



FIND THE HAPPY HOUR NEAREST YOU!

InHealth » Check In

Their Own Words

Antony Chiang

by **Anne McGregor**

December 01, 2014

comment

Antony Chiang is the president of the Empire Health Foundation. The Foundation has established goals of relatively rapid improvement on some of the most intractable public health issues facing the Inland Northwest — obesity, child abuse and trauma, and the shortage of health care providers.

Some would say those issues seem overwhelming. How do you meaningfully tackle something like obesity on a community-wide basis?

We do this thing called "bright spotting." Sure, there are hundreds of communities across the U.S. where the obesity rate has gone up 300 or 400 percent in the last four decades. Instead of looking at all those dark spots, why don't we find the one bright spot, where they're actually turning it around?

For obesity prevention, we decided to copy a couple different bright spots. There was one in Colorado, and there was one in Somerville [Massachusetts], and we actually mashed them up.

Fast forward: The Cheney School District is a great example. They converted to healthy, scratch cooking. They have techniques where they're being physically active while they're learning. Volunteer parents go through a "bus route" and pick up kids, but they are a walking school bus, rather than a vehicle. So the school

n for it, and





Young Kwak

local restaurants did healthy choices for kids. Really a great multi-pronged effort. And their obesity has gone down as compared to a control group in two years. We think that's amazing.

Tell me about your new project to combat adverse childhood experiences — so-called ACEs? What's the bright spot here?

Right. How do you prevent abuse, neglect, substance abuse, incarceration of parents? These are all ACEs. It seems super-daunting.

We actually did an ecosystem scan. Two of the sectors, or silos if you will, kind of rose to the top as promising right at this moment. One is the K-12 education system, our public school system; the other is our foster care system. We've set a bold goal to reduce the number of foster kids by 50 percent in our system in five years. We've gotten a lot of raised eyebrows, just because it is admittedly so bold. But if Medford [Oregon] can do it, if Alameda County [in California] can do it — I mean, that's the home of Oakland — do we have a weaker community, do we have a less collaborative

community than those two places? I don't think so. I think we have an amazing community.

Tags

CHECK IN

Comments



Add a comment

POST COMMENT

© 2015 Inlander

SWITCH TO DESKTOP

