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NLTCN NEWSLETTER

April - June 2009

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Dear Jean,

The NLTCN Steering and Advisory Committees met in Phoenix, AZ, during the National Conference on Tobacco or Health (NCTOH), June 9th, for its 2nd face to face meeting. Members enthusiastically welcomed Dr. Elba Díaz-Toro from Puerto Rico to the Steering Committee. Thanks to efforts of several coalitions Puerto Rico passed the most comprehensive Clean Indoor legislation in the nation. Dr. Díaz-Toro has an ambitious plan to advance further the tobacco control agenda. Also, Juan Carlos Vega (from our Advisory Committee) and Lissette Rodriguez (our faithful network volunteer) will be working together on expanding NLTCN's membership in Puerto Rico and supporting the upcoming Tobacco Summit on the island.

In Phoenix, the leadership agreed to start translating the website and Newsletter into Spanish and to standardizing the name of the Network in Spanish as **Latinos Saludables Sin Tabaco**. We urge all members to send contributions in Spanish so that our Puertorican and Spanish speaking colleagues can feel truly Bienvenidos!!! to the Network. Esperamos sus contribuciones tanto en Español como en Inglés.

The Steering Committee also welcomed Yanira Arias who is representing the Latino Commission on AIDS, a national group based in New York City. Yanira spoke at the LGBT Summit in the name of NLTCN and has been working with LGBT Latinos and incorporating tobacco to their work with Latinos with HIV/AIDS. Data is scant on Latino LGBT smoking rates, but NYC surveys indicate that rates are approximately 40-45%. The NLTCN will continue its efforts to reach this group.

Members shared their many successful and innovative efforts being carried out around the country and acknowledged the importance of writing these down to benefit network members. The Second Year Plan was approved with modifications. For a listing of the NLTCN members of the Steering and

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Advisory Committee please visit our website at:
www.latinotobaccocontrol.org

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FDA is given authority to regulate tobacco.



President Obama signs legislation granting authority over tobacco products to the United States Food and Drug Administration in the Rose Garden of the White House. (Marvin Joseph/ The Washington Post)

On Monday, June 22, 2009 President Obama signed into law the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act and the Indiana Latino Institute, Inc.'s President and CEO and NTLCN Executive Director Aida McCammon was present to witness this historic event.

It took 14 years of negotiations for members of Congress and health advocates to bring forth this legislation which gives the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) the authority to regulate tobacco products. This law is a first step in the long road to truly regulate all tobacco products. The regulations which will ensue and its implementation will give everyone an opportunity to get involved and improve aspects of the law. Highlights of what the new law covers are:

- Each packet of cigarettes will disclose all ingredients and additives
- It bans candy flavoring in cigarettes
- It bans billboard advertising within 1,000 feet of schools and playgrounds
- It will restrict Youth -Focused Marketing
- It will prohibit marketing measures misleading consumers (ex. Using "light, low or mild" on tobacco products)
- It will display new Warning Labels in each cigarette pack by July 2011 with information and graphics depicting health risks of smoking

What the law doesn't cover:

- It does not ban Menthol an additive in cigarettes preferred by many youth (but creates mechanisms for studies to be performed on the effect of Menthol in smokers, and opens the door for further regulation/banning of this additive.)
- It doesn't regulate smokeless tobacco products (dissolvable disks, sticks and strips and other products that are extremely dangerous and are being marketed as "less harmful" in our communities.)

Considering that 46% of Latino youth (9th-10th grades) across the nation who smoke prefer mentholated cigarettes the regulations that will emanate from this law need to be strengthened to protect our youth. NLTCN members can get engaged in the regulatory process in order to assure that Latino and minority voices are being heard.

Is it a comprehensive law that addresses all issues? No, but it gives authority to the federal government to control and regulate tobacco, nicotine, and most additives and pushes the tobacco industry to disclose what is in their products. This law is a victory for many advocates and for public health. But there is much to be done to assure that funding is provided to strengthen the FDA to do its job and those regulations improve every aspect of the law.

Mrs. McCammon was proud and honored to be invited as a guest in the White House to witness a turning point in tobacco control and an achievement which will impact the public's health.

Fewer Indiana students lighting up

Shari Rudavsky

Posted: July 14, 2009

INDYSTAR

INDIANAPOLIS, IN

Indiana youth are snuffing out the smoking habit.

The 2008 Youth Tobacco Survey finds that fewer middle and high school students are lighting up than in the past, a decline that cessation advocates attribute to education, policy changes, and changing social norms.

Since 2000 the percentage of high school students in Indiana who smoke has dropped 42 percent, from 31.6 to 18.3. Middle school smoking has been cut by more than half, falling from 9.8 percent in 2000 to 4.1 percent in 2008.

In the past two years alone, the smoking rate fell 23.2 percent for high school students and 47 percent for middle school students.

"We are elated by the numbers," said Karla Sneegas, executive director of Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation about the survey's results. "We're definitely seeing our efforts pay off."

One of the most effective policy changes in recent years has been increasing cigarette tax and the cost of tobacco products, Sneegas said.

But that alone does not account for the drop. Local education aimed at teens and changing social norms have also contributed, Sneegas said.

In addition, more teens identified themselves as "closed" to smoking, meaning they will not consider adopting the habit, according to the survey.

which looked at about 7,000 teens in 99 middle and high schools across the state. "We want to see the whole trend moving towards that end of the spectrum and we are," Sneegas said.

CDC - Centros para el Control y la Prevención de Enfermedades - Su fuente confiable de información sobre salud en internet

T A B A Q U I S M O

Para recursos principales, materiales y publicaciones, enlaces externos y más información en español, visite [CDC en Español](#) si no le funciona el enlace, copie la siguiente dirección:

<http://www.cdc.gov/spanish/prevencion/tabaquismo.html>

Profiles of Latino Health: The Top 12 Questions About Latinos and Health Care by National Council of La Raza Answers to the research questions that people are asking about Latinos' health and interactions with the health care system

As families increasingly struggle to balance health care costs with everyday needs, nearly all Americans are acutely aware of the urgent need for comprehensive reform of our health care system. Latinos, who at 15% of the U.S. population are the largest racial or ethnic minority group in the nation, are expected to represent 60% of the nation's population growth between 2005 and 2050. Policymakers must respond to the changing demographics of the country and understand Latinos' experiences with the current system in order to create reforms that guarantee affordable, accessible health care for all. If health care reform does not integrate the needs and concerns of all Americans, it will inevitably be less effective in the long-term.

In April 2009, to mark the beginning of National Minority Health Month, the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) released Profiles of Latino Health, a new resource for those who want to know more about prominent health issues affecting the Latino community. The first series, "The Top Twelve Questions about Latinos and Health Care," shines a spotlight on Latinos' health status and their interactions with the health care system. These snapshots provide insight into the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead for creating a health care system that meets the unique needs of the Latino community.

Each week from April to June, NCLR answered a prevailing research question that fell under one of five major themes:

- Key health trends
- Health insurance coverage
- Access to care
- Health care costs
- Quality of care

Click the following links to find out the answers to the top twelve questions about Latinos and health care:

[Question 1:](#) Which health conditions disparately impact Latinos?

[Question 2:](#) In what ways does the Hispanic community show signs of good health?

[Question 3:](#) In what ways do Latinos access health insurance?

[Question 4:](#) Where in the country are Latinos most likely to lack health coverage?

[Question 5:](#) What are the main reasons behind high levels of uninsurance among Latinos?

[Question 6:](#) Do Latinos have adequate access to health care?

[Question 7:](#) Which health care services do Latinos have trouble obtaining?

[Question 8:](#) What are the financial barriers to health care-and the implications-for Latinos?

[Question 9:](#) What is the cost of health care received by Latinos, and who pays for it?

[Question 10:](#) How does patient-provider communication affect the quality of Latinos' health care?

[Question 11:](#) How many Latino health professionals are practicing in the United States?

[Question 12:](#) How much do Latinos know about their health, and what are their primary sources of information?

If you are not able to access the links in each questions, please click on the following link or copy and paste to your browser:

<http://www.nclr.org/section/profilesoflatiohealth/>

For more information, contact:

[Kara Ryan](#)

[Jennifer Ng'andu](#)

Smokers Can't Blow Off Stress

by Wendy Wang and Paul Taylor

Pew Research Center

April 8, 2009

While many say they light up to relieve stress, half of all smokers say they "frequently" experience stress in their daily lives, compared with just 35% of those who once smoked and have now quit, and 31% of those who never smoked.

Read the full article at:

<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1185/smoking-stress-quitting>

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Commission to Build a Healthier America

ISSUE BRIEF 5: RACE AND SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS

APRIL 2009

To understand health disparities, it is not enough to consider only race or only socioeconomic factors. Both affect health. This issue brief focuses on disparities in health itself contrasted with the well-documented disparities in health care

For full report: www.commissiononhealth.org

ENews from American Legacy Foundation

New Survey Highlights Emotional, Financial Toll Multi-Generational Tobacco Use Takes on Parents "Sandwiched" In Between

Many adults in their 40s and 50s find themselves raising children, while also looking after aging or ill parents - a situation that has given rise to a new term: "Sandwich Generation." As caregivers across the country and those who support them commemorate **Sandwich Generation Month** in July, a new Legacy survey highlights the unique concerns associated with tobacco use and prevention for Americans raising their own kids, while simultaneously caring for their aging parents - millions of whom have been life-long smokers and are now struggling with the resulting health effects. The survey highlights the concerns of this group of Americans and the impact the nation's number-one preventable cause of death - tobacco use - is having on their emotional and financial well-being. Treating tobacco-related disease is enormously expensive for families and for the healthcare system. The survey, conducted by Opinion Research Corporation, found that 75 percent of respondents with a parent who is a current or former smoker were concerned about their aging parent's current or past smoking, or their diagnosis of having a tobacco-related disease. In addition, 34 percent of the respondents with teenage or adult children indicated that they were concerned about their child's current or potential smoking. To read the full press release with details on the survey: enews@americanlegacy.org.

Movie Character Smoking and Adolescent Smoking: Who Matters More, Good Guys or Bad Guys?

Published online June 29, 2009

PEDIATRICS Vol. 124 No. 1 July 2009, pp. 135-143

(doi:10.1542/10.1542/peds.2007-3420) -Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics-

Susanne E. Tanski, MD (a,b), Mike Stoolmiller, PhD (c), Sonya Dal Cin, PhD (d), Keilah Worth, PhD (b), Jennifer Gibson, MS (b) and James D. Sargent, MD (a,b)

(a) Department of Pediatrics, Dartmouth Medical School, Hanover, New Hampshire

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OBJECTIVE: To assess the association between smoking onset and exposure to movie smoking according to character type.

METHODS: A longitudinal, random-digit-dial telephone survey of 6522 US adolescents was performed with movie exposure assessed at 4 time points

over 24 months. Adolescents were asked whether they had seen a random sub-sample of recently released movies, for which we identified smoking by major characters and type of portrayal (divided into negative, positive, and mixed/neutral categories). Multivariate hazard regression analysis was used to assess the independent effects of these exposures on the odds of trying smoking.

RESULTS: By the 24-month follow-up survey, 15.9% of baseline never-smokers had tried smoking. Within the sample of movies, 3848 major characters were identified, of whom 69% were male. Smokers represented 22.8% of 518 negative characters, 13.7% of 2486 positive characters, and 21.1% of 844 mixed/neutral characters. Analysis of the crude relationship showed that episodes of negative character smoking exposure had the strongest influence on smoking initiation. However, because most characters were portrayed as positive, exposure to this category was greatest. When the full population effect of each exposure was modeled, each type of character smoking independently affected smoking onset. There was an interaction between negative character smoking and sensation-seeking with stronger response for adolescent slower in sensation-seeking.

CONCLUSIONS: Character smoking predicts adolescent smoking initiation regardless of character type, which demonstrates the importance of limiting exposure to all movie smoking. Negative character portrayals of smoking have stronger impact on low risk-taking adolescents, undercutting the argument that greater exposure is a marker for adolescent risk-taking behavior.

APHA's Healthiest Nation in One Generation Campaign

The American Public Health Association (APHA) launched an interactive campaign that helps people across the nation educate themselves about public health, share their stories of how they are making a difference and spread the word about what can be done to create a healthier America

David R. Williams, Ph.D., Staff Director
April 9, 2009

The American Public Health Association kicked off its National Public Health Week (NPHW) this week, April 6-12, with the theme, "Building the Foundation for a Healthy America." In conjunction with NPHW, they're launching an excellent new video campaign called Healthiest Nation in One Generation. Read more and watch the new video from www.generationpublichealth.org.

You might think we're one of the healthiest nations, but we're not. Compared to other developed nations, we're lagging far behind. The thing is: It doesn't have to be this way. We can make this the healthiest nation in one generation. Committing to a healthier America is something we all can do.

First, support public health - from the local clinic to the neighborhood park. A healthier America won't be possible without the support of your communities. Second, adopt a healthier lifestyle. Encourage others to do the same. Help us teach a new generation that simple actions - like not smoking and eating healthy - lead to a happier, longer and more productive life. After all, healthy children will become healthy adults. All you have to

do now is join us.

Smoking prevention takes big hit in new budget

Posted: July 15, 2009

Matthew Tully
Indystar

By definition, bottom-line budget decisions are usually regrettable. That's because they're often made with short-term goals in mind, regardless of long-term consequences.

Gov. Mitch Daniels and Indiana lawmakers made one such decision in the closing days of this year's legislative session: They took a whack out of the state's well-respected but perpetually underfunded anti-smoking program. The decision to slash spending on the Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation program was not surprising; plenty of other programs took hits this year. But the size of the cut -- roughly 33 percent -- stunned many working hard to reduce the state's smoking rate.

"It's a drop in the bucket compared to the rest of the state budget," Aaron Doeppers, Midwest director for the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, said of the \$5.35 million cut. "But it's a huge amount of money for tobacco prevention.

"I don't understand it."

How could he?

The state in recent years has actually taken a number of steps suggesting it was finally getting serious about anti-smoking efforts. The governor pushed through a major cigarette tax increase in 2007, many local communities have adopted no-smoking ordinances, and a new report shows a significant drop in the rate of smoking by Indiana youths.

Meanwhile, Daniels and lawmakers had been in agreement earlier in the year: The anti-smoking program's spending, which comes mainly from the 1998 tobacco settlement, would be cut by about 10 percent -- from \$16.2 million to \$14.5 million. That cut was big, but still similar to those other programs faced.

"We understood," Doeppers said. "You have to take your lumps and say, 'We're willing to go along with this just like everybody else.' " As lawmakers moved into a special session, though, the anti-smoking program took a uniquely large hit -- down to \$10.85 million. While that is the same amount the state spent on anti-smoking programs in 2007, it is a drop from the past two years and woefully short of the \$32 million the program received in its earliest years. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, by the way, recommends Indiana spend more than \$30 million on the program.

Facing cuts, the Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation (ITPC) board will gather Thursday to craft a vastly scaled-down spending plan. The impact will be felt by those struggling to give up their cigarettes, and those trying to help them. Spending on the state's successful Tobacco Quitline -- (800) 784-8669 -- will take a bruising. Meanwhile, much-needed grants for local groups throughout the state, many of which finance campaigns aimed

at children, will be hit hard.

Karla Sneegas, ITPC's executive director, said the cuts to the Quitline will be particularly painful. With a recent increase in the federal cigarette tax, the line has seen a four-fold increase in the number of calls from wannabe quitters. The hotline will continue, she said, but her group will not be able to advertise it. Because of that, "there won't be nearly as many smokers that will find out about it," Sneegas said.

State Health Commissioner Dr. Judy Monroe, who has been a strong supporter of efforts to reduce smoking, hopes recent steps taken by the federal government will blunt the impact of the state spending cuts.

Let's hope she's right.

But why take a chance on losing momentum? With more and more smokers trying to quit because of tax increases, and in the wake of news that youth smoking rates are improving, this would be a perfect time to beef up anti-smoking programs.

Regrettably, Indiana is heading in the opposite direction.

Legislation - Public Health

Five States Announce Major Tobacco Victories

North Carolina and Wisconsin Approve Smoke-Free Laws; Florida, Hawaii and Mississippi Enact Tobacco Tax Hikes

Recently, a number of historic victories have been made in the fight to protect workers and the public from the serious health hazards of secondhand smoke. Policy-makers in North Carolina and Wisconsin delivered victories for health and the public's right to breathe clean air when they approved strong smoke-free legislation to make all restaurants and bars smoke-free. With the addition of North Carolina and Wisconsin, a total of 27 states will have strong smoke-free laws that include restaurants and bars-protecting nearly 59 percent of Americans from the proven dangers of secondhand smoke. North Carolina has become the first traditional tobacco-growing state to make all restaurants and bars smoke-free. In support of these state efforts, RWJF funded educational direct mail campaigns, public opinion polling, and strategic and technical assistance facilitated through Americans for Non-Smokers' Rights and the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

In addition, policy-makers in Florida, Hawaii and Mississippi enacted into law tax increases for cigarettes and other tobacco products, protecting people in those states from the devastating toll of tobacco use. In support of these state efforts, RWJF funded public opinion polls on attitudes toward tobacco tax increases, public education media campaigns as well as strategic and technical assistance provided through its grantee, the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids estimates that the cigarette tax increases in Florida, Hawaii and Mississippi combined will:

Prevent 186,800 kids from becoming smokers

Spur 112,600 adult smokers to quit
Prevent 89,400 premature smoking-caused deaths
Save \$4.3 billion in long-term health care costs
Raise more than \$740 million a year in revenue.

[Learn more](#) or visit
<http://www.rwjf.org/publichealth/product.jsp?id=42828>

The American Cancer Society invites you to attend its 2009 Conference Health Equity: Through The Cancer Lens

The American Cancer Society presents 2009 Disparities Conference
HEALTH EQUITY: Through The Cancer Lens
July 28-29, 2009
Mandalay Bay Hotel
Las Vegas, Nevada
www.TheCancerLens.org

The Office of Health Disparities of the American Cancer Society is pleased to present its third conference on health disparities, Health Equity: Through the Cancer Lens.

This year we move beyond description to action, as we continue to save lives. We'll begin our conference with a combined general plenary session, in which we will present consensus recommendations on cancer disparities in underserved populations as part of our collaboration with the National Medical Association (NMA). From there, we will combine research, practice, academia, and community efforts to focus on best practices from an advocacy, community intervention, and communication perspective.

We will answer key questions, including:

- What strategies are successful in increasing prevention and/or early detection of breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer?
- What strategies are successful in improving the availability of quality treatment, prolonging survivorship, and enhancing quality of life?
- What initiatives have been successful in reducing obesity and smoking rates?
- What policies have been most effective at promoting health equity and how can they be implemented at the local, state, and federal level?
- How do we address the social determinants of health to improve cancer outcomes?
- What health messages and communications delivery mechanisms have been effective in raising cancer awareness and changing individual behavior?

Visit www.TheCancerLens.org for more information. We look forward to seeing you there.

Linda Blount MPH
National Vice President
Health Disparities

HOOSIERS SEEKING HELP TO QUIT SMOKING IN RECORD NUMBERS

April 9, 2009

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Calls to Indiana's Tobacco Quitline Reaches All-Time High

INDIANAPOLIS - In the week when the federal tax on cigarettes was increased by 62 cents a pack, calls to the free Indiana Tobacco Quitline - 1-800-QUIT-NOW - increased by nearly 400 percent.

"The federal tax increase on tobacco products went into effect on April 1st and we received more than 1,100 calls this week. It demonstrates to us - as never before - just how many people really want to quit and they are taking the steps to a healthier life and, in the process, saving themselves a great deal of money," said Karla Sneegas, executive director, Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation (ITPC)

Sneegas said the call volume has been surging dramatically in recent weeks, hitting a previous high of 952 calls in mid-March after the tobacco industry increased its prices on a pack of cigarettes by as much as 70 cents in anticipation of the federal tax hike.

The focus on smoking cessation, in Indiana, is also gaining ground among health care providers.

State Health Commissioner Calls on Providers to Make a Difference

In conjunction with the federal tobacco tax increase taking effect, State Health Commissioner Judy Monroe, M.D. called on Indiana's licensed health care providers to be prepared to help their patients quit. Earlier this week, she sent a letter along with resource materials to all physicians, dentists, advanced practice nurses, and pharmacists encouraging them to use their influence as health care providers to help their patients quit smoking.

"The increase in the federal cigarette tax makes it an ideal time for us to remind Hoosiers that there's never been a better time to quit," said Dr. Monroe. "Health care providers should take advantage of this opportunity and talk to their patients about the benefits of quitting and educate them about resources they can use to overcome their addiction. We can't afford to miss this chance to help those who want to quit."

Health care providers are encouraged to "ask and advise" their patients to quit. Indiana's health care providers can become part of the QUITNOW Referral Network to the Indiana Tobacco Quitline, a free confidential phone counseling service staffed by trained quit coaches who are ready to provide help for tobacco users who are ready to try to quit.

The Quitline can be reached by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW

The call for assistance from health care providers was addressed this week in Indianapolis, as public health professionals from across the Hoosier state gathered for the Indiana Joint National Public Health Week Conference. During a special workshop on increasing statewide collaboration on tobacco cessation, Dr. Judy Monroe was joined by tobacco cessation advocates to develop plans for a statewide summit to be held later in 2009.

Diane M. Canova, managing senior fellow and senior program officer for the Washington, D.C.-based Partnership for Prevention, provided a national "lay of the land" perspective on tobacco cessation issues and reviewing recommendations developed by the Partnership in 2008. "The overarching goal of the Call for A.C.T.T.I.O.N. (Access to Cessation Treatment for Tobacco in Our Nation) is to increase the number of smokers in the U.S., who are able to gain access to comprehensive tobacco dependence treatment to 50 percent by 2015 and 100 percent by 2020. The Partnership for Prevention is committed to advancing policies and practices to prevent disease and improve the health of all Americans.

"As health professionals, we have a tremendous opportunity to come together and dramatically reduce the number of smokers and share with them the fact that help is available for them to quit," said Canova. "Indiana can become a model for other states who are interested in collaborative models to stretch our public health resources." **Indiana Smokers Can Get Free Help to Quit Now**

"The sudden increase in calls to the Indiana Tobacco Quitline in March and now continuing in April is one of the most significant spikes in calls we have experienced", said Sneegas. "Over 90 percent of Indiana smokers want to quit, and this recent price increase provides even more incentive during these tough economic times".

Open from 8 a.m. until 3 a.m. seven days a week, the free Indiana Tobacco Quitline is available for any Hoosier adult who is ready to quit. To access the service, tobacco users can call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

The Indiana Tobacco Quitline also assists tobacco users who are quitting cigar and spit tobacco use as well as cigarettes.

According to documented research, when the price of cigarettes goes up, more adults quit and more youth don't start smoking. The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids estimates that in Indiana, the federal tobacco tax increase will prompt 27,600 adults to quit smoking and prevent thousands more kids from becoming adults who smoke. That expected decrease will save the state millions in future healthcare and Medicaid costs.

In addition to reducing smoking among adults and youth, the new federal tobacco tax will help fund the expansion of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), covering nearly 4 million more children nationwide.

#

An Economic Downslide for the African-American and Latino Middle Class

Jennifer Wheary

Posted: May 21, 2009 06:05 PM

Jennifer Wheary is a Senior Fellow at Demos, a New York based think tank, and co-author of the report, *The Downslide Before the Downturn: Declining Economic Security Among Middle Class African Americans and Latinos, 2000-2006*.

African American and Latino families are the most endangered members of the Middle Class. This is according to a [new study](#) by Demos and the Institute on Assets and Social Policy at Brandeis University.

Demos and Brandeis found that in 2006, well before the current downturn took root, 84 percent of African American and 88 percent of Latino middle-class families lacked the financial security needed to weather an economic storm.

The researchers measured the strength of middle-class families across five key markers of economic stability: assets, education level, budgets, housing costs, and healthcare. Those middle-class families who were strong in the majority of these areas were considered to be financially secure. The researchers found that financial security for the middle class has declined since 2000.

In 2006, 88 percent of Latino and 94 percent of African-American middle-class households could not meet even three-quarters of their essential expenses if they lost their incomes and needed to cover them using assets alone. This is up from 82 percent and 89 percent in 2000, respectively.

Part of the reason for the decline in asset security was due to the fact that the median value of financial assets held by members of the African American middle-class declined by 33 percent in the six year period, while those held by Latinos declined by 60 percent.

In addition to experiencing a decline in assets, African-American and Latino middle-class households were also faced with rising housing costs and decreased access to healthcare. Between 2000 and 2006, median housing costs increased 9 percent for African American middle-class households and 8 percent for Latino households. During the same period, the number of families in which at least one member lacked health insurance increased--from 18 percent to 30 percent for African Americans and from 26 percent to 39 percent for Latinos.

Demos and Brandeis also found that African-American and Latino middle-class families were in a poorer position than other middle-class families.

In 2006, 24 percent of middle-class families were financially secure, but

only 16% of African Americans and 12% of Latinos experienced that same financial security.

Experts worry about the impact of financial insecurity on the ability of African-American and Latino middle-class families to recover from the current downturn.

A report released last week by the Pew Hispanic Center shows that African Americans and Latinos experienced the most dramatic decline in home ownership rates in recent years among all ethnic groups. African-American home ownership rates increased from 43 percent in 1995 to nearly 50 percent in 2004. But by 2008 the rate had dropped to 48 percent.

The most recent employment data also shows that unemployment is affecting African Americans and Latinos more than other groups. While the national unemployment rate hit nearly 9 percent last month, the African American unemployment rate reached 15 percent, and the Latino unemployment rate was more than 11 percent.

The Demos and Brandies data, along with the most recent economic indicators, suggest that the downward slide seen by the African-American and Latino middle classes has been going on for a while and could continue for the foreseeable future.

"It's definitely the economic circumstances," Rakesh Kochhar, the Associate Director of Research at Pew's Hispanic Center told CNN. "Officially, the recession began the fourth quarter of 2007, but Hispanic [and African-American] unemployment started rising sharply a year before that."

This Newsletter is made possible through a Cooperative Agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), other Network funders include the American Legacy Foundation and the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids.

If you have any articles, organizational news, job opportunities and other announcements which you consider of interest to those involved in tobacco control, particularly in the Latino communities, please forward them to me so that I can share them with the NLTCN Network members in upcoming Newsletters. Thank you for your support!

Si tiene algún artículo, noticia, oportunidad de empleo u otros tipos de anuncios que usted considere de interés para aquellos trabajando en control de tabaco, particularmente en las comunidades latinas, por favor de enviármelos para que yo pueda compartirlos con los miembros de la red NLTCN en nuestros próximos boletines.

Sincerely (Su Servidor),

Jean Leroux
National Network Communications Manager

jleroux@indianalatio.com

(317) 472-1055

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