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Health Promotion Around the World: Boston, USA

by *Emily Fisher*

“Spare Change News... help the homeless help themselves!” Three years ago, that was the cry I heard outside my subway train stop that slowed my morning routine and enticed me to buy a paper. Homelessness had always been an issue that had worried me. It also seemed like something that I felt I could on some small level help to alleviate: I was always drawn to serving in local soup kitchens and food banks. And when I first bought the paper I simply thought I was doing something for charity. As I began reading, I realized that this enterprise was more than charity and was embarrassed by my simplistic thinking. So, I continued to buy, read, and enjoy the paper. And three years and one master’s degree later, I recognized the spirit of health promotion in the paper and its vendors and felt the story should be shared with the ISECN network.

The Spare Change Newspaper is a print publication published every two weeks in the Boston area. It is sold by local individuals, called vendors, spread throughout the city of Boston, for \$1 USD/paper. Vendors buy each paper from Spare Change News for 25 cents and keep the rest of the profits from the papers they sell. The paper’s vendors are often, but not always homeless. This is a social enterprise that offers many of the eco-

nomically disadvantaged vendors a way to help make ends meet, while also giving them an opportunity to join and contribute to a network of support. What I find unique about the paper is that its inception was not out of the charity work of privileged individuals, but developed through the work of those seeking to find a way forward: the founders were individuals who were themselves homeless when they began the paper. And every vendor involved since has his or her own reasons for beginning and staying with Spare Change.

For this story, I spoke with the current editor, Adam Sennott, who joined Spare Change News in June 2010.

He views the paper as a journalistic venture that raises awareness around poverty and gives marginalized society members a voice. Adam became involved with the paper by writing an article about a teacher he knew who had previously been homeless for seven years. Today, the paper continues to include biographies of homeless

Mission:

We empower the economically disadvantaged in Greater Boston through self-employment, skill development and self-expression. By creating forums, including independent media, we reshape public perception of poverty and homelessness.

JOIN ISECN!

If you are an IUHPE member of the student or early career category, please click on the hand symbol to join our mailing list! Remember to fill in your full name where asked for it.



The mission of ISECN is to identify, support and serve the needs of the IUHPE student and early career category. We aim to do this by building and engaging a global network of members to encourage the free exchange of ideas, knowledge, know-how, and experiences. We hope ISECN will be a tool for development of relevant collaborative projects, both at global and regional levels.

Health Promotion Around the World (Cont'd)

individuals to break down some of the stereotypes people often hold of the homeless. "Homelessness can happen to anyone," Adam told me, and he had the stories to prove it. He also feels that homeless and other local individuals should be deeply involved in not only the selling of the paper, but in the fabric of the stories both as authors and as story subjects. Adam is now pleased to have a group of contributing writers that includes students, the unemployed, dedicated volunteers and the vendors themselves. Unlike what I had originally thought, the paper is not solely about homelessness: the paper includes articles around political debates, local stories, poetry and interviews with local and famous individuals. One vendor was able to do an interview article with a former governor and presidential nominee after selling the politician a copy of the paper!

The paper also publishes resources for those that are in need including shelter, food and work opportunities. And those that need certain items can post an ad for these: I have read requests for furniture, books, appliances and electronic items. In addition to the print connection, Spare Change News utilizes emerging technology: they have a website complete with biographies of the vendors and areas for blogging and comments, a Twitter account, and a Facebook page. The staff members at Spare Change News also continue to explore other ways to expand and better reach their population with opportunities and areas for growth. They recently created four vendor supervisor positions: in exchange for newspapers to sell, these supervisors offer up their expertise with other vendors and act as liaisons for issues or facilitate transitions for new vendors.

When I asked Adam if he saw the paper as a way to end homelessness, he replied that he saw their mission as doing whatever they could to help. The paper cannot be the sole answer to homelessness as that is a complex issue; however, it can be a tool to use to raise awareness and challenge misconceptions people have around poverty and homelessness. As David Jefferson, former Spare Change News editor and the current director of

the Homelessness Empowerment Project noted, "Homelessness is not something understood in our culture... it's not the same kind of visible as it was in the past." Homelessness in the United States varies among individuals and is not necessarily a result of a drug or alcohol addiction: everyone's story is different. While the paper's vendors are economically disadvantaged, some are actively homeless (rough sleepers): they find shelter around the city indoors or outdoors depending on the weather and what services the city or local businesses have in place. Other people that are considered homeless are those who live in shelters or are in unstable living situations such as motels, with friends or relatives, or in section 8 housing. One census estimated that there were 7,681 homeless individuals in Boston during the winter of 2006-2007 (<http://www.brm.org/homeless/greaterboston.aspx>.) Because those that are in the economically disadvantaged category are not as visible as they used to be, it's easy to forget the levels of poverty present in the United States. The paper and its vendors are one way to remind us of that.

I pass by a Spare Change News vendor outside almost every day, including during the harshest winter cold or heavy summer heat. What continually strikes me about Edward, one vendor on my daily commute, is not only his constant presence, but his unflagging diligence in shouting out "Spare Change" followed by "have a good day" or on rainy days "stay dry." I chose to explore this story because it is about something that resembles what we as health promoters have set out to do. The Spare Change News encompasses a vision that incorporates empowerment and the community, and because of these elements, sustainability. The Spare Change News and its vendors continue to produce work to be proud of and it is work that benefits themselves as well as those outside their own lives. They are giving back, even as we may mistakenly think our act of buying the paper is a one-way exchange. Street papers like this one are actually in many cities- if you have one in your local city, check it out!



Visit the website for more details on Spare Change, their vendors and other street papers around the world:
www.sparechangenews.net

3rd European Public Health Conference

Conference Review

by Wanda Martin, RN, PhD(c),
University of Victoria, BC, Canada

I had the privilege of attending the 3rd European Public Health conference in Amsterdam this past November, thanks to funding from the Institute of Population and Public Health of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. The theme was “Integrated Public Health” with five focused areas: integrating scientific knowledge to practice, policy and education; an integrated approach towards information systems; integrating new knowledge skills, and competencies with public health professionals; public-private partnerships; and integrating public health and health promotion in primary health care.

My supervisor, Dr. Marjorie MacDonald presented as part of a workshop on “Population Health Intervention Research in Canada: Interventions to stimulate population health intervention research and related outcomes, 2010”. In this workshop, Nancy Edwards gave an overview of funding and peer review for population health intervention research; Marjorie discussed developing research methods for studying complex population health interventions; Maureen Malowany talked about training future researchers to build capacity for public health intervention research; and Lise Gauvin brought to light the challenges and opportunities in population health intervention research through examples of ongoing CIHR-funded projects.

I also presented at the conference as part of the Food and Obesity track. I presented my recent work on food security policies in Canada as they relate to equity and social justice. It was an odd fit for this conference, since the majority of the presentations in this track dealt with dietary intake, and not with food security from a systems perspective. In fact, the pre-conference workshop titled “European food and nutrition – from field to fork?” that was intended to include discussion on the policy implications of integrating public health in the common agriculture policy in the EU had speakers not

attend, resulting in a joint workshop on advocacy and communications. It was disappointing to miss this opportunity to get a better picture of EU agriculture policies as they relate to public health. Even the session on future public health challenges to climate change did not include food security as a stressor. The focus was on increased temperature, air quality, floods, atopic diseases, as well as foodborne, waterborne, and vector-borne diseases.

Both Dr. MacDonald and I were able to attend the pre-conference meeting with EIRA (Evidence in Research and Action). It is a network that was established in 2009 to exchange knowledge and experiences in bridging the gap between research, practice and policy in health promotion.

*Learn more about
EIRA on the website:*

www.sdu.dk/eira

The main message I took away from the plenary speakers at this conference was the need for politically active public health professionals. Public health education needs to enhance communication and political science skills. There is an additional need to educate journalists in public health (or public health professionals in journalism). Advocacy and change is at the heart of public health and to make change happen, we need public health leaders as political leaders. Overall, the conference was a good opportunity to see how European public health leaders perceive the future challenges to public health.



If you are interested in learning more about the European Public Health Association and future events, check out the website: <http://www.eupha.org/>

Learning and Conference Opportunities

Conferences

The Long Tail of Global Health Equity: Tackling the Endemic Non-Communicable Diseases of the Bottom Billion

Dates: 2-3 March 2011

Location: Joe Martin Conference Center (Harvard Medical School campus), Boston, MA USA

The meeting – hosted by Harvard Medical School, Partners In Health, the Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard School of Public Health, the Global Task Force on Expanded Access to Cancer Care & Control in Developing Countries, and the NCD Alliance – will bring together global health experts and disease-specific leaders knowledgeable about the non-communicable diseases evident in the poorest countries.

Conference scope: Historically, non-communicable disease in middle-income countries has received close attention. It is crucial to focus on the disease burden of the poorest populations, the bottom billion, largely composed of children and young adults. Discussions at the March meeting will contribute to deliberations of a high-level and timely United Nations meeting in September about NCD health systems issues.

Free to attend- free webcast access!

Website: <http://www.pih.org/pages/harvardncd>

Courses

Certificate in Community-Driven Health Impact Assessment.

Dates: 30 May—17 June 2011

Location: Coady International Institute, St. Francis Xavier University

This course will introduce participants to a holistic understanding of health within the context of development. It will examine the relationship between health and development and the impact of development programs and policies on health. Participants will develop skills in facilitating community groups to go through the People

Assessing Their Health (PATH) process and develop a Community Health Impact Assessment Tool (CHIAT).

Scholarships: Applicants from developing countries are eligible for Coady Institute scholarships and bursaries that cover most of the cost of tuition, room and board. Special efforts are made to enable women and aboriginal peoples attend.

Applying: Applicants should apply at least two months before the start of the program.

Website: <http://coady.stfx.ca/education/certificate/health/>

Short courses in Public Health: Critical Appraisal of health-related scientific information

Dates: 7-9 March 2011

Location: ISPED Bordeaux School of Public Health
We have developed a 3 days training session on Critical appraisal of health-related scientific information. This is the first of a series of short courses in Public Health promoted by the Institute. The training is mainly dedicated to post graduates, PhD students, researchers but it shall be useful to anyone involved in health research and publication activity. Courses are taught in English.

Website: http://www.isped.u-bordeaux2.fr/FR_HTM_Actualites_Details.aspx?INF_CLE=621

Summer School in Public Health and Epidemiology

Dates: 6-17 June 2011

Location: ISPED Bordeaux School of Public Health
The summer school is dedicated to supply updated information on the main epidemiological methods and techniques applied to industrialised and developing countries in the approach of the major public health issues. It is directed to anyone involved in the health sector (research teams, epidemiologists, general practitioners, public health doctors, clinical research assistants, health coordinators, nurses...) with preferably a work experience in the field of the chosen course(s) (but it is not mandatory.) Courses are taught in French. The major subjects are: (i) Statistical methods, (ii) Clinical research methods, (iii) Epidemiology and public health

Learning and Conference Opportunities (cont'd)

methods, (iv) Computer - Information systems, (v) Bibliography and publication.

See ISPED website for further information.

ACT Summer Internship Program

Duration: June 6- July 29, 2011.

Location: Iowa City, Iowa.

ACT sponsors an annual Summer Internship Program, for outstanding doctoral students interested in careers related to assessment and educational studies. The eight-week program provides interns with practical experience through completion of a project, seminars, and direct interaction with professional staff responsible for research and development of testing programs and other educational services. Applicants must be enrolled in and attending an institution within the United States.

Financial Support: Interns will be paid a stipend of \$5,000 plus round-trip transportation between their graduate institution and Iowa City. A \$1000 supplement-

tal housing allowance is available for applicants living outside a 50-mile radius.

Application Deadline: February 11, 2011

Website: <http://www.act.org/humanresources/jobs/intern.html>

20th European Training Consortium in Public Health and Health Promotion (ETC-PHHP) Summer Course 2011 in cooperation with European Masters Programme in Health Promotion (EUMAHP) - Strategies for Health in Europe: Health in a Lifecourse Perspective

Dates: July 25th - August 6th 2011

Location: Zagreb, Croatia

Final Application Deadline: 8 April 2011

Website: <http://www.etc-summerschool.eu>

Call for Papers/Abstracts

Call for Papers:

Building Open Society in Central Asia & South Caucasus SERIES/CFP- OSI Central Eurasia Project's Occasional Paper Series

Interested authors should apply by sending in an application package of: (a) Expose of the paper (3 pg maximum), (b) Remuneration requirement, (c) CV, (d) Writing samples. (All documents should be in English.)

Send by email to ceppapers@sorosny.org. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis and will be reviewed by an expert committee. A limited amount of travel money is available for selected papers that require field research.

Website: <http://www.arisc.org/Resources/Calls-for-Papers>

Call for Abstracts:

European Association of Dental Public Health,
16th Congress

Quality and Dental Public Health Research

Date: 22-24 September 2011

Location: University of Rome, Italy.

Abstract submission closes March 15, 2011

Website: http://www.eadph.org/abstract_submission/abstract_submission.html

4th European Public Health Conference
Public health and welfare - welfare development and health

Dates: 10-12 November 2011

Location: Organised by Danish Society of Public Health, Copenhagen, Denmark

Abstract submission opens: 1 February 2011

Website: http://www.eupha.org/site/upcoming_conference.php

Nuevas Publicaciones

Revista de Comunicación y Salud (RCyS)

La Revista de Comunicación y Salud (RCyS) es una publicación científica en castellano y portugués revisada por pares, que se difunde electrónicamente en formato de libre acceso con una periodicidad semestral. RCyS, editada por el Instituto Internacional de Comunicación y Salud (INICyS), nace con el objetivo de construir un lugar de encuentro y de referencia para los expertos y académicos de Iberoamérica, donde poder publicar y consultar los avances científicos que se desarrollan en el emergente campo de la comunicación y la salud. Esta publicación puede leerse y descargarse en la web:



www.revistadecomunicacionysalud.org.

Revista de Comunicación y Salud (RCyS) ha abierto el plazo para la recepción de artículos inéditos!

Informe SESPAS 2010. La Salud Pública en la sociedad española: hacia la salud en todas las políticas.

Este informe, elaborado por la Sociedad Española de Salud Pública y Administración Sanitaria (SESPAS) tiene el objetivo de contribuir al avance de la incorporación del principio "Salud" en todas las políticas en la salud pública en España. El Informe SESPAS 2010 tiene cuatro partes: un capítulo de introducción sobre los retos de la incorporación del principio de salud en todas las políticas en la salud pública; la segunda parte consta de varios artículos de reflexión sobre la relación entre el sistema sanitario y la salud pública; la tercera parte se centra en políticas intersectoriales de salud pública; y acaba el informe con varios artículos sobre temas transversales de salud pública, como la formación, la información, la investigación, la evaluación y la ética en las políticas de salud pública. Para acceder al índice del informe y descargar la versión online, hacer clic aquí:

http://www.elsevier.es/revistas/ctl_servlet?_f=7012&articuloid=13188254&revistaid=138.

Plan Integral para la Actividad Física y el Deporte

Este libro recoge el Plan integral para la Actividad Física y el Deporte, Plan A+D, presentado recientemente por el Consejo Superior de Deportes (CSD) del Gobierno de España. El Plan, a implementarse en el período 2010-2020, tiene el objetivo de garantizar a la población española el acceso universal a la práctica deportiva de calidad, ayudando así a combatir el elevado nivel de sedentarismo y obesidad y a promover hábitos de vida activos y saludables. El Plan A+D responde a tres preguntas: ¿Qué puede hacer el Gobierno para lograr una mayor y mejor promoción de la actividad física y del deporte en España siguiendo las directrices de la Unión Europea y de la Organización Mundial de la Salud? ¿Cómo pueden trabajar de forma coordinada el Gobierno, las comunidades autónomas, los ayuntamientos, los clubes y federaciones deportivas y el sector privado empresarial para impulsar la práctica de la actividad física y del deporte en el conjunto de la población española? ¿Qué pasos tendr ía que dar el CSD en los próximos años para diseñar un Plan que establezca líneas orientadoras para todos los agentes del sistema deportivo del Estado? Más información: <http://www.fundadeps.org/Observatorio.asp?codrecurso=211>

[codrecurso=211](http://www.fundadeps.org/Observatorio.asp?codrecurso=211)

Recomendaciones para el abordaje de la salud de los jóvenes

Estas recomendaciones son el fruto de la reunión de jóvenes europeos "Food for Mind. Mind for Health", realizada del 22 al 24 de octubre de 2010 en la ciudad italiana de Turín, Capital Europea de la Juventud 2010. La reunión, organizada por el CIPES (centro europeo de la Unión Internacional de Promoción de la Salud y Educación para la Salud), tenía el objetivo de involucrar a los jóvenes europeos en el proceso de decisiones relacionadas con su salud, con especial referencia a tres temas: salud sexual, alimentación y movilización para la salud juvenil. Más información: <http://www.fundadeps.org/Observatorio.asp?codrecurso=221>



New Publications

WHO/UN-HABITAT on health inequities in urban settings **Hidden cities: unmasking and overcoming health inequities in urban settings**

“...The future of our urban world has as yet to be realized, but brings both a price and a promise. To what extent we want to pay the price, as opposed to fulfilling the promise, is in our hands.....” While it is generally understood that city dwellers on average enjoy better health than their rural counterparts, very little is known about health differences that exist within cities. The report Hidden Cities reveals the urban health inequities that result from the circumstances in which people grow, live, work and age, and the health systems they can access. The report highlights the challenges and opportunities urbanization brings and its effect on the well-being of urbanites.

Published: November 2010

Available online: http://www.hiddencities.org/downloads/WHO_UN-HABITAT_Hidden_Cities_Web.pdf

Human Development Report 2010 —20th Anniversary Edition **‘The Real Wealth of Nations: Pathways to Human Development’**

For the first time, the Report looks back rigorously at the past several decades and identifies often surprising trends and patterns with important lessons for the future. These varied pathways to human development show that there is no single formula for sustainable progress—and that impressive gains can be achieved even without consistent economic growth.

Published: November 4th, 2010

Available online: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/>

State of the World’s Cities 2010/2011: ‘Bridging The Urban Divide’ **The United Nations Human Settlements Programme - UN-HABITAT**

“The 2010/11 State of the World’s Cities Report, “Bridging the Urban Divide” examines the social, economic, cultural and political drivers of urban poverty and deprivation. It argues that much inequality and injustice stems from inadequate policy-making and planning by local authorities and central governments alike. Typical remedies include removing barriers that prevent access to land, housing, infrastructure and basic services, and facilitating rather than inhibiting participation and citizenship. The report also emphasizes that lasting gains are best achieved through a combination of local action and national enabling policies. As we grapple with old and new challenges in a rapidly urbanizing world, this timely report can help inform research, policy dialogue and development planning for years to come.....”. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General, United Nations

Published: 2010

Price: \$40 USD (PDF available for free download)

Available online: <http://bit.ly/hxe0E3>

Describing Socioeconomic Futures for Climate Change Research and Assessment: Report of a Workshop

The implications of climate change for the environment and society depend on the rate and magnitude of climate change, but also on changes in technology, economics, lifestyles, and policy that will affect the capacity both for limiting and adapting to climate change. Describing Socioeconomic Futures for Climate Change Research and Assessment reviews the state of science for considering socioeconomic changes over long time frames and clarifies definitions and concepts to facilitate communication across research communities. The book also explores driving forces and key uncertainties that will affect impacts, adaptation, vulnerability and mitigation in the future. Furthermore, it considers research needs and the elements of a strategy for describing socioeconomic and environmental futures for climate change research and assessment.

Published: 2010

Available for free download (\$18.90 USD in print form)

Website: http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13007

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