

THE CENTER for HEALTH COMMUNICATION and MARKETING (CHCM)

Annual Report 2005-06

The **Center for Health Communication and Marketing (CHCM)** is affiliated with the Center for Health/HIV Intervention and Prevention (CHIP) within the Psychology Department at the University of Connecticut (UConn), Storrs. Established in September 2005, CHCM is funded by a \$3.8 million federal grant from the Center for Disease Control. The grant is one of only two in the nation to be awarded in 2005 for establishing a Center of Excellence in Health Communication and Marketing.

CHCM's mission is to conduct cutting edge research for informing the design and dissemination of health communication and marketing interventions and practices. The Center focuses on the relationships between at-risk populations and their contexts, communication strategies, messages and behavior change. An overarching goal is to understand what types of interventions work best in which situations. CHCM builds on expertise in health, communication, persuasion, diffusion, behavior change theory, psychology, research methods, and evaluation. Projects include the design, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of successful health interventions for at-risk populations across a range of health issues, systematic research synthesis of the effectiveness of prior health communication approaches, and monitoring of health communication practices. In addition, the Center meets one of the "Healthy People 2010" goals of increasing the quality and years of healthy life.

AIMS OF THE CENTER

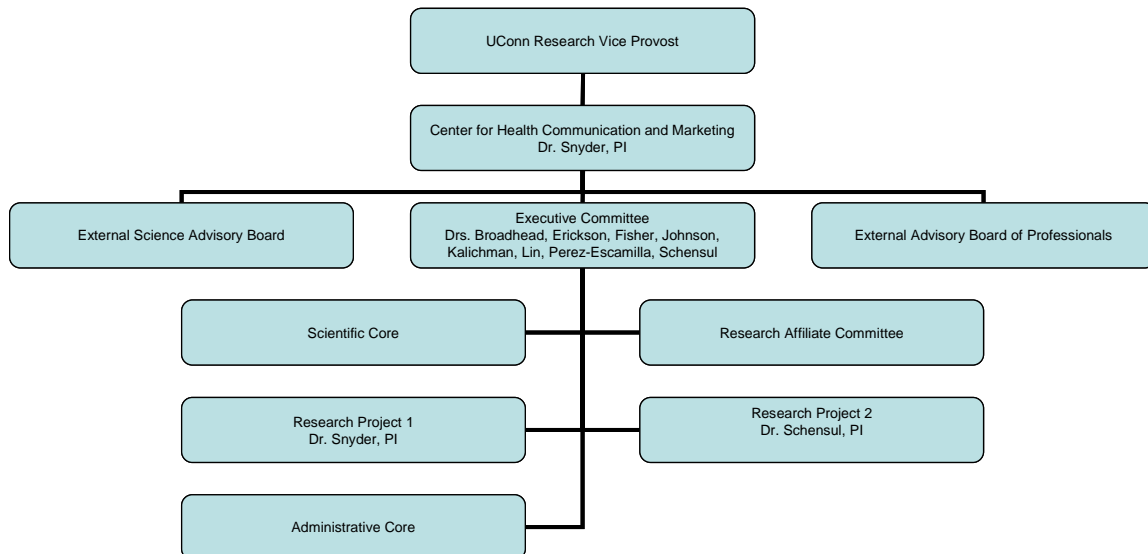
- Advance basic theoretical understanding of health communication and marketing and its role in health behavior change, decision-making, and reactions to emergencies among people in diverse cultures, organizations, and policy contexts.
- Develop new understanding about the interrelationships between at-risk populations, communication strategies, messages, and behavior that can directly inform the design of health communication and marketing interventions.
- Build a knowledge base of comparative intervention approaches.
- Monitor existing health communication and marketing practices that may impede or improve health.
- Produce innovative theoretically driven, evidence-based health communication and social marketing interventions.
- Improve theory and practice of dissemination and translation of theory- and evidence-based interventions for different types of health-promoting organizations and diverse communities.
- Actively disseminate successful evidence-based interventions and public health practices.
- Support interdisciplinary collaborations resulting in new research proposals, innovative interventions and significant advances in theory and methods.
- Host a website featuring: a database of successful interventions; research on monitoring of existing health communication and marketing practices; notices of conferences and lecture series; and grant opportunities.

- Forge relationships with a wide range of organizations including the state public health department, health and communication related businesses, health delivery organizations, community based organizations and health-oriented foundations..

CHCM ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

CHCM’s formal organizational structure consists of the Principal Investigator, Executive Committee, Scientific Advisory Board, External Advisory Board of Professionals and a Research Affiliate Committee. Administratively, CHCM is managed by the Administrative Core Director, the Co-Director and the Executive Committee.

CHCM Organizational Chart



The **Administrative Core** is responsible for program coordination, administration, monitoring and evaluation of CHCM. The management style and organizational structure focuses attention on the role of health communication and marketing theories and methods, and enhances existing intervention research at UConn and collaborating institutions. The administrative core facilitates and fosters interdisciplinary collaboration and individual initiative in a climate of productivity and creativity and provides a nurturing environment for junior researchers and students. There are two external boards of advisors; one consists of professionals in health, communication, technology organizations from state, non-profit, and for-profit entities; and the other is researchers from academic and consulting organizations.

CHCM Executive Committee:

Dr. Leslie Snyder, Director and Professor
Communication Sciences

Dr. Jeffrey Fisher, Director

Center for Health/HIV Intervention & Prevention

Dr. Robert Broadhead, Professor and Chair
Sociology Department

Dr. Pamela Erickson, Professor
Anthropology Department

Dr. Blair Johnson, Professor
Psychology Department

Dr. Seth Kalichman, Professor
Psychology Department

Dr. Carolyn Lin, Professor
Communication Sciences

Dr. Rafael Perez-Escamilla, Professor
Nutritional Sciences

Dr. Jean Schensul, Senior Scientist
Institute for Community Research, Hartford, CT

CHCM Scientific Advisory Board:

Dr. Frank Biocca, Ameritech Professor
Telecom Inf Std MD Communication, Michigan State University

Dr. Jane Brown, Professor
Journalism/Mass Communication, University of North Carolina

Dr. Linda Degutis, Director
Yale Center for Public Health, Yale University

Dr. William deJong, Sb Coordinator of Doctoral Education
Social & Behavioral Sciences, Boston University

Dr. Timothy Edgar, Graduate Program Director
Health Communications, Emerson College

Dr. Robert Hornik,
Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania

Dr. Michael Merson, Director
Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS, Yale University

Dr. Eileen Berlin Ray, Professor and Director
Communications Management Division, Cleveland State University

Dr. Michael Slater, Professor
School of Communication, The Ohio State University

Dr. William Smith, Director
Social Change Group, Academy for Educational Development

Dr. Kasisomayajula Viswanath, Associate Professor
Dana Farber Cancer Institute and the School of Public Health, Harvard University

CHCM External Board of Professionals:

Mr. Danny Briere, President
MBlast & Telechoice

Ms. Deborah Crane, Community Programs Director
Generations Family Health Center, Inc.

Dr. J. Robert Galvin, Commissioner
State of Connecticut
Department of Public Health

Mr. William Gerrish, Director
Office of Communications
CT Department of Public Health

Ms. Jennifer O'Meara, Director
Interactive Communications, BCBSRI

Mr. Dwayne Proctor, Senior Communications Officer
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Mr. Glen Orkin, Motion, Inc.

Ms. Katya Andresen Robinson, Vice President of Marketing
Network for Good

Mr. Stuart Shear, Director
Communications, Health and National Security Programs
Markle Foundation

Mr. Greg Thompkins, Vice President of Marketing
VBrick Systems, Inc.

The **Scientific Core** brings together a multi-disciplinary group of scholars in a structured way to advance theory and methods of research in health communication and marketing. The scientific core contributes to the field by identifying research priorities in the discipline, conducting original descriptive research to monitor the current state of research practice and disseminate successful interventions. This group explores ways in which to develop techniques to monitor the amount, approach and substance of health communication by community-based and non-profit organizations, health delivery organizations and the world-wide web. The scientific core, comprised of senior investigators and specialists, is organized into six groups for addressing specific areas of concern: 1) Research Methods, 2) Meta-analyses, 3) Behavior Change Theory and Message Design, 4) Information Technology,

5) Communication Strategy, and 6) At-risk Populations and Health Care. Each group consists of researchers from a variety of disciplines, theoretical approaches and health foci. The leader of each core group serves on the CHCM Executive Committee. Initial meetings of the core groups were held in the spring 2006 semester.

Scientific Core Groups:

Research Methods Core Group

Ann O' Connell, Core Area Leader, Associate Professor
Educational Psychology, Neag School of Education/UConn
Rivet K. Amico, Ph.D., Psychology, CHIP, UConn
Dipak Dey, Professor and Chair, Statistics, UConn
Pamela I. Erickson, Associate Professor, Anthropology, UConn
David A. Kenny, Distinguished Professor, Psychology, UConn
Leslie Snyder, CHCM Director and Professor, Communication Sciences, UConn

Meta-analysis Core Group

Blair T. Johnson, Core Area Leader, Professor, Psychology, UConn
Leslie B. Snyder, CHCM Director and Professor, Communication Sciences, UConn
Dipak Dey, Professor and Chair, Statistics, UConn

Behavior Change Theory and Message Design Core Group

Jeffrey D. Fisher, Core Area Leader, CHIP Director and Professor, Psychology, UConn
Ross Buck, Professor, Communication Sciences, UConn
Michael M. Copenhaver, Assistant Research Professor, Psychology/CHIP, UConn
Blair T. Johnson, Professor, Psychology, UConn
Marina Krmar, Associate Professor, Communication Sciences, UConn
Kerry L. Marsh, Associate Professor, Psychology & Greater Hartford Campus, UConn
Leslie B. Snyder, CHCM Director and Professor, Communication Sciences, UConn

Communication Strategy Core Group

Leslie Snyder, Core Area Leader, Professor, Communication Sciences, UConn
Thomas Babor, Professor and Chair, Community Medicine, UConn Medical Center
Robert Broadhead, Professor, Sociology, UConn
Seth C. Kalichman, Professor, Psychology, UConn
Carolyn Lin, Professor, Communication Sciences, UConn
Rafael Pérez-Escamilla, Associate Professor, Nutritional Sciences, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, UConn
Jean J. Schensul, Senior Scientist and Founding Director
Institute for Community Research, Hartford, CT
Narasimhan Srinivasan, Associate Professor, Marketing, School of Business, UConn
Zoe Strickler, Coordinator, Multidisciplinary Research, Psychology/CHIP, UConn
Art Vanlear, Associate Professor, Communication Sciences, UConn

At-risk Populations and Health Care Core Group

Rafael Pérez-Escamilla, Core Area Leader, Associate Professor, Nutritional Sciences, UConn
Pamela I. Erickson, Associate Professor, Anthropology, UConn
Patricia J. Neafsey, Professor, Pharmacology, School of Nursing, UConn

Linda S. Pescatello, Associate Professor, Health Promotion and Allied Health Sciences,
School of Allied Health, UConn
Juan Salazar, Assistant Professor, Pediatrics, UConn Medical Center
Eileen Storey, MD, MPH, Professor, Division of Occupational and Environmental Medicine,
UConn Medical Center
Jean J. Schensul, Senior Scientist and Founding Director, Institute for Community Research,
Hartford, CT

Information Technology Core Group

Carolyn Lin, Core Area Leader, Professor, Communication Sciences, UConn
William D. Barta, Post-doctoral Fellow, Psychology/CHIP, UConn
Kirstie Cope-Ferrar, Assistant Professor, Communication Sciences, UConn
Karen Cornetto, Assistant Professor, Communication Sciences, UConn
Ian Greenshields, Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Computer
Science and Engineering, UConn
Patricia J. Neafsey, Professor, School of Nursing, UConn
Thomas W. Miller, Professor, Health Promotion and Allied Health Sciences, School of
Allied Health, UConn

The **Research Affiliates** of CHCM collaborate on research, attend talks and seminars, and respond to internal and external requests for proposals.

CHCM Research Affiliates:

Dr. Tom Babor, Professor and Chair
Community Medicine, University of Connecticut Health Center

Dr. William Barta, Post-doctoral Fellow
Center for Health/HIV Intervention & Prevention (CHIP)/Psychology, University of Connecticut

Dr. Susan Beeman, Asst. Educator in Residence
Nutritional Sciences, University of Connecticut

Dr. Robert Broadhead, Professor
Sociology Department, University of Connecticut

Dr. Ross Buck, Professor and Chair
Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut

Dr. Kirstie Cope-Farrar, Assistant Professor
Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut

Dr. Karen Cornetto, Assistant Professor
Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut

Dr. Deborah Cornman, Associate Director
Center for Health/HIV Intervention & Prevention, University of Connecticut

Dr. Dipak Dey, Professor and Head
Statistics Department, University of Connecticut

Dr. Sarah Diamond, Research Associate
Institute for Community Research

Dr. Pamela Erickson, Professor
Anthropology, University of Connecticut

Ms. Nilda Fernandez,
Community Health, Family Social Work, School of Medicine, UConn Health Center

Dr. Ann Ferris, Professor
Nutritional Sciences, University of Connecticut

Dr. Jeffrey Fisher, Director
Center for Health/HIV Intervention & Prevention, University of Connecticut

Mr. William Gerrish, Director
Office of Communications, CT Department of Public Health

Dr. Douglas Hartman, Associate Professor
Juvenile/Health Literacy, Neag School of Education/UConn

Mr. Randall Hoyt, Assistant Professor
Visual Communication Design, School of Fine Arts/UConn

Dr. Blair Johnson, Professor
Psychology, University of Connecticut

Dr. Seth Kalichman, Professor
Psychology, University of Connecticut

Dr. David Kenny, Professor
Psychology, University of Connecticut

Dr. Jeffrey Kramer, Director
Center for Health Care and Insurance Studies, School of Business/UConn

Dr. Marina Krmar, Associate Professor
Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut

Dr. Sheryl LaCoursiere, Post-doctoral Fellow
School of Nursing, Yale University

Dr. Anthony Lemieux, Assistant Professor
School of Natural and Social Sciences, SUNY/Purchase

Dr. Carolyn Lin, Professor
Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut

Dr. Kerry Marsh, Associate Professor
CHIP/Psychology, University of Connecticut

Dr. Deborah McDonald, Professor
School of Nursing, University of Connecticut

Dr. Thomas Miller, Professor
CHIP/Health Promotion & Allied Health, University of Connecticut

Dr. Patricia Neafsey, Professor
CHIP/Nursing (Pharmacology), University of Connecticut

Dr. Ann O'Connell, Associate Professor
Educational Psychology, Neag School of Education/UConn

Dr. Rafael Perez-Escamilla, Professor
Nutritional Sciences, University of Connecticut

Dr. Linda Pescatello, Associate Professor
Health Promotion & Allied Health, University of Connecticut

Dr. Geeta Pfau, Assistant Director
Health Services, Eastern Connecticut State University

Dr. Michelle Pierce, Asst. Educator in Residence
Nutritional Sciences, University of Connecticut

Dr. Cynthia Rosengard, Asst. Prof. of Medicine (Research)
Bio Med Medicine, Brown University

Dr. Juan Salazar, Director of Pediatric and Youth HIV Program
Connecticut Children's Medical Center

Dr. Eugene Santos, Jr., Associate Professor
Computer Science and Engineering, University of Connecticut

Dr. Jean Schensul, Senior Scientist
Institute for Community Research

Dr. Natalie Smoak, Post-doctoral Fellow
CHIP/Psychology, University of Connecticut

Dr. Leslie Snyder, CHCM Director and Professor
Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut

Dr. Eileen Storey, Professor
Division of Occupational & Environmental Medicine, UConn Health Center

Dr. Narasimhan Srinivasan, Associate Professor
Marketing, School of Business/UConn

Ms. Zoe Strickler, Coordinator - Multidisciplinary Research
Center for Health/HIV Intervention & Prevention, University of Connecticut

Dr. Christine Unson, Assistant Professor

Department of Communication, Western Connecticut State University

Dr. Arthur Vanlear, Professor
Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut

Dr. Shih-Lun Alex Wang, Assistant Professor
Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut -Stamford

Dr. David Weakliem, Director
Roper Center & Institute of Social Inquiry, University of Connecticut

CHCM HEALTH INTERVENTION RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Project 1: “HIV/STI Prevention for Out-of-School Emerging Adults Using a Video Game” - *Dr. Leslie Snyder, P.I., Drs. Bill Barta, Kirstie Cope-Farrar, & Carolyn Lin, Co-P.I.s*

This research project is designed to create and test the efficacy of an interactive video game to promote safe sex for urban 18-26 year olds. This age group is of particular importance as they have the highest incidence of unprotected sex and very high infections rates of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Progress in 2005-06: The goal of the first phase of the project is to establish the parameters that will determine the content of the game, including the storylines, main messages, game play. Towards this end, the team engaged in reviews of the literature and qualitative research. Examination of the literature on HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, sexual behaviors among the target group, and safe sex intervention was combined with interviews with leading designers of safe sex interventions to refine the behavior change model that will guide game development. With collaboration from the HIV/AIDS Unit at the Connecticut Children’s Medical Center, the research team established a Community Advisory Board composed of interested adults in the target group. The CAB has been very helpful in informing the direction, design, and content of the video game in the six meetings held to date. Focus group and interview research has been conducted with members of the target group and with safe sex educators from local community organizations to select underlying concepts to generate game dialogue and plan game play. The team reviewed commercial video games of three sorts – favorite games of the target group, games dealing with sexual content, and games using some of the gameplay approaches under consideration. The literature on video games was also reviewed. Data was purchased from the Kaiser Foundation to check the game playing habits of different segments of the target group.

Using the behavior change model, literature reviews, and qualitative research, the research team has drafted a matrix of core messages by target groups, a list of scenarios and minigames to be included in the game, and an outline of game play principles and flow. The team continues to flush out the storylines, characters, and scenes. The next major task is hiring a contractor to handle other aspects of game design and programming, including the artwork, music, voices, and software code. A request for bids has been drafted.

Project 2: “Place-Based Social Marketing to Prevent Party Drug Use Among Urban Youth” - *Dr. Jean Schensul, P.I., Dr. Sarah Diamond, & Rey Bermudez, Co-P.I.s, Institute for Community Research, Hartford, CT, Dr. Leslie Snyder, UConn, Co-PI.*

This research project is designed to prevent an increase in substance use over time among urban youth ages 16-20 by demonstrating the fun in attending substance-free events, and by promoting and supporting substance-free group norms. The project involves developing a series of shows at a local entertainment venue using local artists. The performances and visual art products (under the “Xperience” logo) will contain messages about the risks of club drug use. It is hoped that the intervention will benefit from endorsement by local celebrities, and at the same time promote local artists and culture. The study uses critical components of urban youth culture to deliver drug prevention messages. An additional goal is to design a model for this type of intervention that can be conducted by community or municipal organizations in other cities.

Progress in 2005-06: After securing IRB approval, the first activity of the team was to design the messages that performers will incorporate into the original material they will be creating for the shows. The team reviewed the literature and re-analyzed prior data on drug use and related topics among the target group. They drafted a set of core messages and tag lines, and have been conducting focus groups with members of the target audience to refine and select the messages.

Meanwhile, the team successfully recruited a range of local performing artists to participate in the events, and held an initial meeting with them outlining the goals of the project, terms and responsibilities of the artists, and guidance that will be offered by ICR as they develop original work incorporating drug-free messages and tagline. The first show is scheduled for June 15, 2006.

The team also revised the research plan, arranged for conducting interviews with participants via cell phones, and is finalizing and programming the survey. Recruitment of participants is underway.

OTHER CHCM RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

- **Meta-analyses of nutrition education and communication interventions.** Coding is nearly complete.
- **Meta-analysis of health interventions that use tailoring.** Tailoring involves soliciting information from a person and then giving them specific messages matched to their answers. The search of the literature has been completed, and most studies have been collected. A coding scheme is under development.
- **Monitoring advertisements of unhealthy drinks.** Using a commercial database from TNS, a team at CHCM including nutritionists has begun examining the amount of advertising for healthy and unhealthy drinks. The team is working to merge the advertising amount data to a national dataset that contains information about health behaviors and outcomes.
- **Monitoring of public service announcements.** The goal of this project is to describe public service announcements that have been aired since 2001. A coding scheme is being developed.
- **Analysis of existing databases for health communication and education interventions.** The purpose of this activity is to inform the design of the CHCM database of interventions, which will be a service provided to the intervention and

research community through the web. The search and data characteristics of each database were analyzed, and a list of potential information to be included in the CHCM database was generated. Some users of the existing databases were interviewed as well. The next step will be to test the search criteria among potential users from community health organizations, academic and research institutions, health intervention contractors, local and state health departments, and industry.

SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In fiscal year 2005-2006, CHCM Principal Investigators and Research Affiliates have:

- Active grants (17) totaling approximately \$5,000,000 in direct costs
- Submitted 7 grant applications totaling \$2,081,000
- Presented 31 invited scholarly colloquia, presentations or symposia
- Published 30 journal articles
- Published 1 book
- Published 4 book chapters
- Published 1 conference proceeding
- Served as invited consultants on 5 occasions
- Presented at 4 invited workshops

OTHER CHCM ACTIVITY AND PROGRESS

In fiscal year 2005-2006, CHCM has:

- Hired a Program Assistant in December, 2005
- Provided funding for five (5) graduate students in the spring 2006 semester
- Co-sponsored two lectures as part of CHIP's Lecture Series:
 - *Pathways to Health Competence: Designing and Evaluating a National Reproductive Health Communication Program in Egypt*, Dr. Douglas Storey, Johns Hopkins University (co-sponsored with Communication Sciences Dept.);
 - *Using Games, Agents and Other Digital Media for Internet-delivered Health Interventions and Research*, Dr. Carrie Heeter, Ph.D., Professor of Digital Media Design, Department of Telecommunication at Michigan State University and Creative Director for Michigan State University's Virtual University Design and Technology Group.
- Initiated website design
- Created a model for potential collaboration with the members of the External Board of Professionals. Added new members to the Board.

CHCM OBJECTIVES FOR YEAR TWO

- Launch CHCM's website.
- Develop an identifying CHCM logo.
- Continue development of a searchable database of successful health interventions.
- Host a conference on targeting and tailoring in Fall 2006.
- Establish collaborative projects with members of the External Board of Professionals.

- Continue meta-analyses of health communication research and monitoring of advertisements for unhealthy foods.
- Seek interdisciplinary collaboration on new research.
- Provide funding for several graduate RAs during the 2006-07 academic year.
- Hire a Post Doctoral Fellow to assist with research initiatives.
- Project 1: Obtain a contract with a video game developer; develop a game prototype & conduct formative evaluation of the game.
- Project 2: Complete the first round of shows and related research activity in City 1 (Hartford); begin production and research in City 2 (New Haven).