



## CMCH Accomplishments in 2008

**The Center on Media and Child Health (CMCH) made substantial progress in 2008 in our efforts to build and translate knowledge about the effects of media on children's health.**

### KNOWLEDGE BUILDING

#### Research

- CMCH welcomed to our staff Dr. Dafna Lemish. Dafna is a visiting scholar from Tel Aviv University, Israel on sabbatical with us for one year. While at CMCH, Dafna is publishing the *Journal of Children and Media*, which she founded and serves as editor. Dafna's research interests include the role of media in children's lives, as well as gender representations and the role of media in the construction of gender identities.
- Researchers secured a \$275,000 grant from the National Institutes for Health for their Measuring Youth Media Exposure (MYME) study. By integrating survey report, momentary sampling and video documentation of media use exposure, MYME will revolutionize the way data on media use by children are collected.
- With \$13,000 in funding from the Aerosmith Foundation, CMCH researchers launched a study examining the link between adolescents' media use and their sexual risk behavior.
- VIA secured a \$10,000 grant for equipment that will allow the team to archive all previous study data to ensure the preservation and accessibility of the VIA – Asthma, OWL, and Transitions visual narratives into the future.
- In order to understand the potential threats of Internet use on the health of young people world wide, CMCH researchers conducted a global survey documenting the needs and perceived effectiveness of various intervention strategies. Translated into 9 languages and implemented in 29 countries, this survey found that interventions designed around families and institutions close to children were generally seen as more effective than government intervention.
- The Video Intervention/Prevention Assessment (VIA) research team is two-thirds through data collection for their study on overweight in children and adolescents.

#### CMCH Publications and Presentations

- CMCH researchers and affiliated collaborators published original research in a wide range of professional journals, representing the leading publications in child and adolescent health, anthropology and communication, including *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *Communication Methods and Measures*, *Visual Interventions*, *Visual Studies*, *Museum Anthropology Review*, *Photography & Culture*, *International Encyclopedia of Communication*, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *Journal of Children and Media*, *International Journal of Pediatric Obesity*, *Child Development*, and *The Future of Children*.

- Our researchers had their findings accepted for presentation at professional academic conferences across the world, including the International Communication Association, the Society for Adolescent Medicine, Special Libraries Association, Harvard Medical School Adolescent Medicine Continuing Education Conference, Annual Conference of the Center for School Mental Health Assistance, and the International Society for Research on Aggression.

## **Collaborations**

- CMCH researchers completed our collaborative research with the Connect with Kids organization that demonstrated that media (i.e. short informational videos) can be successfully used as part of an in-school curriculum to improve positive behaviors.
- CMCH researchers, working with the Internet KeepSafe Coalition, tested the effectiveness of an online parent resource designed to teach skills for keeping children safe while using the Internet. Results showed that parents who visited the site were more likely to have preventative Internet related rules in their home than parents who did not see the materials.
- CMCH collaborated with the University of Texas at Austin to assess parents' use of the Entertainment Software Rating Board's video game rating system. Results indicated that parents regularly used the ESRB ratings when purchasing video games for their children; however, parents also questioned the system's accuracy.
- CMCH began a research project in Michigan's Upper Peninsula that tests the effectiveness of a community-backed in-school media education and reduction campaign. Using a pre-post design and surveying students, teachers, and parents, we hope to demonstrate that programs can effectively combine media literacy and media reduction to change the beliefs and behaviors of young people.
- In collaboration with numerous local and city organizations including the Boston Public Health Commission, CMCH is in the process of designing a media education and communication campaign designed to reduce interpersonal violence through a prevention program targeting middle school students. \$10,000 in funding for the project was given a high priority by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and is only pending their official announcement.

## **Database of Research**

- CMCH secured a \$400K grant from the Stuart Family Foundation to complete the Database of Research. Funds will be allocated across three years in which the work will be conducted.
- The CMCH library staff continued to add to our Database of Research. The Database currently includes
  - All articles on media and violence, from 1980-present
  - All articles on media and sexual behavior
  - All articles on media and overweight
  - 82% of articles on media and substance use
  - 75% of articles on Internet use

## **KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION**

- CMCH welcomed Karen Fisher, MBA, to our staff as our new Marketing Director. Karen received her business training at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and has over 20 years experience in marketing, operations and product development at companies including Gillette and Dunkin' Donuts and her own venture, Maintainnet, Inc. Karen will be developing the strategy and overseeing the development and execution of CMCH's core Knowledge Translation initiatives.

### **Information Dissemination**

- CMCH continued to produce three monthly newsletters (Parents, Teachers and Researchers), as well as a twice-weekly blog.
- CMCH continued to be a "go to" resource for the national and international press on the subject of media effects on child health. Prominent stories were featured in print/on-line (*The New York Times*, *Scientific American*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, CNN.com, MSNBC.com, Newsweek.com, WebMD.com and Reuters) and broadcast (NBC Nightly News) outlets. CMCH has been in the top 10 newsmakers for Children's Hospital Boston for the past 3 years, and we receive more television coverage than any other area in the hospital.
- CMCH researchers were invited to serve as experts either individually or on panels to stakeholders across the US, including the Joint Committee for Children's Health Care in Everett, MA; the Center for Best Practices for the Prevention of Early Childhood Overweight and Obesity, Albany, NY; Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood Annual Summit; National Association for the Education of Young Children, Chicago, IL; American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry; National Initiative for Children's Healthcare Quality, Miami, FL; iKeepSafe Symposium, Washington, DC; International Forum on School Bullying, University of the Andes, Bogota, Colombia; and the Annual School Safety Summit, Boston, MA.
- Beyond their research, CMCH staff were invited to teach classes and give presentations to audiences across the world, including the Leeds Social Sciences Institute, the Centre for the Study of Children, Youth and Media, London Knowledge Lab, London University; Oxford University; University of Manchester, UK; Goldsmiths' College of London, Manchester, England; Norlien Foundation, Calgary, Alberta; Harvard School of Public Health; Wheelock College, Boston, MA; Bently College, Waltham, MA; SCOOP Program for High School and College Students, Children's Hospital Boston; Stone Family Foundation, Chicago, IL; Milford High School, Milford, MA; Prima Vera High School, Bellingham, MA; Bellingham Memorial Middle School, Bellingham, MA; Endicott College, Beverly, MA; Delta-Schoolcraft Independent School District, Escanaba, MI; and the Center for the Study of Sport in Society, Boston, MA.

### **CMCH Programs**

- As part of the Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Youth Power Summit at Endicott College in Beverly, MA, CMCH education staff created and gave two days of our Mastering Media Messages workshops to area middle school, high school, and college students. The first of these workshops focused on media portrayals of alcohol use and consequences. The second trained participants to create their own media literacy workshops for younger students.

- Michael Rich, MD, MPH, Director of CMCH, completed his proposal for his upcoming book, *Master the Matrix: How to Raise Healthy, Successful Children in the Media Age*. In this book, Dr. Rich explains to parents what we know and what we don't know about media effects, looks at the potential benefits and hazards of using media, and shares an informed and compassionate approach to raising children in a media-saturated world.

### **Financial Development**

- CMCH secured \$432,200 in philanthropic funds in FY08.
- CMCH researchers secured \$271,713 in grants/contracts in FY08.
- CMCH secured \$48,213 from other sources such as speaking fees and endowment interest in FY08.
- CMCH has secured \$310,496 in philanthropic and grant funding for FY09.
- We continued to broaden our funding base with guidance from our Advisory Board and the Children's Hospital Trust. We increased our submission of grant proposals to foundations in particular and presented to several groups of prospective supporters.

### **Goals for FY09**

CMCH has an exciting agenda for FY09. In our Knowledge Building efforts, we intend to engage in planning that will result in refinement of the goals of the research efforts and connection of the research directly to the Knowledge Translation efforts. Additionally, we look forward to completing one third of the remaining CMCH Database of Research.

In our Knowledge Translation efforts, we intend to finalize and execute a one year plan that includes a focused number of initiatives, and then develop three year plan for programming. Central to these efforts will be supporting Michael Rich, MD, MPH through the submission of his book manuscript. Also included will be a re-working of the CMCH website.