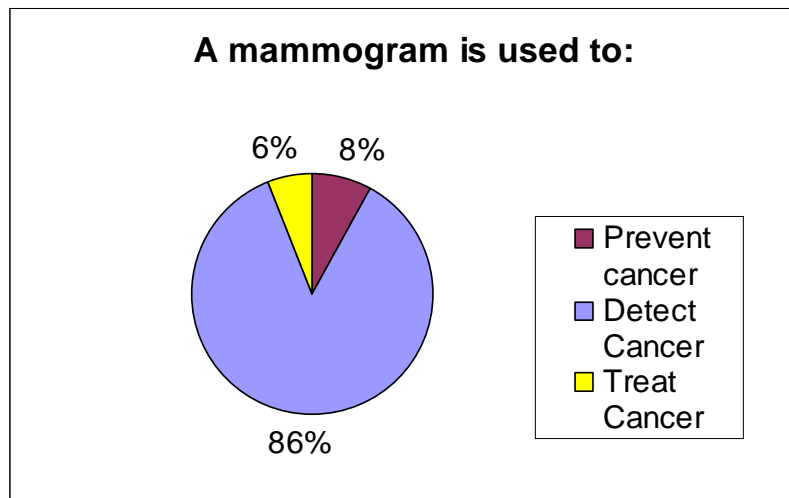
Note: Only second-hand smoke exposure has been associated to breast cancer in the literature.

Pre-Test Knowledge of Screening/Detection



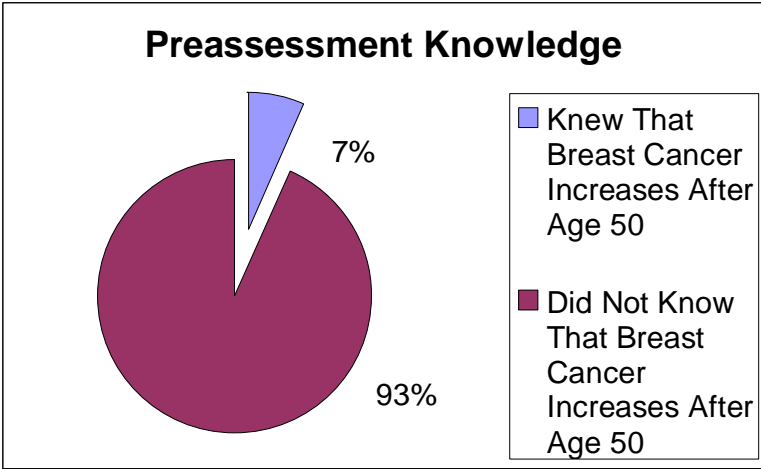
Students joining the newly formed Health Promotion Club (15 students) weren't familiar with what mammograms are or their purpose.

Post-Intervention Knowledge of Screening/Detection



Post intervention testing of 213 (responding out of 500 enrolled) students showed general familiarity with mammograms and their purpose.

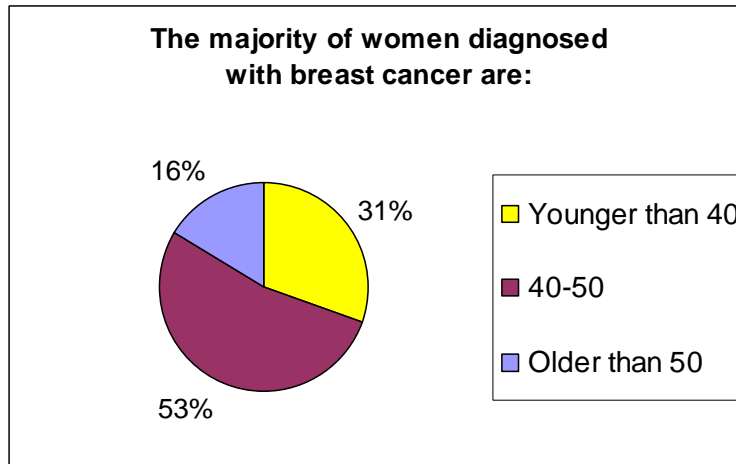
Influence of Age



Students in the focus groups (15 students) pre-intervention didn't realize that breast cancer incidence increases with age.

Post-Intervention Knowledge Influence of Age

While knowledge may have improved, most still believe this disease impacts women 50 or younger



Post intervention testing of 213 (responding out of 500 enrolled) students indicated knowledge may have improved; yet most still believe this disease impacts women younger than 50.

Curricula

JSI worked with teachers to develop lessons that cover:

- Breast Cancer Basics
- Prevention, Screening, Treatment and Care
- Health Disparities
- Environmental Health Factors
- Effective Health Outreach

Available at www.jsi.com

Take Home Messages

- Feeling comfortable talking about breast cancer
- Importance of early detection and treatment.
- Benefits of exercising, healthy diets, avoiding alcohol and environmental and occupational exposures to endocrine disrupting carcinogens.
- Resources and strategies to overcome cultural and linguistic barriers to screening, treatment, and care in Lawrence

Education in Homerooms and Classrooms

- Homerooms studied about breast cancer using a Komen guide: “Buena Vida”
- Homerooms competed on knowledge quizzes. The final contest was broadcast on school television
- A 5 day session on breast cancer was also offered to all sophomores through the health topics class



Outreach Activities To Peers, Family and Community

- School Events
- Field Trips
- Community Events
- Materials Distribution
- Presentations, Posters and Media