



Diabetes Day Camp Teaches Lifelong Lessons

by Tiffany Stuart

A life-threatening disease facing Indian Country is diabetes. Siletz Tribal children age 8-13 had the opportunity to learn more about diabetes at the SOAR Above Diabetes Day Camp held July 19-21, 2005, at Siletz Valley School.

Campers had the opportunity to participate in Native dance, obstacle courses, fun games (soccer games), and interactive games about nutrition. They learned how to prepare food for the camp, studied the connection between physical activity and diabetes, and took part in parental-child interactions.

Not only did the children learn more about diabetes, they learned about different kinds of foods and their contents.

"What does pop have a lot of?" Alissa Lane asked the children, and the kids yelled, "Sugar!"

To learn what healthy foods to eat, the children had snacks such as peanut butter and celery, raisins, and apples. They also learned about healthy foods through the games and their lunches.

They played card games that had multiple choice and true-or-false questions on diabetes. Questions from "Does hot pepper raise your blood pressure" to "Should you be more concerned with fat or sugar content" were included in the game.

This camp is part of the master's degree project of student researcher Gina Legaz, who is obtaining her master's degree in public health and health education. Camp planning and development and the three-day camp itself are consid-

ered Gina's internship for her master's degree. She is supported by the Oregon Pacific Area Health Education Center.

Teachers and helpers at the camp were Alissa, Gina, Letitia Williams, Darcy de la Rosa, Lynette Hibdon, Brenda Robertson, Nick Sixkiller, Frank Aspria, Kris Whitehead, and Tony Whitehead.

This camp was funded by the Diabetes Grant through the Siletz Community Health Clinic.

Parents also participated in this event. At 4:30 p.m. each day, there was focus on "exercising

with my child," "making dinner with my child," and on the last evening, "your child will make you a healthy dinner."

Parents took a survey before and after the camp to help Gina's research, which is intended to help others prevent diabetes in the future.

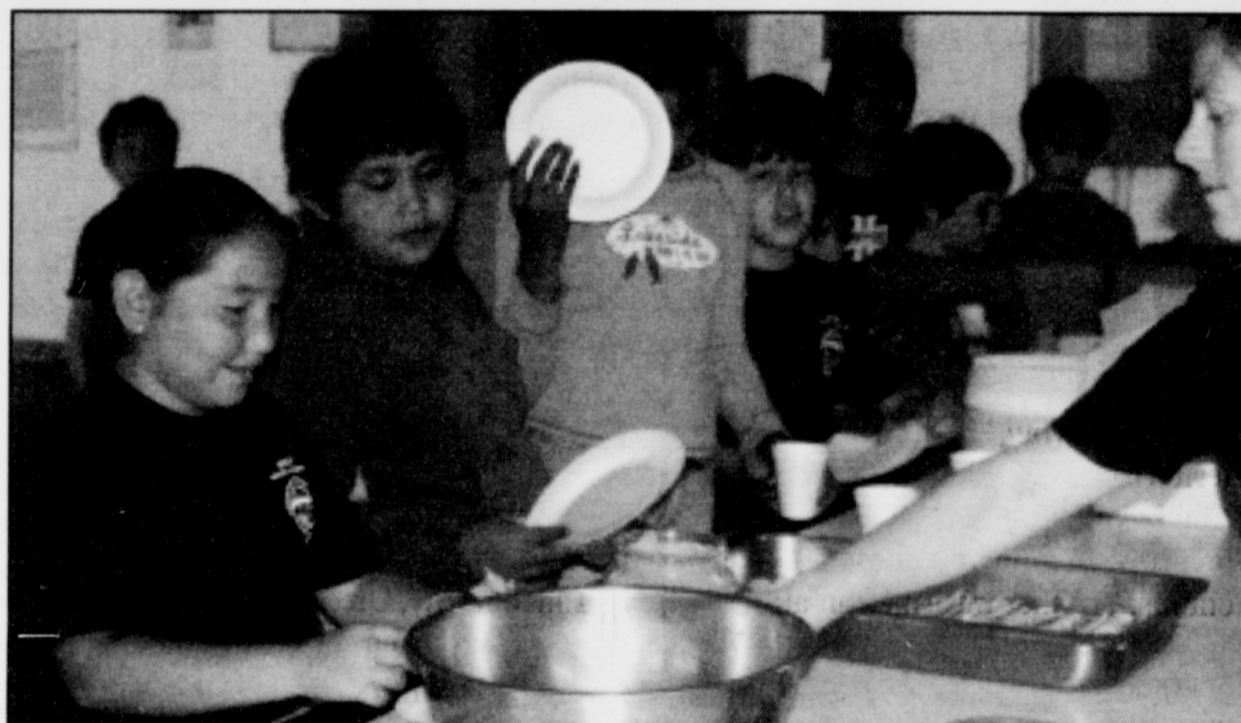
The SOAR Above Diabetes Day Camp's goal was to teach children healthy behaviors. Before and during camp, a survey was taken. Children's blood sugar also was checked during camp (before breakfast, after breakfast, and after physical activity) by staff specifically trained to take blood glucose.

Children wore pedometers and measurements of height, weight, blood pressure, and heart rate were taken at the beginning and the end of camp.

Campers received a camp T-shirt, breakfast, snacks, lunch, and prizes. Above all, Siletz Tribal children gained knowledge about how to live a healthy path in their daily lives.



Playing Sharks and Minos, campers learned that physical activity is good for their health and prevention for diabetes.



Gina Legaz helps Kat Whitehead and Coyote Foster to a healthy snack.

Asthma is a Chronic Disease, But It Can Be Controlled

Things **you can** do to help prevent the onset of asthma or asthma attacks:

- Make a rule of no smoking in home or car
- Make sure wood stoves are tight
- Reduce dust and mold in homes
- Take asthma-control medication as prescribed, even when symptoms are not evident
- Don't smoke while pregnant – studies show direct link of mothers' smoking to asthmatic children
- Encourage children to exercise – helps increase oxygen into lungs and body
- Reduce perfumed cleaners and laundry soaps
- Know the symptoms of an asthma attack:

- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Shortness of breath
- Rapid breathing (much like panting)
- Chest tightness

If you suspect you or your child has asthma, contact your provider today and ask about how to control it. You control asthma; don't let asthma control you.



The Siletz Community Health Clinic can be reached at 1-800-648-0449 or 541-444-1030.

Why Wait?

Set your quit date today!

For help with quitting, contact your provider or DeAnna Pearl, TPEP coordinator, at 541-444-9659 or 1-800-648-0449, ext. 1659; or the Oregon Quit Line (toll-free) at 1-877-270-7867.



Tooth Talk

by Mary Ellen Volansky, RDH, MS

Reduce Cavity Germs with Xylitol, the Natural Way

Xylitol is a sweetener – a **no-calorie** sweetener that is found in birch trees, corn, strawberries, plums, and the human body. Xylitol is safe for everyone and has been FDA approved as a dietary food supplement.

The germs that cause cavities like to eat Xylitol. Those same bacteria cannot digest Xylitol, so there are no acids to cause tooth decay.

It's recommended that a Xylitol product be used three or four times per day; five minutes is enough as in chewing gum or having candy. Some chewing gums, toothpastes, mouth rinses, and candies use

Xylitol as a sweetener. Squiggle Toothpaste has Xylitol and fluoride – two medicines working to keep cavity germs away.

To find out if a product contains enough Xylitol to reduce decay, read the label. Xylitol must be the **first item listed** in the ingredients.

The down side to Xylitol is that it's usually more expensive than regularly sweetened products.

This information was obtained from a pamphlet provided by Delores E. Starr, early childhood caries coordinator, at the Aberdeen Area Support Center.