

Welcome to the latest edition of *TeleNews* from the University of Kansas Center for Telemedicine & Telehealth (KUCTT) at the University of Kansas Medical Center.

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## KUCTT Selected for Presentations at ATA Annual Meeting



### American Telemedicine Association

University of Kansas Center for Telemedicine & Telehealth (KUCTT).

Featured presentations for the American Telemedicine Association (ATA) Annual Meeting & Exhibition in 2010 were recently announced, including two presentations on telehealth programs and research currently underway at the

University of Kansas Center for Telemedicine & Telehealth (KUCTT). With the strong interest in home telehealth demonstrated at the 2009 ATA meetings, we are particularly excited that ATA selected a presentation on the latest home monitoring research being conducted by KUCTT on behalf of the State of Kansas Department on Aging. Data and indicators from Year One of this three-year pilot program will be presented by KUCTT's director, Dr. Ryan Spaulding.

The goal of this pilot research project is to investigate the potential effectiveness of home monitoring in reducing emergency room visits and hospital admissions among the frail elderly population in Kansas. Each participant collects readings on health indicators such as weight, blood pressure, and blood oxygen levels, which are then communicated through a wireless internet connection to a single collection site, where health care professionals ensure all readings are within parameters established by the participant's primary care physician.

The second KUCTT presentation selected will feature data from activity related to KUCTT's nationally-recognized TeleKidcare® program. A school-based telehealth service developed in 1997, TeleKidcare® provides both acute medical and ongoing mental health care for students in eight elementary schools. The goal of the program is a reduction in the number of visits to emergency departments and the time away from school necessitated by health concerns. Considering data from the 782 consultations during the 2007-2009 school years, this presentation will review the program's original goals and consider whether they were realistic.

After two decades of providing telemedicine services throughout Kansas, KUCTT is considered a pioneer in the telemedicine industry. With an active telemedicine program offering Kansans accessibility to over 30 medical specialties at more than 70 sites throughout Kansas, KUCTT staff is frequently invited to present information about its experience and capabilities to national audiences.

If you will not be attending ATA's Annual Meeting this spring but are interested in learning more about these topics, feel free to contact Gordon Alloway, KUCTT project manager, at 913-588-2257 or [galloway@kumc.edu](mailto:galloway@kumc.edu).

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## KIDS COUNT -- Wellness Statistics More Accessible

### The Annie E. Casey Foundation

For twenty years, the non-profit Annie E. Casey Foundation (the Foundation) has collected and reported data profiling the well-being

of children in America. The primary publication containing this data, the *KIDS COUNT* data book has proven useful throughout America for comparing the health of children state-by-state, county-by-county, or within the United States. Recently, the Foundation made a commitment to make all data available on the Internet as the *KIDS COUNT Data Center*.

Using primarily data from the U.S. Census Bureau and dividing the data into categories considered to be "key indicators," *KIDS COUNT* is able to provide a composite index of child well-being. Categories for this data include:

- Demographics - basic census categories
- Educational influences - test scores, age-related measures
- Economic well-being - family income/employment, housing, poverty
- Family and Community influences
- Health - birth outcomes, insurance availability, ethnicity
- Safety and Risk Influences

The full variety of data at the *KIDS COUNT Data Center* can be customized into charts, maps and line graphs.

*KIDS COUNT* data for the state of Kansas is accessible at <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/ks>.

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## Telemental Health Practice Guidelines Now Available

### Practice Guidelines for Videoconferencing-Based Telemental Health

The American Telemedicine Association (ATA) has taken on the task of establishing guidelines for the delivery of uniformly high quality services to patients utilizing

telemedicine techniques. A major step forward in this area occurred this year with the publication of two companion documents related to telemental health:

**Evidence-Based Practice for Telemental Health** (July 2009) - A consensus best practice reference based on clinical empirical experience, this document was designed to aid mental health professionals in meeting mental health practice guidelines. It is an educational tool that provides support, through analysis of published literature, for those involved in developing or providing telemental health services.

**Practice Guidelines for Videoconferencing-Based Telemental Health** (October 2009) - Utilizing the July 2009 Evidence-Based Practice publication as its foundation, this companion publication sets forth coherent, effective, safe and sustainable telemental health practices for telemental health services provided through use of two-way, interactive videoconferencing. This publication contains telemental standards ranging from clinical and technical specifications to standard operating procedures and administrative issues. It also includes details on digital imaging standards, a thorough telemedicine/telehealth glossary, and an exhaustive list of references to ensure telemental health providers feel comfortable in following the recommendations.

As a co-chair of the ATA's Telemental Health Standards and Guidelines Working Group, Dr. Eve-Lynn Nelson, the assistant director of the University of Kansas Center for Telemedicine & Telehealth (KUCTT), was engaged in both writing portions of the publication and adding perspective on the content in general. She was able to draw on her direct experience as a telemental health teacher and provider and share KUCTT's extensive background in providing telemental services throughout Kansas. Few

telemedicine organizations possess the level of telemental health experience that exists in Kansas, and KUCTT welcomed the opportunity to share information about the many best practices that have been recognized within our state.

Both publications are available at the ATA's web site (<http://www.americantelemed.org>). You may also contact Dr. Nelson by telephone at 913-588-2413 or by email at [enelson2@kumc.edu](mailto:enelson2@kumc.edu).

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## Healthy Hawks Project Has Room For Four More



The Department of Pediatrics at the University of Kansas Medical Center has just announced that there is currently room for four more elementary schools to participate in the Healthy Schools Project, the department's in-school health and wellness initiative offered in

conjunction with its nationally recognized Healthy Hawks program. All Kansas elementary schools that have access to interactive video conferencing and are located in towns or counties with populations of less than 20,000 are eligible to participate.

The Healthy Schools Project is designed to supplement each school's current nutrition and exercise programs by offering:

**Wellness Policies Reviews** - A session with each school's nurse, staff, teachers or administrators and a team of pediatric health care specialists to review the school's current wellness policies

**Family-Based Weight Loss Interventions** - An eight-month program for families of children in your school who are overweight

**Individual Health Habits Reviews** - All students can receive an analysis of their health-related habits and suggestions for various health-related activities

For the sake of the children in your school, don't miss out on this opportunity.

Since 2003, the Healthy Schools Project has partnered with rural elementary schools to teach children and their families to live healthier lives through good nutritional habits, physical activity and health behavior modification. Key benefits for schools in the program include:

- Minimal burden to school personnel
- Does not require participation by a school nurse
- No specific training or schooling required for individual(s) in charge
- Participating school staff will be paid for their time and effort

For more information, contact Dr. Ann Davis by telephone at 877-588-3775 or 913-588-5928, or by email at [adavis6@kumc.edu](mailto:adavis6@kumc.edu).

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## Free Webinar on ATA Telemental Health Practice Guidelines

For an opportunity to learn more about ATA's telemental health standards and guidelines, register for the FREE Webinar being presented by the Midwest Alliance for Health Education (MAHE).

**Thursday, January 7, 2010  
1:00pm - 2:00pm (ET)**

Phil Hirsch, PhD, psychologist and telemental health expert will discuss the changes and their impact on delivery of care. You can register today at the MAHE website: <http://www.midwesthealthed.org>.

MAHE provides accessible distance learning opportunities for health care professionals. Questions about registration or any other issues related to MAHE can be directed to [info@midwesthealthed.org](mailto:info@midwesthealthed.org) or 1-866-603-4733.

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