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Community Health Center, Inc. in Partnership with Horizons-NCCS Provides Kids with Health and Wellness Education, and a Healthy Dose of Milk Mustaches Too!

New Canaan, CT, July 18, 2014: On Wednesday, July 16th, staff members from Community Health Center Inc.'s (CHC) Norwalk, Stamford and Danbury locations hosted a health fair for students attending the Horizons Summer Program at New Canaan Country School. The goals of the event were to educate students about health and wellness and allow them to interact with healthcare professionals in a casual and familiar setting.

With oral health, behavioral health, emotional wellbeing, and childhood obesity being significant issues facing adolescents, activities at the CHC-Horizons Health Fair were organized into four specific zones that focused on nutrition, fitness, dental, and overall health and wellness. CHC's clinical staff provided interactive informational sessions and activities for the students throughout the day. Each student received a "health passport" that allowed them to easily keep track of what they learned.

The "Nutrition Zone" included a cooking demonstration by a registered dietician and an informational session with a registered nurse. The fitness-based activities included a Zumba class and a fitness test. The "Dental Zone" included an informational session with a dental hygienist and a healthy smile informational booth. The overall health and wellness zone included an interactive activity with a CHC psychiatrist and a yoga class.

"I wanted to organize the event to allow the students to learn about health and wellness and to be exposed to health care professionals within an informal setting," explained Rishonda Thomas, AmeriCorps member with CHC, and event organizer. "Not many students get an opportunity to interact with healthcare professionals outside of a hospital or doctor's office, so I wanted to create an opportunity for them to ask questions during the sessions or follow up with the providers afterwards. It was great to see the students ask questions or pose for pictures in the provider's white coats and call themselves doctors."

Amy Taylor, Vice President, Western Region for Community Health Center, explained that events like this are inherent to CHC's mission, which is built upon making quality health care service available to all, to build healthier communities through education, and to be a voice and vehicle for social change. "By educating children on health and wellness they can help inspire their peers and future generations to make healthier lifestyle choices."

Taylor went on to remark about the event "The success of the event is unquestionable; from huge smiles during the lively Zumba classes, to intimate conversations on mental health issues with our psychiatrist, to the milk mustache photo booth, you could tell that the kids learned a lot about health and wellness while having fun with their peers."

Horizons' six-week intensive, K through 8th grade Summer Program, set on the campus of New Canaan Country School (NCCS), serves approximately 275 children. The program is a unique blend of academics and enrichment, offering student's opportunities to develop their academic skills through project-based, experiential activities. Unlike traditional summer school, Horizons complements the academic components of its Summer Program with a broad range of enrichment opportunities, similar to the CHC Health Fair. For more information about the Horizons Student Enrichment Program at New Canaan Country School please visit: www.horizonskids.org.

About Community Health Center, Inc.

Since 1972, Community Health Center, Inc. has been one of the leading healthcare providers in the state of Connecticut, building a world-class primary health care system committed to caring for uninsured and underserved populations. CHC is focused on improving health outcomes for its more than 130,000 patients as well as building healthy communities. Recognized as both a Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home by the National Committee for Quality Assurance and a Primary Care Medical Home by The Joint Commission, CHC delivers service in more than 200 locations statewide, offering primary care in medical, dental and behavioral health services. For more information, visit www.chc1.com.

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