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Tip

Health Group Expands Its Facility In Middletown School

Community Health Center Offers Health Care In 182 Schools In State

September 19, 2013 | By SHAWN R. BEALS, sbears@courant.com, The Hartford Courant

The Community Health Center marks its 20th year with school-based health centers in Middletown. The Community Health Center held a ceremony Thursday afternoon in the Macdonough health center's new location next to the gymnasium. Until this year, the center was in a tiny room on the school's main level.

Now, the space has three rooms and meeting space for its medical, dental and behavioral health services.



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Macdonough is one of Community Health Center's six school-based health centers in the city, and one of 182 in the state. Other city locations are Middletown High School, Vinal Technical High School, Woodrow Wilson Middle School, Keigwin Middle School and Bielefield Elementary School.

"It's very needed," said Mark Masselli, founder and chief executive officer of Community Health Center. "It [helps](#) keep kids healthy so they can stay in school, and it helps a school fulfill its mission."

There are about 15 staff members working in the Middletown school health centers. The centers are open Monday through Friday, though not all services are offered every day.

For example, medical services are offered Tuesdays and Thursdays at Macdonough, with its staff members working at Keigwin other days. In a medical emergency, staff members can travel to any of the schools.

Vanessa Maldonado, a single mother whose fifth-grade son uses the health center at Macdonough, said the service gives her family a needed [resource](#).

"He's done a complete turnaround when it comes to expressing his feelings," Maldonado said. "They break it down in a way he can understand, and they're very reliable."

She said her son has been seeing staff at the school health center for three years for counseling.

About 150 Macdonough students are patients at the school-based health center. The center was renovated with federal [funding](#) under the Affordable Care Act.

Quan Daniels said her eldest son, now in 10th grade at Middletown High School, began going to the center when he was a student at Macdonough.

"I don't have to pull him out of school to get a shot, and he gets his physicals at school, too," Daniels said.

Each of her four children uses one of the services offered in the schools, including counseling. She said the program allows her children to have easy, consistent access to medical care.

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Mayor Daniel Drew praised the school-based health centers for offering medical services that are convenient for city families.

"This brings health care to people where they live, where they go to school in their neighborhoods," Drew said.

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