

A Healthy Comm - Unity is a Viable Comm - Unity

Health Disparities

by Susan Corrado
Community Parish Nurse

The recent publication of "The State of Black Madison 2008", looked at the disparities between African Americans and the larger community in Madison in regard to health care, criminal justice, economic well-being, and education.

Focusing on health care: nationally there has always been a considerable difference between people of color and Whites, in percentages of people affected by various poor health issues and poor health outcomes. Sadly the report tells us that it is still true in Madison, where 26 % of Dane County Blacks have no health insurance all or part of the time, compared with 9% of the entire Dane County community, and the infant mortality rate for Blacks in Dane County is twice that of the community as a whole.

Blacks are also ten times more likely to suffer cases of sexually transmitted diseases (STD), and twice as likely to have asthma compared to other Dane County residents. The report also tells us that Blacks in Dane County are 10 times more likely to rely on government- provided health insurance than the population at large. Given that government-provided health insurance currently is based on income and disability, this higher number simply reflects that proportionately there is greater poverty amongst Blacks- which is directly connected to these disparities.

I am grateful that Badger Care/Medical Assistance/Medicare exists otherwise these disparities would be much, much higher. When we as a nation support universal health care coverage, we will make great strides to reducing these disparities.



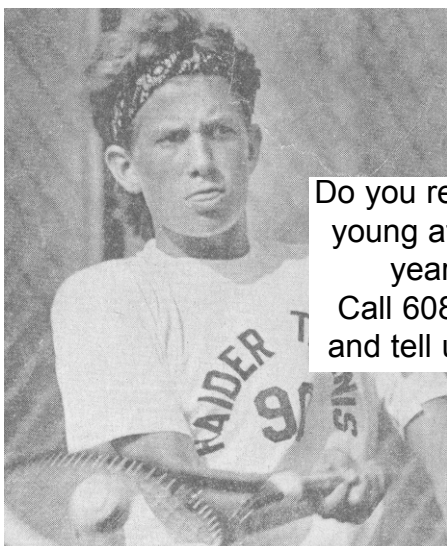
Dr. Gloria Johnson-Powell reflected in the report on these health disparities, and recommended that we as individuals and as a community take steps toward health education, prevention, regular check-ups and early treatment.

Even if one doesn't have insurance, there are life-style changes that can be done to safeguard your health (such as eating well, regular sleep, exercise and having emotional supports). Another rather depressing recent report comes from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that found one in four girls from age 14 to 19 has an STD, with nearly one in two Black teens in the study having an STD.

This is one health issue that can be prevented. Education about STD prevention, and adults helping teens to make responsible decisions, is vital. Valuing and taking care of our bodies is the biggest thing we can do to protect our overall health.

If we are to impact these racial health disparities, we also need to look beyond improving access to care, and making healthy choices. We need to look at our health systems and the assumptions that are made in such things as communication, and expectations; as well as a hard look at us as a society in the biases and prejudices we hold.

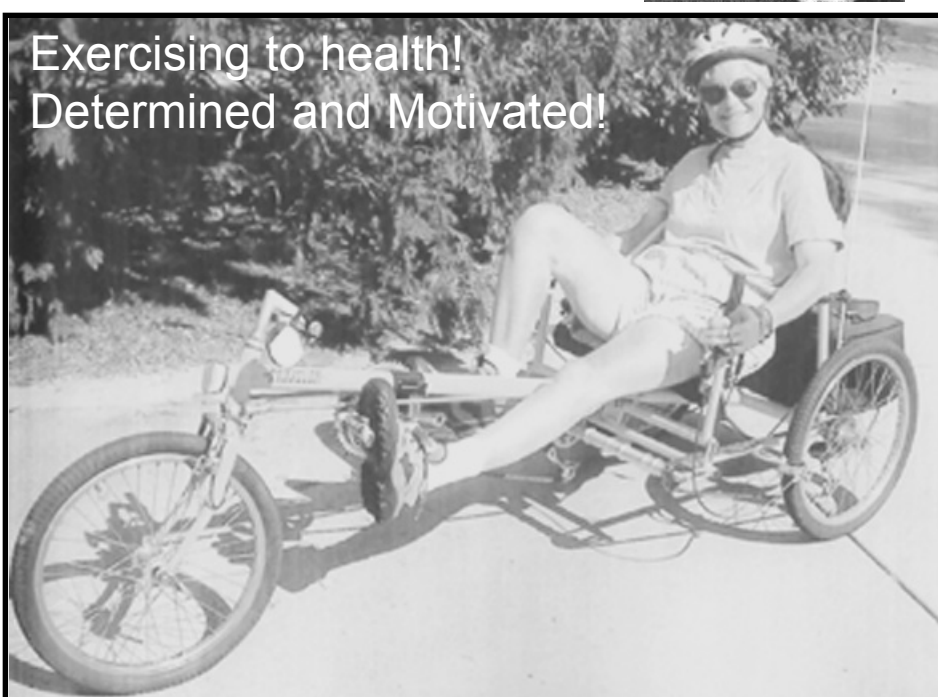
I am grateful to the State of Black Madison Coalition for keeping Madison to the task of bringing about equity. Unless the gains in society include everyone, how can we count it as accomplishment?



Do you recognize this young athlete from years ago?
Call 608-770-2049 and tell us who it is.



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Allied Wellness Center

The Allied Wellness Center is all about encouraging people to make healthy choices and to live life in all its fullness. Wellness means taking care of your mind, body and spirit. Life doesn't always make it easy to do this, but with information, caring support, access to resources and valuing health; wellness can be yours. There are a number of programs and activities that happen routinely at the Wellness Center, participate and take advantage of what's available:

Alcohol and Drug Program: Allied Area Partnership Toward Recovery is a neighborhood program for anyone who struggles with alcohol or drug abuse. Offering respectful, confidential, support and encouragement no matter what stage of use you are in. Individualized counseling available, call to schedule an appointment.

Nurse: Available Tuesdays and Wednesdays 8a.m.-4:30p.m. and Fridays 8a.m.-12 noon to do health assessments, emotional support, health education, information and referrals and help problem solve what prevents you from maintaining your health.

Doctor Is In: A doctor is here 1st Wednesday, 2nd Friday (speaks Spanish), 3rd & 4th Tuesday of each month, 10am-12noon. Free physician consultation, and assessment.

Coffee Clutch: Every morning 9-11 am at the JFF site.

AIDS Network: Every Thursday, 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m., HIV testing, education and counseling.

Sista to Sista: Every Tuesday 6:30pm. Supportive women gathering.

Stories of Change: Every Friday 6pm. Hear encouraging personal stories of recovery from substance abuse from guest speakers, and get the support you are needing in your own recovery journey.

Prayer Meeting and Bible Study: Every Monday 6p.m.-7p.m. led by the African American Council of Churches neighborhood chaplain, Alice Howard. Light meal included.

Badger Care Sign Up: Does your family need health insurance? Come talk to Elena every Tuesday and Thursday morning 8:30-12 noon to see if you are eligible to sign up.

Special Events :

Community Meal: Friday June 27, 6 pm at the Boys and Girls Club (Jenewein). Hosts- Latino Play and Learn group with a presentation by the Dane County TimeBank

Mobile Food Pantry: Saturday, June 28, Boys and Girls Club

Biking for exercise interested in biking with others? Let's start a biking club, even if you have no bike... talk to Susan and lets see if there's enough interest.

Call Susan Corrado for questions about the Wellness Center and programs, 274-7006 or stop in at 2225 Allied Drive #2

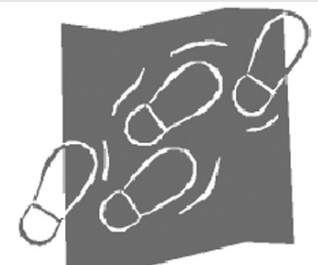
HUGS in the Community

5101 Farwell Street
McFarland, WI 53558
Sennett Middle School Phone: 608-204-4023
Email: projecthugs@gmail.com

Project HUGS provides services to Dane County families, community members and professionals free of charge. We collaborate and receive referrals from school districts, law enforcement, social workers, AODA and mental health providers, human services, and social services agencies.

Parents often self refer when they hear about HUGS services. families served represent all levels of the continuum - from prevention to early intervention through court mandated treatment, detention and out of home placements.

Project HUGS is a 501(c)3 organization funded by:
Dane Co DHS, United Way of Dane County and Generous Supporters



*HUGS, walking with you,
every step of the way.*