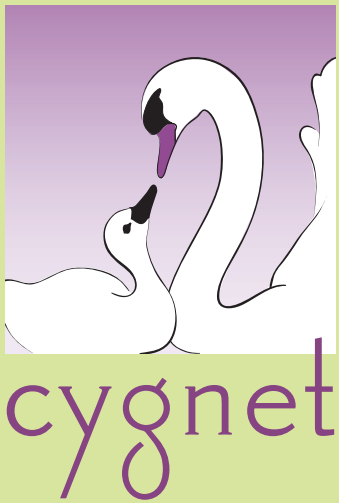


CYGNET Taking Flight

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

SUMMER / FALL 2008



Greetings from the CYGNET Study

By Lawrence H. Kushi, Sc.D.

In June we started the fourth clinic visits with the CYGNET Study participants who are now 9 and 10 years old. Our study staff has truly enjoyed seeing the girls as they have grown, and we hope to continue to see them in the years to come.

The study itself is in its sixth year of funding and our research grant runs through July 2010. We are currently planning a grant application to allow us to continue following the girls for several years beyond 2010.

We are reaching a point where we have the opportunity to write scientific publications on our girls. We have published some preliminary data that described urinary excretion levels of selected environmental chemicals among 30 CYGNET Study girls. (Wolff, M.S. et al 2007) By the time you read this. Other papers that also describe blood levels of selected chemicals from the same pilot study may have been published. As with the manuscript on urinary biomarkers, we will notify you through this newsletter when these papers become available. You may also check the publications at the Bay Area Breast Cancer and the Environment Research Center (BABCERC) site:

<http://bayarea.bccrc.org/pubs.htm>

In the past few months, we received results from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for these biomarkers for all the girls who provided blood or urine samples during the first exam. During the BABCERC Annual Town Hall Meeting in March 2008, we presented some preliminary information about these urinary biomarkers of environmental exposure, which include chemicals such as phthalates, phenolic compounds such as bisphenol A and phytoestrogens.

The blood levels, which we received more recently, include chemicals such as organochlorines or flame retardant chemicals such as PBDE's

(polybrominated diphenyl ethers). The CDC will soon complete additional assays for urinary levels of creatinine and blood lipid levels enabling us to analyze these data and their relationship to pubertal development.

At our April 2008 Tea Talk, several parents expressed considerable interest in receiving their daughters' individual results. We plan to return the results, even though the health significance of any chemicals that are detected is not known at this time. We also intend to provide comparison levels when available. For example, the CDC has conducted assays for many of the same compounds in a representative sample of the US population, and this information is available in their report, "National Report on Human Exposure to Environmental Chemicals." The third such report was published in 2005, and is available on the web at <http://www.cdc.gov/exposurereport/report.htm>.

In addition, we are writing papers that provide an overall description of our study and the companion studies in Cincinnati and New York, as well as our methods and baseline descriptive results for pubertal assessment for breast development. Regarding the latter, it does appear that there are some differences among the three study sites in the proportion of girls who have started pubertal development.

Once again, we want to thank you for your participation. This study is unique and of great scientific and community interest. It will provide insight into pubertal development for many years to come. And without your participation and the participation of the CYGNET girls, none of this would be possible.

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

INSIDE: page

<i>Positive Parenting in Middle Childhood</i>	2
<i>Talking to your Daughter about Growing Up</i>	2
<i>Let's Explore the Exploratorium!</i>	3
<i>Optical Illusions</i>	3
<i>Meet Pati!</i>	3
<i>Handmade Journals at Your Next Clinic Visit</i>	4
<i>Your First Period</i>	4
<i>Recapping the East Bay Spring 2008 Tea Talk</i>	5
<i>Celebrating Your Daughter's Menarche</i>	5
<i>Spring 2008 San Francisco Tea Talk</i>	6



KAISER PERMANENTE®

Division of Research
2000 Broadway
Oakland, CA 94612
510-891-3884

510-891-3106, fax

<http://bayarea.bccrc.org/cygnet.htm>

Positive Parenting in Middle Childhood

By Julianna Deardorff, Ph.D.

Middle childhood (8-11 years old) is a period that involves extensive changes and development for your child in the physical, cognitive, social and emotional realms. This can be an exhilarating and challenging time for parents. It is exciting to watch your child navigate new and complex transitions and relationships, but it is also difficult for some parents to determine which responses work best with their children's changing needs and behaviors. In this article, I'll describe some developmental changes that take place for a typically developing child during the middle years and approaches that appear to be most effective during this time, based on the scientific literature and clinical experiences working with parents and families. I'll also suggest some resources to help you with positive parenting strategies.

Changes in the Middle Years. *Physical changes:* Middle childhood is marked by significant physical growth which occurs in spurts. There is wide variability in growth and physical maturation among children of the same age during this period. For many girls, pubertal changes will become evident during the middle years, so it is important that your child has access to information about her changing body and puberty. *Cognitive changes:* Logical thinking is characteristic of this developmental stage. Children become more goal-oriented and are often interested in planning and organizational tasks. While children at this age have an understanding of cause and effect, there is limited ability to think in the abstract, so problem-solving is also quite limited. *Social-emotional changes:* During middle childhood, it is common for children to desire social approval and want to live up to others' expectations. As such, they are influenced by relationships with parents and teachers and increasingly by peers.

Positive Parenting: Firm and Loving. Positive parenting during middle childhood plays a major role in promoting a number of positive outcomes for children and may even affect outcomes later in life, during adolescence and adulthood. Successful interactions with parents contribute greatly to a child's positive sense of self. Research shows that a combination of firm expectations with loving and warm parenting is optimal for most families. Parents tend to be most successful when they help their children learn to be responsible for their own behaviors. Parents do this by providing clear, reasonable, and consistent expectations for behavior and explanations for why these expectations are important. It is essential that parents do this in a warm and loving manner and engage in positive communication with their children. Family time plays a key role during these years. Staying involved in your child's activities and interests will help build a strong and positive parenting foundation.

Resources. Here are some resources that may be helpful during the middle childhood years:

<http://www.cdc.gov/NCBDDD/child/middlechildhood9-11.htm>

<http://kidshealth.org/index.html>

<http://www.talkwithkids.org/>

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

Talking with your Daughter about Growing Up

By Janice Barlow, RN, NP

Not surprisingly, your daughter may have lots of questions as she goes through puberty. Like most pre-teens, she will look to her parents for answers and help in understanding the physical, social and emotional changes associated with growing up. Despite appearances, children see their parents as their primary source of information about their bodies.

Fortunately, there are a variety of resources for you and your daughter designed to set the stage for healthy and positive communication about puberty and sexuality. Here is a sampling of educational materials and books available at CYGNET clinics, on the web or in local libraries and book stores.

Educational Materials and Books for Parents:

The Mind-Body Connection-Onset of Puberty in Girls
BABCERC Community Outreach and Translation Core, 2008, available at clinics and at www.bayarea.bccerc.org/cotcpubs.htm

What is the Tanner Staging System?
BABCERC Community Outreach and Translation Core, 2008, available at clinics and at www.bayarea.bccerc.org/cotcpubs.htm

101 Ways to Help Your Daughter Love her Body
Richardson, Brenda and Rehr, Elane, 2001, Harper

Everything You Never Wanted Your Kids to Know about Sex (But Were Afraid They'd Ask)
Richardson, Justin and Schuster, Mark, 2004, Three River Press

Keep Talking: A Mother-Daughter Guide to the Pre-Teen Years
Madison, Lynda, 1997, Andrew McMeel Publishing

Girls Will be Girls: Raising Confident and Courageous Daughters
Deak, J and Baker, T., 2003 Hyperion

Books for Girls:

My Body, My Self for Girls
Madaras L, and Madaras, A., 2007, Newmarket Press

My Feelings, My Self
Madaras, L., et al, 2002, Newmarket Press

What's Happening to My Body? Book for Girls
Madaras, L., 2007, Newmarket Press

The Period Book: Everything You Don't Want to Ask (But Need to Know)
Gravelle, K and Gravelle, J., 2006, Walker Publishing

The Care and Keeping of You: The Body Book for Girls
Schaefer, Valerie Lee, 1998, American Girl Library

The Feelings Book: The Care and Keeping of Your Emotions
Madison, Lynda, 2002, American Girl Library

Although parents play the primary role in providing sexuality education for their children, other adults such as teachers and pediatricians can also be wonderful resources for answering you and your daughter's questions about puberty and sexuality.

Janice Barlow, RN, NP leads the BABCERC Community Outreach & Translation Core (COTC) and is the Executive Director of Zero Breast Cancer.

Recapping the East Bay Spring 2008 TEA TALK*

At the last Tea Talk on April 5, 2008, *Keeping Physically Active Throughout Life*, held at the Lawrence Hall of Science in Berkeley, Barbara Sternfeld, PhD, CYGNET Study investigators, talked with the parents about the importance of encouraging their daughters to remain physically active as they approach puberty. She pointed out that athletic girls tend to start their periods at a later age than their non-athletic peers, and that a later age at menarche is associated with a reduced risk of developing breast cancer in later life. She also suggested the following reasons why regular physical activity was beneficial to girls:

- Prevention of obesity and onset of adult diseases
- Protection against other risky behaviors and possible improvement in academic achievement
- Enhancing mental health, improving feelings of well-being, self esteem, body image and self efficacy, and decreasing risk of depression
- Protection against other risky behaviors and possible improvement in academic achievement



CYGNET participants waiting to receive their certificates of participation at the Lawrence Hall of Science in Berkeley

Unfortunately, data presented by Dr. Sternfeld suggests that physical activity declines substantially in girls as they progress from elementary to middle and high school. For instance, in a sample of girls followed from a mean of age 12 to a mean of age 15, the time spent in sedentary behavior during leisure hours increased by 28%. Currently, only about a quarter of high school girls meet physical activity recommendations, compared to over 40% of boys.

*TEA TALKS are held twice a year in several Bay Area locations to bring investigators, participants and their families together to discuss a wide range of science health topics with focus on the CYGNET Study.

However, Dr. Sternfeld emphasized that the decline in physical activity is not inevitable, and made several suggestions to the parents for helping to ensure that their daughters remain active. These included:

- Being a role model. Active parents tend to have active children.
- Exposing your child to a variety of physical activities so that she can discover for herself the activities she likes to do.
- Walking with your daughter instead of driving (to school, for errands).
- Planning physically active family recreation (hiking, biking, volleyball).

Celebrating Your Daughter's Menarche

By Aikya Param

Many cultures celebrate menarche, the occurrence of the first menstrual period. But not all people in the U.S. celebrate this major event in a girl's life. How we regard this special time is a reflection of how those close to us and our culture regard womanhood. Of course, most young girls are told about hygiene in anticipation of menstruation. But mothers and grandmothers, aunts and older sisters can have so much more to say about being a woman and living a happy life than that!

Every year, you celebrate your daughter's body maturing on her birthday. What about celebrating all the things that are special about her on the uniquely special day of menarche, a day that will happen only once in her lifetime? What are her talents? What are her strengths? How does she contribute to the happiness of your family? Of her friends? Of her community? What qualities does she have that show the promise of the woman she will become? Find a way to let her know about all her admirable qualities.

Who are the women in your family whom you admire? Who are the nurturing women in your family? What are their special strengths? Are there values shared by the women in your family that you are proud of? Be sure to share these with your daughter when you tell her about how to care for herself when her first bleeding comes. In many cultures, the young girl is taught the traditions of her

culture by a wise woman at this time. Maybe her sisters, aunts, and grandmothers can contribute to recognition of this passage by telling you what they see that is good in your daughter. Include these as you teach her about coming changes and when you celebrate her special day. In some cultures, the girl receives a special item of clothing, can wear her hair in a new way, or is given jewelry. In India, after menarche a girl can wear a sari. Hopi girls receive a new hairdo that announces to the community her new status. This could be a time to give your daughter something that has been in your family a long time.

Food is often a part of celebrations. In Japan, there is a party to which family and friends are invited. No one knows the reason until the young girl is presented with special foods. A decorated pear, candied apple or red colored rice and beans are brought to the girl on a tray. Your celebration could be as simple as serving your daughter her favorite food or it could be a big feast for many people.

Talk to your daughter about how she would like to be acknowledged. Plan together. The main idea is to be sure your daughter knows that she is beautiful; she is very special; and you love her and are very proud of her. And have fun! Let this special, once in a lifetime event be a time she will remember, that will make her feel pleased about herself and her life.

Aikya Param is a Research Assistant with the CYGNET Study.

Girl's Corner

Let's Explore the Exploratorium!

Ask your parents to bring you and the family to our next CYGNET Tea Talk on Saturday, October 11th, at the San Francisco Exploratorium.

While your parents talk with the CYGNET researchers, you can venture through the MIND collection, which has 40 interactive exhibits about how the mind works. You can learn about how we perceive things around us, make decisions, and why we think and feel the way we do.

After the Tea Talk, you and your family can see the other exhibits at the Exploratorium.

Check out the Exploratorium website:

<http://www.exploratorium.edu/mind/index.html#more>



Uhm...let's see if this looks like it smells...



*Eeeeyukk...
Are you really sure you want to quench
your thirst?*

Fall 2008 CYGNET Tea Talk

San Francisco Exploratorium
Saturday, October 11, 2008
9:30 - 11:00 am

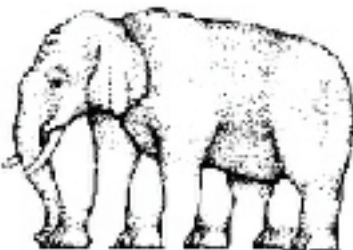


*How can you express
your feelings behind
this mask?*

OPTICAL ILLUSIONS

Before you come visit us at the Exploratorium, here are some optical Illusions for you to think about on your own...

How many legs does the elephant have?



What letter do you see?



Meet Pati!



Hello CYGNETs,

You may remember me from clinic and the Tea Talks or maybe you just remember the lady with the funny accent. Well, that's because I grew up in Spain (over 4,000 miles from here).

Here are a few fun facts about me: I like to ride my mountain bike on the many wonderful trails that surround us in the Bay Area. In September, I'll be riding from Oregon to California. I also love to spend time with my new dog, Lola, who I just rescued from the pound. I also volunteer for the community and nurture my soul with some meditation and yoga.

See you at the next clinic or Tea Talk!

Patricia Atkinson is one of the Research Assistants you might meet at the clinic. By the way, she also loves soccer!

Handmade Journals at Your Next Clinic Visit



Get ready to make our personal journal next time you come to visit us at the clinic. We'll have the supplies to help you make a journal where you can write a story, a poem, or thoughts you'd like to express.

Instructions

1. Choose a cover paper.
2. Place the 3 white pages on top of the cover paper and fold them in half.
3. Punch four evenly spaced holes along the folded line.
4. Pass a thread through the holes.
5. Tie the line together and add beads or tie it into a decorative knot.

Materials

- Decorative and colored construction paper
- White paper
- Yarns, String, Twine, Jewelry Cord and Thread
- A Paper Punch Plyer



Your First Period

By Aikya Param

You may have noticed that your body is beginning to change. Breasts start to develop. Pubic hair and underarm hair may begin to grow. You are changing from a little girl into a woman. If you have come to the CYGNET Tea Talks, you were able to get a book about these changes and some things to do to take care of yourself as you change.

When your body is ready, you will have your first menstrual period. The first menstrual period is called menarche (pronounced MEN-ar-key). It usually happens some time between ages 9 and 16. The appearance of this first bleeding means that your body can support the growth of a baby inside you. You may have a lot of things you want to do before you become a mother, but menarche tells that your body is healthy and is ready for motherhood when you decide. Talk to your mother about menarche and how she felt when her menstruation started.

In many cultures people do something special around the time of menarche to welcome a girl into womanhood. Talk to your mother about this. How would you like to make the day special? Who do you want to tell that it has happened? Do you have a special grandmother or aunt or girl friend that you would like to join the celebration? Your mother will probably tell your father because it is a big important change in a daughter's life. Would you want your father to help celebrate too? It's a good time to learn about the women in your family and how they have been special. There may be ways men and women in your religious tradition observe this special time. It's a time to dream about the kind of a woman you want to be.

Aikya Param is a one of the Research Assistants you might meet at your next CYGNET Study's clinic visit.



Spring 2008 San Francisco Tea Talk

For CYGNET's and their families

Positive Parenting in Middle Childhood

Speakers: Julianna Deardorff, Ph.D.

Louise Greenspan, M.D.

JOIN US!

Saturday, October 11, 2008

9:30 am - 11:30 am

San Francisco Exploratorium

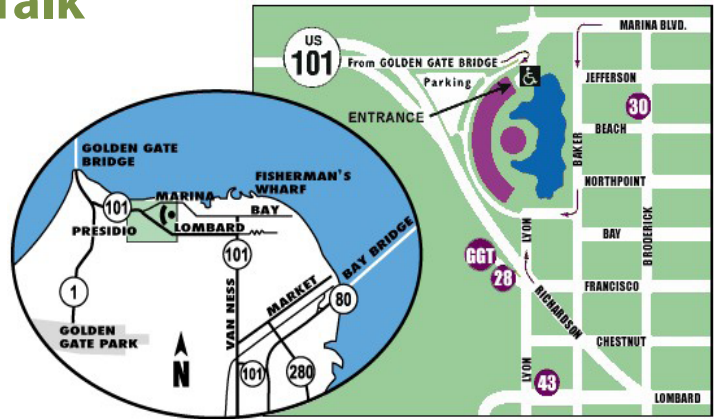
San Francisco, CA

Kids will explore the "Mind Exhibit" with
CYGNET Study Staff from 10:00 am to 11:00 am

Enjoy free admission to the San Francisco Exploratorium
for all family members attending the Tea Talk

For directions, please visit the San Francisco Exploratorium website:

<http://www.exploratorium.edu/visit/directions.html>



Exploratorium
at the Palace of Fine Arts
3601 Lyon Street
San Francisco, CA 94123

Please RSVP by October 8, 2008
510-891-3884

Division of Research
2000 Broadway St.
Oakland, CA 94612

 KAISER PERMANENTE®