



October 2016

# Ola Lokahi

Creating a Healthy Hawaii Together

*The mission of the Department of Health is to protect and improve the health and environment for all people in Hawai'i. We believe that an optimal state of physical, mental, social and environmental well-being is a right and responsibility of all of Hawai'i's people.*

## **"Rethink Your Drink" Campaign:**

# **Nothing Is Sweeter Than a Healthy Life!**

Somewhere in Hawai'i, three teenage friends meet at a coffee shop to order their favorite chilled, sugary drinks and help beat the island heat. Jamie orders the Iced CafSwirl. Reiko, a Berry Blast Tea. Keoni wants a Choco Mochaccino.

A charming barista smiles as she serves up their long-awaited cravings...but something is terribly wrong! Instead of the frosty, sugary bliss they expected, they are confronted with the truth--and it's GROSS. Along with their drinks comes a little something extra: slimy-looking fat, rotting teeth, and a bloody heart. "Just like you ordered," the barista beams. "Don't forget your fat, your rotten teeth, and your risk of heart attack!"

As you read this, you may be thinking, "Is this some kind of freaky Halloween horror story?" Why, no – it's the Department of Health's "Rethink Your Drink" campaign! And the real horror story here is that Hawai'i teens drink more sugary drinks than any other age group,

putting them at risk for obesity, diabetes, and a slew of other chronic diseases and conditions.

### **What lurks in your favorite sweetened drink?**

The Department of Health's newest "Rethink Your Drink" television commercial is now airing statewide through the end of the year. The goal is to teach Hawai'i teenagers about the dangers of drinking too many sugary drinks, so that they reduce their consumption of these beverages and choose water instead. The ad focuses on sweetened coffee and tea drinks, a category of sugary drinks that has been growing in popularity among the teen population.

Soda, sports drinks, energy drinks, juice drinks, and sweetened tea/coffee drinks carry large amounts of



sugar that put teens at risk for many long-term health problems. Drinking just one sugary drink per day can lead to an unintended increase in weight of up to 10 pounds per year. In Hawai'i, nearly half of all

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# Rethink Your Drink Campaign

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teens (46%) drink sugary drinks one or more times per day and nearly all teens (96%) drink them at least once a week.

## A social marketing approach

Rethink Your Drink was developed utilizing a social marketing approach, keeping the needs and desires of the target population at the heart of the planning process. Focus group testing with Oahu teenagers informed the new ads and messaging. Besides demonstrating the health consequences that arise from overconsuming sugary drinks, the new commercials also speak to other problems that teens said were important to them: obesity, acne, and bad teeth.

"We rely heavily on the opinions from our Hawai'i youth to keep the campaign relevant and appealing, and this has contributed to its effectiveness," explained **Lola Irvin**, Administrator for the Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Division.

The campaign also includes state-wide radio promotions, engagement at concerts, fairs, and other events frequented by teens across the state, as well as social media contests and giveaways. Print ads and a second television ad are also planned for later this year.

## Turning the tide on obesity

"Rethink Your Drink" first launched in 2013 to help curb the obesity epidemic among Hawai'i teenagers,



The "Rethink Your Drink" TV public service announcement makes teens think twice about ordering sugary drinks.

who drink more sugary drinks than any other age group in the state. A 2014 evaluation demonstrated that the campaign previously reached over half of Hawai'i's teenagers (54%), and 60% of teens who saw the ads reported drinking fewer sugary drinks as a result of seeing the ads.

"Rethink Your Drink is a powerful platform for changing how our young people see sugary beverages and the risks these pose to their well-being," says Health Director **Dr. Virginia Pressler**. "By educating teens to choose water instead, we're helping them choose a healthier future, and nothing is sweeter than a long and healthy life."

Rethink Your Drink has become a national example for changing social attitudes and behavioral norms towards healthy lifestyles, winning three awards in Public Health

Communications from the National Public Health Information Coalition in 2013. For more information about Rethink Your Drink and to watch the new television ad, please visit [www.healthyHawai'i.com/rethink-your-drink/](http://www.healthyHawai'i.com/rethink-your-drink/)

## Water: The Perfect Drink!

Hawai'i's teens on average drink 8.6 sugary drinks per week — more than any other age group.

This translates into the average Hawai'i teen drinking 40 pounds of sugar a year! Sugar turns to fat in our bodies, putting Hawai'i teens at risk for gaining up to 10 pounds in one year.

Water is calorie-free, sugar-free, fat-free and costs nothing (when it's from the tap). Water is the BEST CHOICE to rehydrate during and after physical activity, as well as throughout the day.

## Alcohol & Substance Abuse Division Receives \$8.4 Million Federal Grant

### Did You Know...

- Hawai'i ranks among the highest in the nation for excessive drinking rates, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

In 2015, Hawai'i's excessive drinking rate increased to 21% of residents engaged in, while the national average declined to 17 percent.

- CDC data also shows a steady increase in the percentage of women in Hawai'i who drink alcohol during their last three months of pregnancy, climbing from 4.3% to 7.9% from 2000 to 2015.
- According to the 2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, among individuals who are 12 years and older, 11.3% of Native Hawai'ians or Pacific Islanders abuse or are dependent upon substances.

The Alcohol and Substance Abuse Division of the Hawai'i State Department of Health is taking action to reverse these trends, particularly among Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.

The Division recently received an \$8.4 million federal grant to launch a large-scale, integrated substance abuse treatment program that will



Gov. David Ige congratulates Edward Mersereau, Chief of the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Division, *left*, and Alan Johnson, Chairperson, Hawai'i Substance Abuse Coalition, *center*, during the National Recovery Month proclamation ceremony last month.

involve a number of community partners.

The Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral and Treatment (SBIRT) grant award is from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

**Edward Mersereau**, Chief of the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Division, announced the grant with members of the Hawai'i Substance Abuse Coalition during a National Recovery Month proclamation ceremony in Governor David Ige's office.

"The federal funds will augment state funding to expand Hawai'i's capacity to address the needs of individuals at risk for and those who are living with substance abuse and

co-existing disorders," Eddy said.

### An Integrated Approach

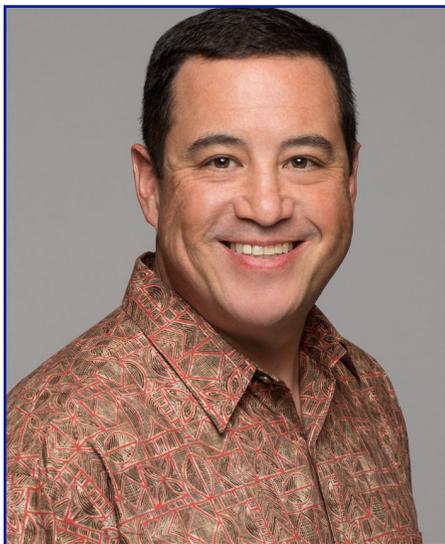
The grant covers a five-year period and involves screenings, interventions, and referrals to specialty treatment services in primary care clinics by working with a small number of federally qualified health centers, based on the diverse ethnic populations they serve and the need for substance abuse treatment in their geographical area.

The Department of Health will also partner with various health plans and providers to increase service in primary care settings.

The collaboration in the community will create a stronger, more effective, and sustainable continuum of care that focuses on prevention.

**Matthew Shim**

# Meet Our New Family Health Services Chief



**Matthew Shim** is putting his extensive public health experience that he gained in the U.S. Air Force to use in a new way. He is helping women and children as our new Chief of the Family Health Services Division. He reports to **Danette Wong Tomiyasu**, Deputy Director of Health Resources Administration.

Matt's division oversees three branches: Children with Special Health Needs Branch, the Maternal and Child Health Branch, and the federal Women, Infants and Children (WIC) supplemental nutrition program.

## Extensive Public Health Experience

Before joining the Department of Health, Matt served in the U.S. Air Force, retiring as a Major in March 2016. He has more than 20 years of experience in public health administration, serving as a Public

Health Officer in many different leadership roles within the U.S. Air Force Biomedical Science Corps. He also participated in OPERATION Iraqi Freedom (Southwest Asia), OPERATION Balikatan (Philippines), PACIFIC ANGEL 12-4 (Nepal), and PACIFIC ANGEL 15-4 (Papua New Guinea).

## A New Frontier

After bravely serving on the front lines of public health battles abroad, he is now tackling issues to improve the health of families here in Hawai'i. "I am looking forward to working with the Division staff, neighbor island staff, and our strategic partners—including the families we serve—to meet our overarching public health goal of improving the health and well-being of mothers, infants, children, families, and communities in Hawai'i," he said.

## Island Connection

Matt was born in Erie, Pennsylvania, but has deep island roots. His dad, the late **Benjamin K.C. Shim**, PhD was a Saint Louis High School alumnus (class of 1947). Matt earned a Master of Public Health (biostatistics) from the University of Hawai'i-Manoa, doing field work on self-reported diabetes in Hawai'i; and served as a Public Health Flight Commander while stationed at at Hickam Air Force Base and Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. He is married to **Trudi (Nekomoto) Shim** of Lawai, Kauai, and they have two daughters, **Skylar** and **Rory**.

## Education

In addition to the MPH from UH, Matt holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Mercyhurst University, in Erie, Pennsylvania; a Master of Arts in Psychology from Connecticut College in New London, Connecticut; and a doctorate in epidemiology from the University of Texas-Houston-School of Public Health. He is Certified in Public Health with the National Board of Public Health Examiners.

Please welcome Matt to the Department of Health 'ohana!

**Children with Special Health Care Needs** provides specialized health and related services to children who have or are at risk for chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional conditions.

**Maternal and Child Health** helps to assure healthy outcomes for the women, children and families of Hawai'i.

**WIC**, the acronym used to refer to the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women Infants, and Children, is a federally funded program that provides Hawai'i residents with nourishing supplemental foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding promotion and health and social service referrals.

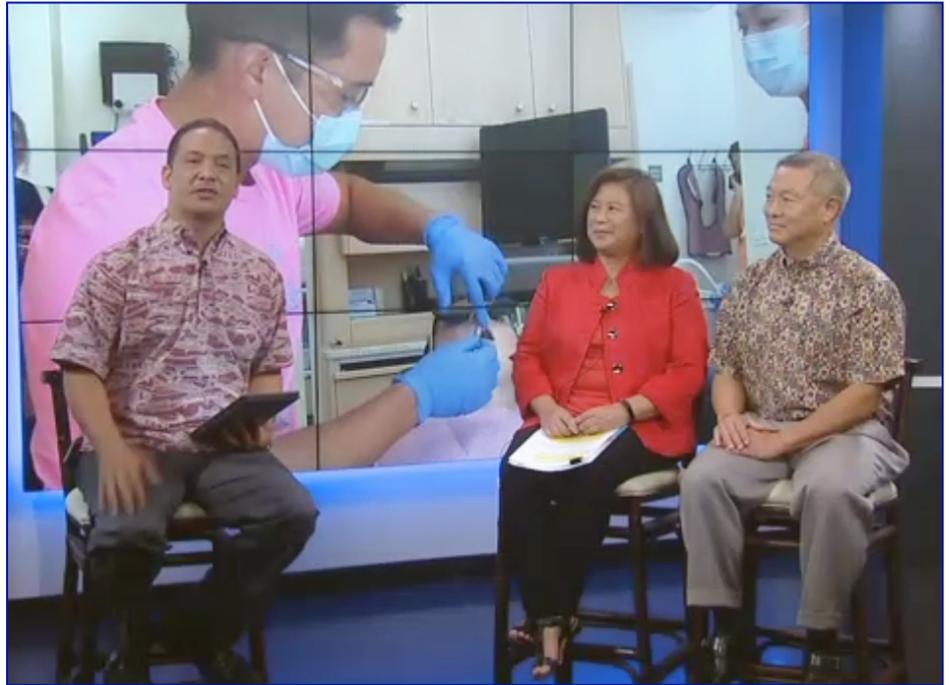
# Keiki Dental Survey Shows Need for Improvements



## Hawai'i Smiles

The Hawai'i State Department of Health's recently released "Hawai'i Smiles" statewide survey confirmed Hawai'i's children have the highest prevalence of tooth decay in the nation, but offered a roadmap to improve the oral health of Hawai'i children. Here are the key findings:

- More than 7 out of 10 third graders (71 percent) are affected by tooth decay.
- About 7 percent of Hawai'i third grade children are in need of urgent dental care because of pain or infection.
- There are significant oral health disparities by income. Children from low-income families have a disproportionate amount of tooth decay.
- The need for urgent dental care is about six times higher in low-income children compared to their higher-income peers.
- Micronesian and other Pacific Islanders, including those from Guam, Samoa, Tonga and other Pacific Islands, have the highest prevalence of untreated decay.
- Ethnic disparities also show a more pronounced gap for urgent dental care



Danette Wong-Tomiyasu, Deputy Director of Health Resources Administration, and Mark Yamakawa, HDS President & CEO, shared an update on programs underway to address the high rate of tooth decay among children with Billy V on Hawai'i News Now Sunrise.

The survey confirmed that Hawai'i children have the highest prevalence of tooth decay in the nation. The baseline results were based on data collected from more than 3,000 third grade students in 67 public elementary schools during the 2014-2015 school year.

Third graders were selected because this is the same target population of national oral health surveillance surveys and provided a basis of comparison with national statistics.

The survey was funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, with additional local funding from the HDS Foundation and the Kaiser Foundation.

The Department of Health is now

working collaboratively with community partners to offer culturally appropriate, community-based prevention programs, screening and referral services, and restorative dental care for children in Hawai'i.

Deploying a molar sealant program for children across our state, and a pilot teledentistry program on Hawai'i Island to improve access to oral health care for vulnerable families are among the efforts now underway to address tooth decay.

These initiatives involve the Hawai'i Department of Health working collaboratively with the Department of Human Services, Department of Education, the HDS Foundation, Hawai'i federally qualified community health centers, family and pediatric dentists.