

A quarterly publication featuring news on CHC's **Service Expansions, Innovations, Partnerships and Special Events**

Community Health Center's Recess Rocks Program Partners With PBS Star SteveSongs To Launch A New Music Video

CHC's chief medical officer, Nwando Olayiwola, and SteveSongs participate in satellite media tour to spread the word about childhood obesity.

In 2004, Community Health Center, Inc. developed **Recess Rocks** as a national program to reverse childhood obesity and to redefine and redesign how recess is incorporated into the school day. The program quickly gained momentum in dozens of Connecticut schools. In 2010 it was launched nationally and picked up by schools in California, Nebraska, Kentucky, Arkansas, Rhode Island, New York and Massachusetts. In 2011, **Recess Rocks** partnered with PBS Kids star SteveSongs to write and produce a theme song. The song, by the same name—*Recess Rocks*—quickly spurred an official dance and music video. The music video, which was officially launched in the beginning of 2012, features local Middletown elementary school students performing the official dance moves along with SteveSongs and **Recess Rocks'** own Miss Kim (Kim Thibodeau, program director).

But this is about so much more than a catchy song, fun dance moves and a rocking music video. One-third of our nation's children are overweight or obese. Moreover, today's children are the first generation likely to have shorter life spans than their parents due to increased risks for associated complications including diabetes, heart disease, cancer, high blood pressure and asthma. Compounding this disturbing trend is the reduction of recess in as many as 40 percent of school districts across the United States, in an effort to focus on improving test scores. **Recess Rocks** aims to help reverse the childhood obesity epidemic and enhance learning for elementary school students.

In January, we took our message on the road with a national radio and television satellite media tour. Dr. Nwando Olayiwola, Chief Medical Officer for CHC, and SteveSongs participated in dozens of interviews with stations across the country. They spoke about the alarming statistics of childhood obesity and explained why it is so important to incorporate programs like **Recess Rocks**, into a child's school day. They also spoke about the new partnership with SteveSongs and how the music video came to be. Several news anchors were entertained by a live acoustic sample of the theme song, while others got a glimpse of Dr. Olayiwola and Mr. Steve performing some of the dance moves. The day-long media tour resulted in over 1,500 total broadcasts and over 9 million media impressions nationally. Soon after the media tour concluded, faculty and staff from schools from across the country were calling and emailing for more information on the program. We had approximately 100 inquiries and downloads of the free online toolkit.

Log on to www.RecessRocks.com to watch the music video and download the theme song and learn more about the program. Teachers can get started with Recess Rocks in their classrooms by downloading the free toolkit and signing up for the monthly *Wellness Rocks* e-newsletter.



CHC Gives Kids A Smile



Free dental services provided to hundreds of Connecticut children

On February 3, 4 and 25, Community Health Center, Inc. provided free dental services to children with HUSKY or no insurance in recognition of the American Dental Association's annual Give Kids a Smile Day. Partnering with groups including New Britain Dental Society, New Britain Oral Health Collaborative and dentists in the communities, CHC hosted events in New Britain, Middletown, New London, Stamford, Meriden, Norwalk and Old Saybrook, serving more than 230 children throughout Connecticut.

Free cleanings, exams, sealants, fillings, fluoride treatments and dental education were among the services provided to children by over 70 volunteers. Procedure costs donated totaled approximately \$40,000.

Each year on the first Friday in February, thousands of the nation's dentists and their dental team members provide free oral health care services to underserved children across the country as part of the Give Kids A Smile® program. Give Kids A Smile activities also highlight for policy makers the ongoing challenges that low-income families face in finding dental care.

On February 1, New Britain Mayor Tim O'Brien, New Britain students who have received care through CHC, and representatives from the Connecticut State Dental Association (CSDA), Department of Public Health (DPH) and Connecticut Oral Health Initiative (COHI) joined CHC at New Britain City Hall for the official kick-off of Give Kids a Smile Day. During this event, CSDA's Dr. Carolyn Malon, president-elect, presented CHC with a check for a \$1,000 grant to assist with the expansion of the Give Kids a Smile program. The group discussed the need for access to dental care throughout the city and state and beyond. Each year, an estimated one in five, or 17 million, American children goes without dental care.

In addition to the free dental services offered across the state, CHC's AmeriCorps members visited kindergarten students at Middletown's McDonough elementary school and combined a Recess Rocks demonstration with dental education.

Visit chc1.com to learn more about CHC's year-round mobile dental program, designed to increase access to dental services for children in schools and community sites like Head Start programs.

CHC's School-Based Health Centers



CHC receives grant funding through the Affordable Care Act to improve and expand School-Based Health Centers

CHC received a total of \$429,996 in grant funding provided by the Affordable Care Act to be used towards the upgrade of CHC's school-based health centers (SBHC). Community Health Center, Inc. is one of two Connecticut-based health centers to be awarded funding.

This award was made possible by the Affordable Care Act, and will enable CHC to expand capacity and modernize facilities at several of the SBHC's across the state that are currently providing much-needed health care to thousands of students. The funding will be used to purchase new equipment at all sites and to renovate existing centers at Platt and Maloney high schools in Meriden, Domus' Trailblazers Academy in Stamford and Woodrow Wilson Middle School in Middletown to allow for additional medical and mobile dental space. Funding is also being used to construct a new school-based health center at Vinal Technical high school in Middletown.

"Children are the foundation upon which this country will grow," said Secretary Sebelius. "The Affordable Care Act will help ensure our children get the high-quality health care they need and deserve."

CHC's school-based health centers are committed to reducing absences, improving performance, and preventing chronic diseases in students. These goals are obtained through comprehensive primary care, including immunizations, complete physical examinations, medication management, intervention for acute chronic illnesses and long-term chronic care—with little interruption from the school day. Students without health insurance receive free services and are provided assistance in determining their eligibility for a public health insurance program, such as HUSKY.

Today, CHC operates a range of health services in schools from full scope (medicine, dentistry, mental health) to single service, such as behavioral health, to a widely acclaimed mobile dental program in over a hundred schools across Connecticut.

"CHC is proud to be the largest provider of school-based health services in the State. These centers are a critical part of our work, because they allow us to reach more uninsured and underserved children and adolescents and ensure access to the highest quality of care during their formative years," said Mark Masselli, president and CEO of Community Health Center, Inc.

"We have been working with local school boards for nearly 20 years to develop school health services consistent with their mission."

These grants are the second in the series of awards that will be made available to school-based health centers under the Affordable Care Act. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) oversees the School-based Health Center Capital Program. The Affordable Care Act will continue to provide funding through 2013 for the School-Based Health Center Capital Program to address significant and pressing capital needs and to improve delivery and support expansion of services at school-based health centers.

New School-Based Health Center opens at New Britain's Smalley Academy

Recently, CHC opened a school-based health center at Smalley Academy to bring on-site medical and behavioral health care to approximately 600 elementary students. The center, located at 175 West Street, is the third that CHC has opened in New Britain and is the newest on the growing list of 38 throughout the state.

"Smalley Academy will utilize the SBHC as another venue to support our students and families. Smalley faculty, staff and administration is excited to host the SBHC in our school and we look forward to collaborating closely," explained Mario Cruz, Principal of Smalley Academy. "It's been our experience that the more we provide support in the areas of mental and physical health, the more amount of time teachers can spend on teaching."

In addition to medical and behavioral health care, the center will provide access to regular mobile dental visits. During these visits, a dental hygienist will provide cleanings and oral health education and take X-rays. If follow-up is required, the student is referred to a dentist at Community Health Center of New Britain.

"We are excited to open this center in New Britain. There is a significant need within the academy for easy access to primary care services," said Jane Hylan, CHC's director of school health services. "Prior to our opening this school-based health center, several students from this school came to New Britain health center for sports physicals. It quickly became evident to our providers that these students had limited or no health care histories or medical records. I applaud Mario Cruz for recognizing a need and reaching out to us."



CHC Launches Innovative Program For Treating Chronic Diseases

CHC is one of the first health centers in the nation to replicate the Project ECHO model to expand access to care for its patients

CHC recently launched a state-of-the-art, evidence based program—**CHC Project ECHO™** Hepatitis C/HIV. CHC is one of the first community health centers in the nation to replicate the ECHO model. Project ECHO™ (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) is a model developed by the University of New Mexico initially to extend Hepatitis C care and management to the rural clinics. This innovative, hi-tech program uses video-conferencing, electronic health records, disease management, and case-based learning to expand access to specialty care for underserved patients. As we reported in our Fall 2011 newsletter, CHC began participating with the University of New Mexico's program in August, and since then our Quality Improvement department has been busy working on replicating the model to fit our state-wide organization. The purpose of bringing **CHC Project ECHO™** online is to provide our primary care providers with internal expert support to help manage cases that would otherwise be referred out to specialists.

"We are very excited to be offering this innovation at CHC which will allow us to offer specialized treatment to patients across the state, many of whom do not have access to such treatment otherwise. In many communities there are few specialists willing to accept patients without insurance or with state funded Medicaid insurance," explained Dr. Marwan Haddad, Medical Director of HIV, HCV, and Buprenorphine Services.

Prior to launching **CHC Project ECHO™**, HIV and Hepatitis C management and treatment was offered as part of primary care services at our New Britain, Meriden, and Middletown sites. Through **CHC Project ECHO™**, HIV/Hepatitis C care is now being offered at additional sites across Connecticut including Bristol, Norwalk, Waterbury, Enfield,

Clinton, and New London via weekly video-conferencing sessions.

How It Works: One provider at each site attends the weekly sessions with the CHC HIV/Hepatitis C faculty team, which is comprised of medical, psychiatric, and pharmacy experts. At these sessions, the providers present cases from their local panels and receive advice and direction on how to manage and treat these patients. Providers learn from the case presentations as well as from HIV and Hepatitis C educational sessions during the weekly meetings. The goal of **CHC Project ECHO™** is to develop an expert in HIV and Hepatitis C care at every CHC site so that patients who suffer from these illnesses have one patient-centered medical home they can access for all their care.

CHC plans to expand Project ECHO in the coming year to support other chronic conditions. In particular, the ECHO team is planning to introduce a Project ECHO clinic for chronic pain within the next several months.

"Our mission is not just to provide health care, but to ensure that the care we provide is the best it can be and is what best meets the needs of our communities and patients," explained Dr. Daren Anderson, Vice President and Chief Quality Officer at Community Health Center, Inc. "Our health care system and communities are constantly evolving and presenting us with new challenges. To be a world class primary care organization, we are constantly transforming ourselves to reflect these changing needs. Project ECHO will allow us to do just that."

The **CHC Project ECHO™** Hepatitis C/HIV program is funded in part by a grant from The Mayday Fund and Vertex Pharmaceuticals Inc., in support of the *Hep-C Circle of Care* program.

Community Health Center, Inc.

Community Health Center, Inc. is a private, non-profit agency. Since 1972, we have been building a world-class primary health care system, that is committed to caring for special populations, and that is focused on improving health outcomes for our patients as well as building healthy communities.





**Community
Health Center, Inc.**

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Inside this issue:

- CHC's Recess Rocks Program Partners With PBS Star Steve Songs To Launch A New Music Video
- CHC Gives Kids A Smile
- CHC Launches Innovative Program For Treating Chronic Diseases
- CHC's School-Based Health Centers News
- Community Health Center, Inc. Hosts Middletown's Inaugural Midnight On Main New Years Eve Festival



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SPRING 2012

Community Health Center Kicks Off Its 40th Year Celebration By Hosting Middletown's Inaugural Midnight On Main New Years Eve Festival

2012 will be an exciting year for Community Health Center. The organization planted its roots in Middletown in 1972, filling a need for affordable health care for the community's most vulnerable population. In the last 40 years CHC has grown into a state-wide primary health care organization caring for 130,000 patients at 13 health centers across Connecticut, and over a hundred additional sites including mobile dental sites, school-based and shelter-based health centers, domestic violence shelters and a dance hall. And just in time for its 40th birthday, CHC will open a state-of-the-art, environmentally-friendly, gold certified LEED building, complete with a roof top garden that overlooks the great city where the organization got its start.

As a way to properly kick-off its 40th year and to thank the City for its decades of support, CHC was the host sponsor for the inaugural **Midnight on Main** New Year's Eve Festival. And what a party it was! 10,000 people from across the state (and country) poured into Middletown to partake in a variety of activities and performances offered in over a dozen venues along Main Street.

Wherever you were in downtown Middletown on December 31st, 2011 you could hear and feel the joy and amazement. The depth and quality of the performances and activities; the comfortable evening weather that was just right for strolling all night long; the charm of a small college town on the Connecticut River with a picture perfect Main Street; and the grace and friendliness of hundreds of volunteers—the success of **Midnight on Main** 2012 redefined Middletown.

It was standing room only at all of the evenings events as people packed into venues. Some of the performers, including SteveSongs and Jean Rohe, performed songs written just for **Midnight on Main**. At 6pm, the City shut down the intersection of Main and Washington Streets as thousands of people gathered for a rooftop fireworks display.



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