

Plenary C: Linking Communities and a Medical Center to Approach Childhood Obesity

Speakers: Dennis Styne, MD

Childhood obesity is related to a host of medical problems in addition to Type 2 diabetes. Lipid Disorders, Hypertension, Poly Cystic Ovarian Syndrome, among other conditions, are all improved by successful weight management but medical therapy must often be invoked. This presentation will cover metabolic complications and how communities can partner with a major medical center to help prevent obesity and these comorbidities.

We have approached the prevention and treatment of childhood obesity with our family centered educational and cognitive behavioral curriculum, the Fit-Kid Program, modified for two indigenous communities, one a remote reservation and another a remote rancharia. Telecommunication and on site training for local staff was supplemented by video conferencing from UCDMC to the Indian sites. Local health care workers and community members were involved in support and implementation. The curriculum is now introduced into a reservation school and further dissemination is planned in the communities. Cooperation between communities allowed cultural modification of the program for their local use. Further, communication with those sites and the UCDMC Medical Center allowed access to expertise not easily available on the Indian sites. Community acceptance of the program was high and in some cases, the children influenced the adults to improve health habits. When asked about the environment of their communities, adults pointed out that this program exerted a positive effect.

The first section of the presentation will review screening tests and therapy of the comorbidities. Telecommunication and on site training content for local staff will then be highlighted and conclude with a discussion on the potential for community acceptance of the program in your local area.