

FSNH Student

Journal #7 – March 1-2, 2013 – 10 hours - Site: Children's Healthy Living (CHL) Program

This past Friday and Saturday, I travelled to Hilo to assist the CHL measurement team with community assessments and recruitment. On Friday, we evaluated parks' settings, amenities, parking, sports features, and incivilities for their accessibility for families and young children. Our team then visited two grocery stores and assessed the availability of healthy food options. We noted if there were advertising influences on the store's exterior or interior. On Saturday, we recruited participants for our research study at a health and safety fair at the University of Hawaii at Hilo. I recruited people in the crowd and passed out flyers to parents of young children. Once I ran out of flyers, I assisted at the check-in and check-out table at our measurement booth. This required me to help with consenting participants, activating their folders for measurement, checking their folders for completion, and providing their compensation.

My time as a recruiter taught me about the importance of networking and how it can make a job easier. I learned this through my interaction with an employee from a Native Hawaiian preschool organization. I met her in the playroom that her organization was sponsoring at the fair. After introducing myself and explaining the focus of CHL, she was very willing to allow me to recruit participants in the room and also referred me to employees who had their young children with them. When I explained how we had an event planned the following weekend in Keaukaha, she got very excited and introduced me to the organization's coordinator for the Keaukaha region who said she would pass out flyers to people in the region. I was extremely grateful for both of these women's help because it made my job easier. This experience taught me how networking and actively introducing myself to people with similar interests and connections can be very beneficial. Even though it is out of my comfort zone and requires a lot of confidence and courage, the rewards and increased job efficiency are worth it.

My time as a recruiter also allowed me to become more comfortable speaking to people in the community since I had to go up to parents, introduce myself, and explain the CHL study. Initially, I felt like a pushy nuisance. I could immediately tell on the person's face if they were interested or not so it was hard to keep going up to people after being rejected many times. I repeatedly told myself it was not personal but business so I would not get depressed. With this technique, I persisted and became more natural with making conversation. I felt very accomplished when people I recruited in the crowd showed up at our booth with their kids to be measured. It validated my efforts and increased my confidence in my conversational skills since I influenced their participation. We had the highest turnout at this recruitment event of all the Hawaii recruitment events so it felt great to know I contributed to the high participation rate using my conversational skills.