



# The Collaborative

Working Together to Improve the Health Status of the Community  
The Bexar County Community Health Collaborative

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## Collaborative Moves Forward in Improving Health of the Community

The Bexar County Community Health Collaborative, founded in early 1997, has evolved into a not-for-profit organization, complete with its first slate of officers, funding and a strategic plan to work collaboratively to improve the health status of the region's citizens.

The Health Collaborative comprises of Baptist Health System, CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Health Care, Methodist Healthcare, San Antonio Metropolitan Health District, Southwest General Hospital and University Health System.

Senior executives from these organizations were recently elected as the first officers: Geoffrey Crabtree, Methodist Healthcare, President; Jean Setzer, University Health System, Vice



President; Alex Garcia, Southwest General Hospital, Secretary; Sr. Michele O'Brien, CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Health Care, Treasurer.

The other members of the board of directors are Frank Blalock, San Antonio Metropolitan Health District; and Walt Furlong, Baptist Health System.

The board's long-range strategic plan targets three important community health issues: nutrition and fitness, as they relate to diabetes and other chronic conditions; fluoride in the drinking water; and youth depression.

The Health Collaborative began informally in 1997 when the healthcare organizations agreed to put aside their

competitive business practices to conduct a comprehensive community health needs assessment. The evolution of the organization is in response to the founding members' interest in improving the health of the community through the synergies created by working together instead of duplicating efforts. The result of this collaboration is a more robust approach to solving critical community health needs and at the same time realizing efficiencies in the use of resources.

Local organizations and individuals are invited to partner with the Health Collaborative to address these concerns.

Interested parties can contact the Health Collaborative Executive Director, Joan M. Miller, at (210) 822-8521.

## Fourth Graders Learning to Make Healthy Choices

Fourth graders in seven schools across San Antonio are eating better, thanks to the Bienestar program, which is being partially funded by the Bexar County Community Health Collaborative. Bienestar, which is sponsored by the Social and Health Research Center of San Antonio, is a multi-pronged program, which includes a classroom curriculum, after-school activities and parent education. The Health Collaborative's support funds a training program for the cafeteria staff, educating them on purchasing and preparing more healthful foods, presenting meals in an attractive manner and encouraging the students to make good choices. The director of the Bienestar program is Dr. Robert Trevino.

The goals of Bienestar, which means well-being in Spanish, are to decrease dietary fat intake, increase dietary fiber intake and increase physical fitness. Some 70 cafeteria workers were trained in the program this spring, increasing

to almost 200 in the fall. The entire programs reached 500 students in the spring, expanding to 17 schools and 1,200 students in the fall. The seven schools in the San Antonio Independent School District that are participating in Bienestar are: J.T. Brackenridge Elementary, Strom Elementary, Ruiz Elementary, Barkley Elementary, Sarah

S. King Elementary, DeZavala Elementary and Rodriguez Elementary.

J. T. Brackenridge was the site of a successful media event in May, where reporters spoke with students and school officials about the benefits of the Bienestar program. The event featured an end-of-the-semester

outcomes study. Researchers gathered data

on the quantity of fruits and vegetables the students put on their lunch trays, and compared that with the quantity of fruits and vegetables found in the trash. Results of the initial study will be available this summer. The Health Collaborative decided to target nutrition and fitness as they relate to diabetes and other chronic conditions after conducting a comprehensive community needs assessment two years ago.



A joint community effort sponsored by:

Baptist Health System

CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Healthcare

Methodist Healthcare

San Antonio Metropolitan Health District

Southwest General Hospital

University Health System

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# The Foods We Eat

2000

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Officers

#### President:

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Methodist Healthcare

#### Vice President:

Jean R. Setzer, Ph.D.,  
University Health System

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Alex Garcia, Southwest  
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#### Treasurer:

Sr. Michele O'Brien,  
CHRISTUS Santa Rosa  
Health Care

### Board Members

Frank Blalock,  
San Antonio  
Metropolitan  
Health District

Walter J. Furlong,  
Baptist Health System

### Executive Director

Joan M. Miller

## Health Collaborative Target Issues

Three Health Collaborative Target Issues:

- Nutrition and fitness as they relate to diabetes and other chronic conditions
- Fluoride in the drinking water
- Youth depression



## Health Collaborative Strategic Plan

Healthy Collaborative's Strategic Plan:

- Collaboratively implement community health improvement initiatives
- Adopt community health measurement system
- Increase partnerships inside and outside of healthcare
- Secure ongoing funding from multiple sources
- Sustain distinct, viable, visible structure

## 2000 Mission

To improve the health status of the community through collaborative means. The result of this collaboration is a more robust approach to solving critical community health needs, and at the same time realizing efficiencies in the use of resources. The focus is to maximize synergies created by working together instead of duplicating efforts.

## Program Teaches Schools to "CATCH"

Two local schools districts will begin a program this fall aimed at decreasing the dietary fat intake and increasing physical activity levels of elementary school children. The Health Collaborative is funding the Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) program in 10 schools in the Harlandale and Northeast independent school districts. CATCH, a product of the University of Texas Houston School of Public Health, will reach 250 third, fourth and fifth graders in the fall.

The program utilizes a train-the-trainer approach in educating classroom teachers, physical education instructors and food service staff about healthful eating and active lifestyles. CATCH, which is approved by the Texas Education Agency, has been operating in 15 Texas school districts, as well as communities in other states. Outcome measures include studies of the students' physical activity intensity levels and duration, as well as examinations for teachers and students.

Confirmed participants to date include Gilbert Elementary, Morrill Elementary, Schulze Elementary, Vestal Elementary, Jackson Keller Elementary and Redland Oaks Elementary.

## Community Fitness and Nutrition Inventory Guide

The Health Collaborative is producing an inventory guide this summer of resources in the San Antonio area to promote good nutrition and fitness.

The inventories will be available free of charge. To receive a copy, contact the Health Collaborative at (210) 822-8521.

**BEXAR COUNTY  
COMMUNITY HEALTH  
COLLABORATIVE**



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