

July Edition

2022

AzCHOW Newsletter



Arizona Community
Health Workers
Association, Inc.

Director's Message

Hello everyone,

As we begin summer 2022, let's remember to take precautions. Now that we have vaccines available for all family members remind your families and communities about staying up to date on their vaccines and to continue following the safety guidelines.

The July 2022 newsletter edition will feature exciting recaps of our Roots 2022 Annual Conference and provide many exciting updates for the CHW workforce in Arizona.

Thank you on behalf of the AzCHOW team!

Floribella Redondo-Martinez
Co-Founder & Chief Executive Officer AzCHOW

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Roots 2022 Conference



The AzCHOW mission is to provide a forum for CHWs to inform and unite culturally diverse CHWs of all disciplines, and to strengthen the professional development of the field through resource sharing and collaborative opportunities with community, government, health and educational institutions.

Thank you CHW workforce for joining us at the Roots 2022 Annual Conference this event would not have been successful and as valuable without you!



Thank you to our sponsors for making this event possible!





CELEBRATING NATIONAL PUBLIC
HEALTH WEEK

CHWS ARE PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSIONALS



Written by Ruby Meraz

The 2022 NPHW theme was “Public Health is Where You Are.” With that being said, AzCHOW is shining a light on the unique role CHWs play in supporting public health in their communities. CHWs are dynamic public health professionals that contribute to the health and wellness of individuals and communities.

Historically, CHWs, CHRs, or Promotores, have led the way in supporting communities managing their chronic diseases and accessing social services, however, recently the COVID-19 pandemic shined a much needed light on the unique skills CHWs possess in order to provide critical care and support to their communities. CHWs have been addressing misinformation surrounding COVID-19 and vaccines while balancing the other healthcare concerns their clients and communities may have. Although CHWs are more than capable of helping their communities, and have been doing that successfully during the pandemic, we want to take the time to remind our CHW workforce to, TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES TOO!

Although, it is important to recognize our Public Health Professionals during NPHW, we want to remind you all to take time everyday to recognize the hard work you are doing for your communities and treat yourself to your preferred self-care practices. In order for our work to continue we must prioritize our health and wellness as well.



"PUBLIC HEALTH IS
WHERE YOU ARE."
-NPHW





I AM DAMIAN

MY OWN LITTLE WORLD

AM I REALLY DIFFERENT?

BY DENISE GARCIA

My name is Damian and I am 3 years old. I like music, blocks, puzzles, painting, and toys that light up. You'll know I'm around you when you hear a blowing noise coming out of my mouth day and night. My mommy is home with me all day and daddy works but I see him every night. It's crazy how mom and dad can talk so much. I always hear them say things over and over to me. I see the sadness on their faces and even though I try, I really don't know how to do or say what they ask. The only thing I can do is to walk away. Sometimes people find me "weird" but I just really think differently. I love my parents but sometimes their hugs can be too much for me. Space is something I always want and need even from the people I love the most.

"I wish mommy and daddy can understand what goes on inside my head."

I enjoy my time alone especially when it comes to play time. When I see other kids, I rather stay away from them since they are super noisy. Sometimes they can really annoy me and so I choose to bite, kick, and even pull their hair before running away from them. Being outdoors is one of my favorite things to do. Mommy doesn't like to take me much and is always afraid when we go outside. I like to run into the streets because I just think it looks fun. Mommy and daddy run after me and try to catch me, which makes it even more fun. I also like to watch and sometimes touch the fire on candles or the stove. Mommy always tells me not to do that and she may even carry me away while I begin to kick and scream since I want to explore. If I don't get things done the way that I want, I can really have a bad time.

When we go out, I always observe where we are going and what roads we are taking. Mommy and daddy tell me and show me pictures even though I still cry and whine because I don't understand them. If there are many people around, I get very stimulated and flap my hands, jump, and even sway to try to calm myself down. Eating at restaurants may be hard sometimes because they don't really have the types of nuggets or sandwiches that I like. I have to eat very specific foods because I eat with my eyes and food has to look the same every time. I sometimes stuff my mouth because I like how it feels to fluff my cheeks. I am all about feeling everything with my hands, face, and even belly. I like soft things but not any kind of animal fur because that makes me cringe. Every piece of clothing I own must be very soft or else I will take it off or throw it on the floor. I know mommy is sometimes tired and she looks at me with loving eyes but I just have to throw whatever I don't like on the ground.



Did I mention that I walk on my tippy toes? Well, I love to do this a lot! I can walk, dance, and jump on my toes all day if I want. I have so much energy and mommy is always playing with me too. She makes me my favorite foods, cuts my apples the way I like it, uses the colored plates I like, and also helps me clean up all of my toys after a busy day in my playroom. I sometimes just want to cuddle and kiss mommy but it's not easy for me. I want her to know that I love her as much as she and daddy love me. When Daddy shows up from work, I run to the door and climb in his arms. I love seeing him again after a long day at home. Usually, we play all night until I am tired out and he puts me to sleep. I don't understand my parents too much, I just go with the flow and always watch for their reactions. When they smile, I smile and when they frown, I just stop whatever I am doing.

"The Autism spectrum doesn't mean you are not normal, it means you think differently and that should make you feel special"



I wish mommy and daddy can understand what goes on inside my head. I have my own little world in where I get to be who I want to be. I can be an astronaut, rock star, and even a western cowboy. Even though mommy cries when I don't communicate much and daddy cheers a lot when I point at something I want, I know they just want to help me. They do so much for me and I can see they are always tired because of everything they have to do. Waking me, dressing me, feeding me, cleaning me, and keeping me alive are not their only responsibilities. They have to do so much extra work to help me develop in the best way that I can. I hear them talk about something called therapies and now I play with a bunch of ladies that make me do work every day. You can say I am pretty busy because it feels like forever that these therapist talk to me and make me work hard. Thanks to that, I am able to say a few words and my parents seem very happy about it. It takes a lot of work but being in the Autism spectrum doesn't mean you are not normal, it means you think differently and that should make you feel special. I will always love my family and having them around caring for me is what I care about the most.

"I sometimes just want to cuddle and kiss mommy but it's not easy for me."



EXPLORING A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP WITH STRESS



How to prevent stress from affecting my physical health?

BY SAHIL KUBAVAT

Over the past couple of years stress has played a dominant role in a lot of our lives. Whether it be from health-related concerns about COVID-19, economic worries, a lack of proper social support, or anxiety about worldwide political unrest, there is a lot in the world to stress about. So, it is important to take a step back and acknowledge the stressful times that we have all experienced in these past few years and remember that no one is alone in this struggle. Even if it's not always talked about, your family, your friends, your colleagues and even strangers that pass you by, are all going through these tumultuous times together. But acknowledging that stress is a part of all our lives is only the first step, the next is figuring out what to do about it.

Stress is the physiological response our body undergoes to face and deal with challenges. This can be a useful tool for us to overcome obstacles. Stress about an upcoming test motivates us to study, stress about finances encourages us to stay within budget, stress about the pandemic leads us to social distance for our own safety. However, while stress can be useful, prolonged stress can cause serious harm to one's health. Chronic stress can cause changes in one's brain structure, potentially increasing vulnerability to psychiatric disorders. Chronic stress is also strongly associated with an increased risk for cardiovascular disease and depression.¹ In addition to the physical effects, stress can also cause feelings of fear, anger, sadness, and worry or even changes in one's desires and energy. These symptoms are striking, but with the proper approach, stress can be properly managed.

Chronic stress is strongly associated with an increased risk for cardiovascular disease and depression.

Dealing with stress can be handled in several different ways. One of the most impactful ways, can be identifying and eliminating the cause of excess stress in your life. If you find that your job is causing you an unbearable amount of stress, perhaps the best thing that you can do for your mental and physical health is to find another job. Many times, the solution to dealing with stress is to avoid situations that induce stress. However, sometimes you don't have the option to leave a stressful situation. In these circumstances, instead of eliminating the cause of stress in your life, it is best to learn how to integrate stress into your life and form a healthy relationship with stress.

A healthy relationship with stress begins with adjusting one's attitudes towards stress. Studies have found that our thoughts about stress can actually affect how stress impacts our health. By thinking about stress as a functional and adaptive tool for us to deal with challenges, the cardiovascular and cognitive responses to stress improve.² The way we think about stress is an essential part of forming a healthy relationship with stress. In addition to changing our attitude, we can also work to manage our symptoms with stress to make sure that it is not an overwhelming and persistent part of our lives. Now there are many ways to do this, and activities that relieve stress look differently for everyone. Some common ways to cope with stress include exercising regularly, getting plenty of sleep, meditating, eating healthy, and engaging in activities you enjoy.³ While this does not work to eliminate the cause of stress in your life, it helps make dealing with stress a bit easier.

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One crucial part of dealing with stress is the act of connecting and helping others. One study found that helping others can potentially lead to a decrease in stress-related mortality.⁴ The act of service and the comfort of community works to reduce the negative effects of stress in our lives. This is why community is such an important part of the endeavor to create a healthier society. Community health workers, especially during April, the national Stress Awareness Month, have an important role in integrating stress as a healthy part of everyone's life. By acting as cornerstones of support in the community and learning how best to approach stress, we can work together to ensure that our community is a happier and healthier place. So, take a moment and acknowledge how hard times have been and remember that even if we can't control the situation we are in, we can control how we respond to it. Work to figure out the best way you can form a healthy relationship with stress and use that wisdom to guide others to do the same.

¹ Mariotti, A. (2015). The effects of chronic stress on Health: New Insights Into the molecular mechanisms of brain-body communication. *Future Science OA*, 1(3). <https://doi.org/10.4155/fso.15.21>

² Jamieson, J. P., Nock, M. K., & Mendes, W. B. (2012). Mind over matter: Reappraising arousal improves cardiovascular and cognitive responses to stress. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 141(3), 417–422. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025719>

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved April 6, 2022, from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

⁴ Poulin, M. J., Brown, S. L., Dillard, A. J., & Smith, D. M. (2013). Giving to others and the association between stress and mortality. *American Journal of Public Health*, 103(9), 1649–1655. <https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.2012.300876>



WORLD HEALTH

CARING FOR OUR PLANET AND OUR HEALTH

By: Dr. Ana Celia H. Martinez. Editors Leonarda Jaramillo & Sahil Kubavat

Have you ever thought about the relationship between the environment and your health? If you haven't thought about this... It's time for all of us to look deeper into this problem, this article could be the starting point for collective reflection and to start an action plan.

Over the past decade we have constantly been exposed to messages focused on saving the planet. These messages highlight our role with small or big actions to save our planet, however, these messages fail to expose the relationship between a healthy planet with healthy people.

"The World Health Organization estimates that more than 13 million deaths around the world each year are due to avoidable environmental causes" (WHO, 2022). This is a very strong statement! There is a strong relationship between the environment and health. Living in a polluted world would result in breathing, eating, and drinking substances that could harm our health. This scenario allows us to reflect not only on climate change, but also think about its relationship with human health. Pollution increases the chances of people getting sick with cancer, asthma, and heart disease.

You may be asking to yourself: What can I do? The experts recommend starting at home. Reading labels and reducing all the chemicals you use on a regular basis. Products we use on a regular basis for cleaning, washing, and cosmetics have many chemicals, many of which are harmful! Think twice before buying/using single use plastics and trying to use glass containers instead and to recycle as much as possible. You would be surprised that in 2022 there are still places that don't have recycling in place! Other tips include using your car in a savvy way by planning your trips, adopting a no-car approach on most of the weekends, trying to find a job close to your home, organizing a walking school bus in your neighborhood, focusing on having a more walkable community and eating whole foods instead of the processed kinds. We all have the power of change in our hands! If we all make changes intentionally, the results in our health will be huge! If you think about the bigger picture, another way to choose what is best for our planet and our health is by using our right to vote.

Together we can break the cycle of our planet destruction. We all have the power to do the right thing TODAY! Remember: our planet's health is our health. If you want to Follow a worldwide campaign, go to

#HealthierTomorrow

References:

World Health Organization (2022). World Health Day 2022 Our planet, our health.
<https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-health-day/2022>

CDC Recommends COVID-19 Vaccines for Young Children



Recent updates on children's vaccine to protect them against COVID19 has been published. With summer in full bloom and COVID19 cases still rising we encourage Arizona families to take extra precaution this summer.

"Today, CDC Director Rochelle P. Walensky, M.D., M.P.H., endorsed the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP) recommendation that all children 6 months through 5 years of age should receive a COVID-19 vaccine. This expands eligibility for vaccination to nearly 20 million additional children and means that all Americans ages 6 months and older are now eligible for vaccination.

Parents and caregivers can now get their children 6 months through 5 years of age vaccinated with the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines to better protect them from COVID-19. All children, including children who have already had COVID-19, should get vaccinated..."

See full article on the CDC website following the link: [CDC Article](#)

Voluntary Certification

Benefits of the CHW Voluntary Certification:

Provides a pathway for further professionalization of the CHW workforce offering an avenue to increase the recognition, compensation, training, and standardization of the workforce

Status:

- Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPR) filed with the Secretary of State (SOS); posted to the Administrative Rules Webpage for a 30 day public comment period - closed May 10, 2022. Additional comments received during the oral proceeding held on May 18, 2022.
- Following the review of all comments, the Notice of Final Rulemaking (NFR) was drafted and submitted to the Governor for review and approval.
- Next the NFR will be submitted to the Governor's Regulatory Review Council (GRRC) for final review and approval.
- Projected to take up to six months - tentatively open Fall 2022

Website and Resources:

- [ADHS CHW Webpage:](#)

<https://www.azdhs.gov/prevention/tobacco-chronic-disease/community-health-workers>

- [Administrative Rules CHW Voluntary Certification Rulemaking Webpage:](#)

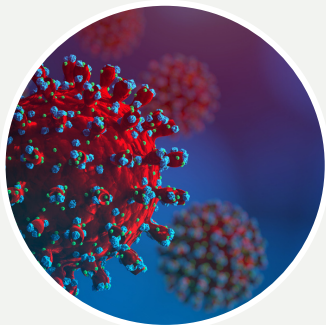
<https://azdhs.gov/director/administrative-counsel-rules/rules/index.php#rulemakings-community-healthworkers>

Emergency Preparedness For CHWs in Arizona

Coming soon for all CHWs in Arizona!

Overview:

- Identify emergency risks and vulnerabilities at the neighborhood, town/city, county, and state level.
- Present a model for the assessment of damages/ needs and the delivery of services to the community in distress.
- Propose a recovery program for the community to restate connection with ordinary life and resilience from loss and trauma.



AzHIP

AzCHOW in collaboration with the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) brings to you an exciting new project. Coming soon mental health trainings for you community health workers!

Trainings will primarily focus on serving rural and vulnerable communities as well as promoting self-care for those serving in our Arizona communities.

Stay tuned for trainings, webinars, and presentations!



Announcements

Have exciting news or CHW/CHR/Promotores stories to share with our Arizona community health worker workforce? Contact us at info@azchow.org