The Pacific Islander Biospecimen Education and Collection (PIBEC) Project aimed to develop culturally-tailored education materials for Pacific Islander adults. These materials describe what biospecimens are, how they are studied in research, and why the research is important in improving health outcomes for Pacific Islanders.

After viewing the educational materials, participants of the project were given an opportunity to take part in an optional second study during which they could donate a saliva sample. This sample will be housed safely in a biorepository until members of a Pacific Islander advisory committee agreed to use the sample on research that would benefit Pacific Islander health.

Pacific Islanders in the U.S. have high rates of cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and substance use compared with other racial and ethnic groups. Pacific Islanders are also less likely than other groups to donate their biospecimens for genetic and other biomedical studies, which presents a significant barrier to cancer and other disease-related research.

Given the advances in genetic research in the identification, prevention, and treatment of diseases, the development of educational approaches to improve knowledge about biospecimen donation among Pacific Islanders is significant.

With the help of several collaborating Pacific Islander community-based organizations in Southern California, a total of 219 Pacific Islander adults were recruited to review the PIBEC educational materials. Of the participants, 36% were men and 64% were women, the median age was 34, and ethnicities are shown below.

PIBEC Participants by Ethnicity

- Samoan: 56.6% (124)
- Tongan: 22.6% (49)
- Native Hawaiian: 10.1% (22)
- Chamorro: 4.6% (10)
- 2 or More: 5.5% (12)

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PIBEC FINDINGS: BY THE NUMBERS

EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

95% FOUND THE VIDEO TO BE INFORMATIVE
98% SAID MATERIALS WERE EASY TO FOLLOW AND UNDERSTAND
97% AGREED THAT THE NHPI THEME HELPED TO KEEP THEM ENGAGED
89% SAID MATERIALS INCREASED THEIR OVERALL KNOWLEDGE

PIBEC DONATION

WHAT TYPES OF SAMPLES WERE PARTICIPANTS WILLING TO PROVIDE?
91% WOULD PROVIDE A SALIVA SAMPLE
45% WOULD PROVIDE A URINE SAMPLE
48% WOULD PROVIDE A BLOOD SAMPLE
28% WOULD PROVIDE A TOENAIL SAMPLE

WE ASKED PARTICIPANTS TO RATE THEIR DONATION EXPERIENCE:
92% FELT THAT THE DONATION PROCESS WENT SMOOTHLY
90% FELT COMFORTABLE WITH THE SALIVA DONATION PROCEDURE
94% FELT TRUSTFUL OF THE STAFF AND RESEARCH TEAM

OF THOSE WHO DONATED A SAMPLE:
72% WANT TO HELP THEIR COMMUNITY
42% HAD A FAMILY HISTORY OF CANCER
24% HAVE FRIENDS LIVING WITH CANCER

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE FUTURE?
TAILORED BIOSPECIMEN EDUCATION MATERIALS CAN HELP TO BETTER INFORM THE PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITY TO MAKE BETTER DECISIONS ON DONATIONS OF GENETIC SAMPLES FOR RESEARCH.

97.7%
THAT’S 214 OF 219 PARTICIPANTS WHO DONATED A SALIVA SAMPLE