YMCA’s Diabetes Prevention Program Reduces Risk

Fran Park-Palama drove by the same North Shore trail near Malaekahana almost every day for years, vowing to walk it someday, but feeling unmotivated. She felt a sense of guilt when putting herself and her health first and never felt she had enough time in the day to incorporate physical activity. Now she walks it at least twice weekly, and walking is part of her daily lifestyle. She is well on her way to reach the goal of losing 7% of her body weight thanks to the YMCA’s Diabetes Prevention Program (Y-DPP).

The YMCA’s Diabetes Prevention Program helps adults at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes to adopt and maintain healthy lifestyles by eating healthier, increasing physical activity, and losing a modest amount of weight in order to reduce their chances of developing the disease. If not controlled, diabetes can lead to blindness, kidney failure, stroke and heart disease. Structured behavior interventions such as the Y-DPP can cut the risk in half.

In a classroom setting, a Y-DPP Lifestyle Coach facilitates a small group of participants in learning about healthier eating, physical activity and other behavior changes over 25 sessions in one year. The goals are to reduce body weight by 7% and increase physical activity to 150 minutes per week.

Kaiser Permanente of Hawaii partnered with YMCA of Honolulu to provide program funding for economically challenged adults at risk for diabetes. IUHA Health Insurance is now one of the first health insurers in the country to provide coverage for the program for their members. The Y has also joined the Hawaii State Department of Health as part of a statewide coalition focusing on raising awareness, referrals and coverage for diabetes prevention.

Research by the National Institutes of Health has shown that programs like the YMCA’s Diabetes Prevention Program can reduce the number of new cases of type 2 diabetes by 58%, and 71% in adults over age 60.

In recent studies the YMCA of USA did with Medicare, the Y was able to show with 8,000 Medicare beneficiaries, for a $429 investment, Medicare could save $2,650 in total cost of care for those individuals within a 15-month period. As a result, beginning in January 2018, Medicare will now include Y-DPP as a covered benefit.

“The Y-DPP creates a safe environment where everyone feels comfortable to share and to face different obstacles to their health,” says Jenny Ostlind, Y-DPP Lifestyle Coach. “We’re here to help guide them and to provide a good support system so that they can move at their own speed towards leading a healthier lifestyle.”

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Frank says take the test...

One out of 3 adults in Hawaii has prediabetes or diabetes, but most don’t realize it. Risk factors for diabetes include: age over 45, overweight, physical inactivity and family history of diabetes.

Our Y is part of the State Department of Health’s statewide diabetes prevention coalition which launched a campaign featuring comedian Frank De Lima, who himself has Type 2 diabetes, to alert people of the increasing risk of developing diabetes. Adults are asked to take a quick online 30-second – 9 – question quiz to assess their risk. Those at risk can then take action by participating in a nationally recognized Diabetes Prevention Program, such as offered by the Y.

Find out if you and/or a loved one is at risk—take the test today by visiting http://www.ymcahonolulu.org/healthy_living/health_wellbeing_fitness/chronic_disease_programs/diabetes_prevention

President’s Letter

July/August 2017

President’s Message

Healthy Lifestyles Help Every Age

One day after visiting one of our Ys, I stopped in at See’s Candy at Kahala Mall. Just to look of course. I forgot I was wearing my YMCA of Honolulu nametag, and the young lady behind the counter asked if she could share a Y story about her grandmother.

She said that her grandmother had suffered, and recovered from, a heart attack and her doctor said if she did not begin to get exercise, the next time she would not be so lucky. He recommended she join the Y. She did, and now, six months later, she was a new person – healthy, happy and full of life.

The young lady said she wanted to thank the Y not just for saving her grandma’s life, but for allowing the young woman to continue to have a special relationship with her grandmother.

Fostering healthy lifestyles is one of the core things we do at the Y. We work to bring families closer together, encourage good health and nurture connections through fitness, sports, fun and shared interests.

We also know that healthy lifestyles are so much more than just working out. That’s why we provide educational programs to promote healthier decisions, offer a variety of activities that support physical, intellectual and spiritual strength and for those who need extra help – offer chronic disease prevention and management programs.

In this issue of our President’s Newsletter, you’ll meet families who are adopting healthy lifestyle habits that are helping them to prevent serious health challenges such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. Lifestyle changes today can affect the trajectory of family members’ physical and mental health and well-being, at all ages.

The Y is proud to partner with families to build a healthier community.

Michael Broderick
President & CEO
YMCA of Honolulu
Battling Childhood Obesity is a Family Affair

Two years ago Jennifer Renasia and her then 8-year-old son Logan did something new that changed their lives. At the recommendation of their doctor, they joined the Y’s childhood obesity program. Now their goal is to live according to the “5-2-1-0” daily guidelines of servings of five fruits, roots, & veggies, two hours or less of screen time, one hour or more physical activity, and zero sugary drinks!

The program, a community partnership between Hawaii Pacific Health and the YMCA of Honolulu, taught keiki, who are moderate to severely obese, along with their family about nutrition, healthy home environments, physical activity, medical and mental health and family support issues.

National data shows that over 28% of youth ages 10-17 in Hawaii are identified as overweight or obese. Childhood obesity is a serious medical condition that, if left untreated, could lead to other health challenges such as diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and depression.

Family support and participation is crucial to success. Patients and families commit to a 12-month program, beginning with an intensive phase of weekly sessions over 3 months. There are also extracurricular activities such as grocery store tours, hikes, farmer’s market tours, and other gatherings which continue to engage families to stay motivated and troubleshoot challenges to change.

Over 300 keiki, parents, siblings and extended family members have participated in the program since it launched in 2012. Following the program, 75% of participants decreased their BMI (Body Mass Index) and 100% reported they had initiated healthy lifestyle changes.

We are excited to be rolling out a new and improved version of our childhood obesity program that will allow us to reach even more families.

Our partnership with Hawaii Pacific Health will also expand to include offering the program to youth and families at YMCA’s across Oahu, Wahiawa Center for Community Health and through Wilcox Hospital on Kauai.

―This program has given my family the tools to live a healthier lifestyle. Tips on meal planning, getting my son involved with food prep, portion control, and how to read ingredients on labels were some of my favorite topics.

We have been able to maintain our weight by keeping active and using the 5-2-1-0 plan as a guideline for our monthly goals. Logan is now involved in PAL sports and practices one hour per day. I am walking daily and attend two aerobics classes weekly. And I am six months smoke free as well!

Seeing the progress helps my family to achieve ongoing success. I particularly loved the family-centered focus and how staff genuinely cared and would call to set up weekly goals, ongoing follow up and workshops. We remain committed to the program and take every opportunity to be with other families and the staff when an outdoor activity arises.

I would definitely recommend this program to anyone who needs to make a change to improve their health…especially for our children!‖

-Jennifer Renasia

Enhance Fitness Energizes and Empowers Kupuna

Lynda Hino had tried several programs to help her rheumatoid arthritis but none had helped. She had attended exercise classes and also had physical therapy, but she was looking for more ongoing support and guidance. Back in January, she decided to enroll in the YMCA’s Enhance Fitness Arthritis Management Program.

“IT used to be a struggle for me just to get up out of my chair, or out of the car,” Lynda said, “but my strength and flexibility have improved so much, I can get up with ease now. Thanks to our fantastic Nuuanu Y instructors Chaz, Derek and Travis, my quality of life is so much better and they help all of us to work through and manage our arthritic challenges.”

“Plus I love the camaraderie with the class! There is a real sense of ohana, encouragement and support amongst all the class members.”

The YMCA of Honolulu offers the Enhance Fitness Arthritis Management program at six YMCAs. The 16-week program includes low impact exercise classes that are safe and challenging for older adults of all fitness levels focusing on increasing cardiovascular endurance, strength, balance and flexibility – all which can help reduce arthritis symptoms.

Classes are held in a relaxed atmosphere that promotes fun and laughter and provides many opportunities for the social interaction that is vital to senior health and well-being.

Across Oahu, over 225 participants, ranging from ages 58 to 92, have completed the program thus far, and benefited greatly with the following outcomes:

- 60% improvement in physical functioning
- 45% improvement in social functioning
- 50% improvement in depression
- 90% participant retention rate

The program has been nationally recognized as a Falls Prevention Program by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US Department of Health and Human Services, US Administration on Aging and the National Council on Aging.

―Sharing, talking about various aspects of our health with fellow participants in the class who are also dealing with the challenges of arthritis, makes the sessions a lot of fun and we encourage each other both during class and afterward.

Lynda’s arthritis symptoms have improved so much that she is now able to do a lot more things, including gardening, working around the house and traveling. I feel so much better,‖ Lynda said. “I have even been able to play tennis again, which I wasn’t able to do before."

―Like many kupuna in our community, I maintain an active lifestyle and help to take care of grandchildren. The Y program really helped to inspire me to feel that I am going to manage whatever health issue I might have, it is not going to control me.

I have gone from using one to two pound weights in class, and now I’m eying those five pound weights! I also used to flinch to go up and down the steps to get to class at the Nuuanu Y. Now I say, one of these days I’m going to run up those stairs!”

-Lynda Hino