

CYGNET Taking Flight

Cohort Study of Young Girls' Nutrition, Environment, and Transitions

HOLIDAY 2006



cygnet

Progress on the CYGNET Study

By Lawrence H. Kushi, Sc.D.

Autumn greetings from the CYGNET Study! By now, the girls in the study should be comfortably settled into the routine of the school year, and everyone is probably thinking about preparations for the holiday season.

The CYGNET Study staff completed enrollment of our cohort – the 444 girls we will be following over the next several years. This is a great achievement that would not have been possible without your participation and contribution of your valuable time to the study.

As many of you know, we have also begun seeing you and your daughters for your annual follow-up visits. It has been wonderful to see each of you again, and we look forward to seeing the rest of you over the coming months. These follow-up visits are a great joy to our study staff, as we reconnect with you and see how the girls have matured over the past year. Many of the girls recall clearly their first visits and return to the clinic with a warm smile and eager spirit.

Aside from the joy of seeing you again, these annual clinic visits are of great importance to the study. As you know, by seeing the girls at around the anniversary of your first visit, we will be able to track their pubertal development over time. It is important that we schedule these visits close to the anniversary of your first visit – give or take a month, if possible – as this will allow us to have approximately similar lengths of time between each visit for each study participant. We will, of course, work with your schedule if it is not possible to see us in that

time window. Seeing you again is much more preferable to not seeing you at all!

Meanwhile, you may be wondering what is happening with the study and all the data you have been providing. We sent about 30 blood and urine samples to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, and they have analyzed these samples for several compounds and are in the process of analyzing them for others. We will soon be sending the rest of the samples that we have collected during your first visit. About 40% of you provided blood samples, and we hope that more of you will be willing to provide a sample during the second visit. Of course, giving a blood sample and all aspects of the study are completely voluntary!

We are also beginning to look at all the other data you have provided. As you know, the girls were 6 or 7 years old Kaiser members who live in the San Francisco Bay Area. The largest number – 126 girls – lives in Oakland, and another 88 live in San Francisco. Several other communities, including Alameda, Berkeley, Richmond, San Rafael, and Novato constitute another third of participants. As we start to analyze the data, we will provide information about these analyses in this newsletter, at Tea Talks (keep your eyes out for the next one), and in other community meetings.

Thank you for your continuing participation in the study, and have a great holiday season.

Lawrence H. Kushi, Sc.D., Associate Director, Division of Research, Kaiser Permanente, is the Principal Investigator of the CYGNET Study.

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The Mind-Body Connection

By Julianna Deardorff, Ph.D.

The scientific and medical communities have long accepted the fact that the mind and the body are integrally linked. We know that our emotions can affect the way we feel physically and vice-versa. This is often called the mind-body connection.

Our bodies and stress

Our bodies respond to the way we think, feel and act. If you are exercising regularly, eating well, and are well-rested, you will stay healthier and feel happier. If you are under pressure at work or you aren't getting enough sleep, you may feel down or unhealthy. This is because being "healthy" means feeling good physically *and* mentally. Too much stress and exhaustion can affect your immune system and make your body more susceptible to colds, flus, and depression. As adults, we intuitively know that when we feel well emotionally, we usually feel better physically too. However, we tend to forget that this same principle applies to our kids. In the same way that we go to great lengths to feed our children healthy foods and give them adequate playtime, we need to spend an equal amount of time meeting their emotional needs and nurturing their spirits.

Why do we ask about thoughts, feeling and behaviors?

You may have noticed there are several forms that we ask you to fill out on your own, which are a little different than the questions we ask during the clinic interview. These forms ask about your thoughts and feelings as well as your daughter's feelings and behaviors. Although these questions may seem a little strange, they are an important part of our study. As you know, we are interested in what causes some girls to experience puberty earlier than other girls. Some scientists believe that there may be a connection between how a girl feels and acts and when she goes through puberty (a mind-body connection). For this reason, we are trying to get a better idea of your



daughter's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, your own feelings, and some aspects of your family environment.

What to expect?

As your daughter gets older and enters adolescence, the intensity and breadth of her emotions and behaviors is likely to change. You can help her handle the highs and lows by starting to talk to her now about her thoughts and feelings. By talking to your daughter, you are teaching her to process her emotions positively. Also, you can help her think of healthy ways to cope with issues. In addition to talking, many girls like to play sports, swim or listen to music when they are feeling down or anxious. Others like to listen to stories or read. These skills will help your daughter cope better as she enters puberty so that your whole family can enjoy this exciting developmental journey!

As your daughter gets older in our study, we will take some time in our newsletters and during our Tea Talks to discuss how you can help puberty be a positive experience for your daughter and your family. *Stay tuned...*

Julianna Deardorff, Ph.D. is an Assistant Adjunct Professor for the Division of Cancer Epidemiology at the University of California, San Francisco and a CYGNET co-investigator.

Holiday Season Activities by Coralie Chan

PLAYS, THEATER and OTHER ACTIVITIES:



California Revels: Each year the organization picks a cultural theme and explores that culture's celebration of the winter solstice. Not only will you enjoy a performance of song and dance, audience participation is strongly encouraged during its annual song of solstice.

Shows normally begin late November–Mid December and are typically held in the Scottish Rite Temple in Oakland. For more information visit their website at: www.calrevels.org

The Nutcracker: For some, the holiday season isn't complete without a dose of the Nutcracker. Each city host has its own regional ballet performance. For the large ballet theater experience, San Francisco hosts the Nutcracker each year during the month of December. Special pricing is available for matinees and same day tickets. For more information visit their website at: www.sfballet.org

For a more intimate Nutcracker experience, the Dean Leshner Center in Walnut Creek, the Berkeley Ballet, and the Marin Ballet company host Nutcracker performances throughout December. All venues provide kid-friendly atmospheres and more intimate experiences for your child. For more information visit their websites at: www.drlca.org, www.berkeleyballet.org or www.marinballet.org

Holiday Harmony: Holiday traditions from Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa are celebrated at Pier 39 during the 3rd weekend of November. Stay for the tree lighting ceremony at 5:30pm. For more information visit their website at: www.pier39.com

Great Dickens Christmas Fair: Costumed entertainers dress up as characters from Charles Dickens novels. Typically beginning the weekend before Thanksgiving through Christmas. For more information visit their website at: www.dickensfair.com

Holiday Light Fantasy in the Woods: Each year Tilden Regional Park hosts a daily light display with crafts at the Tilden Carousel. During this time carousel rides are only \$1.00. For more information call (510) 524-6773.

CHRISTMAS TREE and MENORAH LIGHTING:

The Jack London Square Christmas tree is lit on the Friday after Thanksgiving. Check out your local newspaper for more information regarding the time of the ceremony.



The Union Square Christmas Tree in San Francisco is lit each year on the Friday after Thanksgiving at 5:30PM. Bring your mittens and some hot chocolate for a fun and relaxing way to start the holiday season.

The Union Square Menorah is lit on the first day of Hanukkah.

For other tree and Menorah lightings, please check your local newspaper. For more information.



Coralie Chan is a former CYGNET research assistant now pursuing her Masters in Public Health at Columbia University. She has attended holiday events in the Bay Area since she was a young girl.

Progresos del Estudio Cygnet

Escrito por: Lawrence H. Kushi, Sc.D.

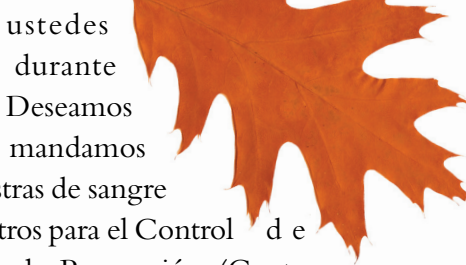
¡Saludos en este otoño les desea el Estudio Cygnet! Ya las chicas que participan en el estudio están cómodamente en la rutina del año escolar, y probablemente muchos de ustedes se están preparando para las festividades.

El personal del Estudio Cygnet completó la matriculación de nuestro cohorte – las 444 niñas que seguiremos en los próximos años. Esto es un gran logro que no habría sido posible sin su participación y contribución de su tiempo valioso al estudio.

Como muchos de ustedes saben, ya empezamos a ver a las niñas – las estrellas en nuestro estudio – para la segunda visita anual. Ha sido maravilloso conocer a cada una de las familias, y esperamos verle pronto en los meses venideros durante sus visitas. Estamos alegres porque pronto nos conectaremos de nuevo y veremos cómo las niñas han madurado durante un año. Es de seguro que muchas de las niñas recuerdan claramente su primera visita y vendrán a esta visita con una sonrisa tibia y un espíritu ansioso.

Aparte de la alegría al verles de nuevo, deseamos enfatizar la importancia de cada visita anual. Como ustedes saben, deseamos ver a las niñas alrededor del aniversario de su primera visita, de esta manera seremos capaces de rastrear el desarrollo pubertal con buen tiempo. Es muy importante planear la segunda visita alrededor de su aniversario de acuerdo a su primer visita, dar o tomar un mes, si es posible – de esta manera tendremos buen tiempo para ver a cada niña. Claro que haremos todo lo posible de trabajar con su horario si no les es posible vernos en esa ventana de tiempo. ¡Verles otra vez es mucho más preferible que no verle por completo!

Probablemente se preguntan lo que sucedió con el estudio y todos



los datos que ustedes proporcionaron durante su primera visita. Deseamos informarles que mandamos cerca de 30 muestras de sangre y orina a los Centros para el Control y la Enfermedad y la Prevención (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – CDC) en Atlanta, y ellos han analizado estas muestras para varios compuestos y están en el proceso de analizar otros. También pronto mandaremos el resto de las muestras que hemos reunido durante las primeras visitas. Cerca de 40% de las niñas proporcionaron la muestra de sangre durante la primera visita, y en este año esperamos que este porcentaje aumente y que aun más estén dispuestas a proporcionar una muestra durante la segunda visita. ¡Por supuesto, dando una muestra de sangre y participar en todos los aspectos del estudio son completamente voluntarios!

Hemos comenzado a analizar todos los datos que ustedes nos proporcionaron. Como ustedes saben, las niñas fueron de 6 o 7 años de edad durante la primera visita, todas fueron miembros de Kaiser, y viven generalmente en el Área de la Bahía de San Francisco. El número más grande – 126 chicas – viven en Oakland, y como 88 viven en San Francisco. Varias otras comunidades, inclusive Alameda, Berkeley, Richmond, San Rafael y Novato constituyen un tercio de las participantes. Al empezar a analizar los datos, nosotros le proporcionaremos información acerca de ellos en este boletín, en los Discursos de Té (mantenga sus ojos abiertos para nuestro próximo discurso), y en otras reuniones de la comunidad.

Gracias por su continua participación en el estudio, y disfruten las festividades.

Lawrence H. Kushi, Sc.D., es Director Asociado de Kaiser Permanente División de Investigaciones, es el Investigador Principal del Estudio CYGNET.

Cygnets on Ice

By Coralie Chan

Although snow doesn't fall in the Bay Area, we can act like it does by putting on a hat and a scarf and heading to a nearby ice skating rink for some winter fun and physical activity. Bring along your pedometer!

ICE SKATING

East Bay:

The Oakland Ice Center is home to two ice rinks. Open daily and throughout the year. For more information visit their website at:

www.oaklandice.com

Berkeley Iceland is home to the UC Berkeley Ice Hockey team. Featuring "Fabulous Friday Skating" you can lace up your skates for a mere \$6. Hours and additional information can be found at:

www.berkeleyiceland.com

If ice skating outdoors is on your list, the BayStreet Mall located in Emeryville, hosts a seasonal (November-January) ice rink on their plaza. For more information visit their website at:

www.baystreetemeryville.com

San Francisco:

For an outdoor ice skating, visit the Embarcadero Ice Skating Rink located on the Justin Herman Plaza from November-January each year. Experience the thrill of skating outside, and enjoy the evening with hot chocolate.

Yerba Buena Ice Rink is open everyday for indoor ice skating. For more information visit their website at:

www.skatebowl.com

Coralie Chan is a former CYGNET research assistant now pursuing her Masters in Public Health at Columbia University. She has attended holiday events in the Bay Area since she was a young girl.



Yoga Pose of the Season!

By Angela Beeck

Relax into winter with the Shavasana pose! You'll love this pose because it is so easy and so good for you! Shavasana helps you relax while giving your body well needed rest during the holidays.

Two Easy Steps:

1. Roll out your yoga mat and gently lie on your back.



2. Close your eyes and imagine a white light over your entire body. Feel light and relaxed. Don't think too much. Just feel every part of your body resting on the floor and smile. You deserve to rest.



- Play relaxing quiet music during your relaxation
- Imagine that your yoga mat has special powers and can take you to a magical place
- What does your magical place smell like? What colors are there? Who is there?
- Be creative!

Angela Beeck is a CYGNET Research Assistant and Yoga Instructor who is now pursuing her Masters in Child Life at Mills College.



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