

STRIPED

Strategic Training Initiative
for the Prevention of
Eating Disorders:
A public health incubator

A collaboration of Harvard School of Public Health and Boston Children's Hospital

Newsletter | Fall 2011

Why STRIPED? Why now?

Eating disorders and disordered weight control behaviors present a significant threat to the health of adolescents and adults, yet they remain largely overlooked by public health and preventive medicine professionals. To address this critical need, we launched STRIPED in July 2009, based at the Harvard School of Public Health and Boston Children's Hospital, with the goal of building a transdisciplinary training initiative that will generate professionals with the depth and range of expertise and skills needed to take

on the challenge of eating disorders prevention.

A public health incubator

Our initiative is a public health incubator, designed to cultivate the creation of novel insights and strategies for prevention by introducing trainees to a rich array of disciplinary perspectives, methodologies, and theories and providing them with opportunities to join crosscutting collaborative research teams.

STRIPED debuts in the public health scientific press

In April 2011, a commentary by Dr. Austin was published in the *American Journal of Public Health*, marking the training initiative's debut in the public health press. In her commentary, "The Blind Spot in the Drive for Childhood Obesity Prevention: Bringing Eating Disorders Prevention Into Focus as a Public Health Priority," Dr. Austin makes the case for why public health professionals need to get more serious about the problem of eating disorders if we want to truly move forward in efforts to prevent childhood obesity.

In August 2011, Dr. Austin along with Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention health economist Li Yan Wang, MBA, and STRIPED staff Lauren Nichols, BA, published a study of the potential cost savings of preventing eating disorders. Their article, "The Economic Effect of Planet Health on Preventing Bulimia Nervosa," published in *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, is the first to document how much individuals and society could save by stepping up prevention efforts, providing important new evidence for policymakers, advocates, and public health professionals as to why eating disorders prevention is so critical.

What our trainees say about STRIPED



"STRIPED provided me with a unique perspective on eating disorder prevention that incorporates knowledge and experience from all possible disciplines—adolescent health,

mental health, preventive medicine, nutrition, public health, social medicine—you name it. I now feel comfortable engaging with providers and activists in any field in order to prevent eating disorders both creatively and effectively."

—Meagan Campol, MD, MPH



"The experience of working with the members of STRIPED has been inspiring and fulfilling. This group of talented and passionate students, researchers, and clinicians have and

will undoubtedly continue to advance the field of eating disorders prevention through innovative and effective research and practice. STRIPED is public health at its very best!"

—Rob Buelow, MS student

Thank you!

Our sincerest gratitude goes out to Ellen Feldberg Gordon for her generous gift to the Harvard School of Public Health. It is her continued generosity, commitment, and support that makes STRIPED what it is today.



Boston Children's Hospital



HARVARD SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC HEALTH



Visit us on
the web!

hsph.harvard.edu/striped/

From the director

Greetings from the Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders. I'm delighted to report that our training initiative, launched in 2009, is now thriving. During our first two years of growing the initiative, we successfully brought together top trainees and faculty collaborators from the Harvard School of Public Health, Children's Hospital Boston, Harvard Law School, and beyond to work on novel projects in eating disorders prevention. For many, it was their first foray into the field. In our second year, we worked with nine trainees in one way or another through research, field practicum, and our independent study course. In a first for HSPH, we now have three doctoral students—Emily Kroshus, Bernice Raveche Garnett, and Monica Wang—focusing their dissertation research on eating disorders prevention. In other news, faculty Dr. Kendrin Sonneville joined us this past year, giving a seminar and co-mentoring the STRIPED independent study course, and now she's stepping up to work with me as co-director of the initiative. Dr. Sonneville is an outstanding adolescent clinical dietician and public health researcher who specializes in integrated prevention of eating disorders and obesity. She'll be a valuable addition to the leadership team. Welcome, Kendrin!

I'm thrilled to announce that Ellen Feldberg Gordon, our founding supporter, provided us with a generous new gift to jump start our transition from the pilot phase to a full-scale initiative in a number of exciting ways. Here are a few of the highlights:

- We launched our website, so you'll have an easy place to find out about STRIPED news and opportunities for students, supporters, and collaborators: hsp.h.harvard.edu/striped
- Starting this fall, we're offering two dissertation awards of \$5000 each for doctoral students at HSPH specializing in eating disorders prevention. Our first two highly deserving recipients are Monica Wang and Bernice Raveche Garnett.

- We're sponsoring two new practicum opportunities this year, one in research into the effects of the beauty industry on health and the other in advocacy to advance school-based screening for eating disorders.
- Our team, led by top-notch trainees Bernice Raveche Garnett and Rob Buelow, is carrying out the first-ever evaluation of Fat Talk Free Week, a national social media campaign to challenge people to speak more positively about their bodies and to interrupt the kinds of body disparaging conversations that are so common these days.

I could go on, but you get the idea. We've got lots going on and more in the works. Check back with our website periodically to keep up to date and find out how you can get involved.

On a personal note, I want to say what a blessing it has been for me throughout our first two years to work with such a talented, passionate, and compassionate group of scholars and advocates—from our faculty and trainees to our International Expert Advisory Panel and funders. Now with two successful years behind us, we're ever more committed to our mission to bring eating disorders prevention from the margins into the mainstream of our nation's public health priorities.

All my best wishes,



S. Bryn Austin, ScD
Director

Funders

Ellen Feldberg Gordon Fund for Eating Disorders Research

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Delta Delta Delta Fraternity and the
Center for Living, Learning, and Leading, Inc.

U.S. Maternal and Child Health Bureau/Health Resources
and Services Administration training grant MC00001, PI
Dr. Marie McCormick and LEAH MC00009, PI Dr. Jean Emans

Credits

Newsletter authors:
S. Bryn Austin,
Annabel Chang

Contact us

Annabel Chang
STRIPED Program Assistant
annabel.chang@childrens.harvard.edu

Spotlight: STRIPED trainee Monica L. Wang



"Advancing programs and policies that prevent DWCB and obesity among youth and address disparities in these outcomes is critical. Public health offers so many opportunities to be a catalyst for change, particularly among underserved populations. My goal is to translate knowledge and research into practice to work towards improved and equitable health outcomes for youth."

—Monica

Monica L. Wang, MS, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Society, Human Development and Health, was the first trainee with our initiative, joining our team in 2009. With the support of the Ellen Feldberg Gordon Fund for Eating Disorders Research for her doctoral dissertation with the Healthy Choices Study, Monica is examining behavioral, familial, and

environmental risk and protective factors for disordered weight control behaviors (DWCB) among youth, exploring racial/ethnic disparities in DWCB among youth, and developing recommendations for programs and policies that address both DWCB and obesity.

Even at this early stage in her career, Monica has a wealth of experience working for health equity and social justice in diverse communities. This past year, Monica was awarded a highly competitive Albert Schweitzer Fellowship to support her work to reduce the amount of sugar-sweetened beverages Boston youth drink. Her project centered on youth-led advocacy in collaboration with Sociedad Latina, a non-profit organization that serves middle and high school youth from Boston Public Schools. In addition, she is a co-instructor with a school-wide public health foundations course at HSPH and works as an evaluation consultant with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Housing

New publication by STRIPED trainee

In our independent study strategy incubator, HSPH student Meagan Campol, MD, MPH, created a new tool for clinicians to help them guide young mothers with eating disorders to get care and provide healthy environments for their children. Meagan's article will be published soon in the *Einstein Journal of Biology and Medicine*.

Congratulations, Meagan!

and Urban Development, and National Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning with the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative. She is on track to graduate with her doctor of science degree from HSPH in 2012.

STRIPED training strategy

The initiative encompasses five training components, designed to provide trainees with a diverse range of opportunities to develop expertise in eating disorders prevention.

Research opportunities

We provide trainees with research opportunities that help them develop content expertise in eating disorders prevention and the methodological expertise needed to conduct rigorous scientific research. Trainees are linked with opportunities to take part in research projects, provided with funding so they can devote the time needed to carry out the projects, and mentored by experts in the field.

Practicum fieldwork

We link trainees with practicum opportunities and provide support for them to carry out fieldwork focused on eating disorders prevention. STRIPED is sponsoring two practicum opportunities in the 2011-12 academic year. For these practicum, we established partnerships

with the National Eating Disorders Association, one of the leading eating disorders nonprofit community groups in the country, and the Multiservice Eating Disorders Association, Massachusetts' premier community-based nonprofit organization dedicated to eating disorders advocacy, prevention, and treatment.

Independent study course

At the Harvard School of Public Health, we offer the course SHH 300 "Independent Study in Eating Disorders Prevention: A Strategy Incubator," which provides mentorship from STRIPED faculty to help students generate novel, transdisciplinary strategies to prevent eating disorders and the spectrum of disordered weight- and shape-control behaviors. Students work closely with STRIPED director Dr. Austin and co-director Dr. Sonnevile to develop innovative approaches for prevention that expand beyond the bounds of current thinking in the field. The product of this independent study is a written proposal for an innovative transdisciplinary eating disorders prevention study.

Academic seminars

We incorporate academic sessions on topics related to eating disorders prevention into a range of standing seminars and courses offered at Harvard School of Public Health and Boston Children's Hospital, in addition to film screenings and discussions for the wider community.

Case-based curriculum

The STRIPED team is beginning to work to develop a case-based curriculum, which we will use in classroom settings to engage students in real-world dilemmas, problem solving, and teamwork to tackle current, high-impact issues in eating disorders prevention. Cases will be tailored to objectives of existing courses, such as healthcare policy, community-based nutrition, health economics, obesity prevention, gender equity and social justice, and adolescent health research methods.

STRIPED team

Faculty



S. Bryn Austin, ScD
Director, STRIPED
Associate Professor, Department of Society, Human Development and Health, Harvard School of Public Health; Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School; Director of Fellowship Research Training, Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine, Boston Children's Hospital



Kendrin Sonneville, ScD, RD, LDN
Co-Director, STRIPED
Instructor, Harvard Medical School
Director of Nutrition Training, Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine, Boston Children's Hospital



Marie McCormick, MD, ScD
Sumner and Esther Feldberg Professor of Maternal and Child Health, Department of Society, Human Development and Health, Harvard School of Public Health; Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School; Senior Associate Director of the Infant Follow-up Program, Boston Children's Hospital



Jean Emans, MD
Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School
Chief, Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine, Vice Chair for Clinical Affairs, Department of Medicine, Co-Director of the Center for Young Women's Health, Faculty Director of the Office of Faculty Development, Boston Children's Hospital

Trainees



Maliha Ali, MD, MPH
Maternal & Child Health, HSPH



Rob Buelow, Society, Human Development & Health, HSPH



Megan Campol, MD, MPH, Maternal & Child Health, HSPH



Emily Kroshus, MPH, Society, Human Development & Health, HSPH



Jenna Kruger, MPH, Health Policy, Yale University



Bernice Raveche Gamett, MPH, Society, Human Development & Health, HSPH



Lisa Taylor, JD, Harvard Law School



Monica Wang, MS, Society, Human Development & Health, HSPH



Jerel Calzo, PhD, Division of Adolescent & Young Adult Medicine, Boston Children's Hospital

Not pictured:
Meredith Chace, MS, Health Policy, HSPH

Staff

Annabel Chang, BA

International expert advisory panel



Jess Haines, PhD, MHSc, RD
University of Guelph
Guelph, Canada



Debra Franko, PhD
Northeastern University
Harris Center for Education and Advocacy in Eating Disorders
Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston



Dianne Neumark-Sztainer, PhD, MPH, RD
University of Minnesota
School of Public Health, Minneapolis



Susan Paxton, PhD
La Trobe University
Melbourne, Australia