

Healthy Children's Program: A Health Education and Screening Program

Sponsored by
Auxiliary to the Medico-Chirurgical Society of
the District of Columbia and the
Kellogg Foundation
Spring 2005

Introduction

*“The health of a community is interdependent and necessitates mutual cooperation and understanding.”
(African-American Health Network)*

Purpose of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation:

"to help people help themselves through the practical application of knowledge and resources to improve their quality of life and that of future generations."

Purpose of Healthy Children's Program

- Provide health screenings to three and four-year-old children;
- Provide health education for parents/guardians of the targeted children;
- Facilitate enrollment in CHIPS programs or other health insurance programs, and
- Help three- and four-year-old children receive the necessary immunizations and health support (eyeglasses, hearing aids, etc.) to facilitate their success in school.

Coalition Member Organizations

- Auxiliary to the Medico-Chirurgical Society of the District of Columbia, Inc. (AMCS)
- Medico-Chirurgical Society of the District of Columbia, Inc. (Med-Chi)
- District of Columbia Department of Health Offices of Medicaid and Child Safety Network
- District of Columbia Department of Health Immunization Division (DOH-IM)

Coalition Member Organizations

- District of Columbia Department of Human Services' Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD)
- National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI) – **Supporting** Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids (SPARK DC)
- DC Universal School Readiness Stakeholders
- Early Childhood Leadership Institute (ECLI), **University of the District of Columbia**

Coalition Member Groups

- Howard University's College of Medicine (HU-COM) and School of Dentistry (HU-SOD) and
- University of the District of Columbia (**UDC**) Department of Nursing and the Department of Early Childhood Education
- Children's School Services (CSS) for District of Columbia Wards 7 and 8

Management Team

- Anderson, Dr. Beverly (Principal Investigator, Member of AMCS of DC)
- Davis, Mrs. Alice (Co-Program Director, President of AMCS of DC)
- Faggett, Dr. Walter (Medical Director of Medicaid and of the Health Care Safety Net, President of Med-Chi, Pediatrician)
- Kamara, Ms. Barbara (Co-Program Director, Executive Director of DHS's Office of Early Childhood Development for the District of Columbia)
- Sykes, Mr. Maurice (Director of the Early Childhood Leadership Institute at UDC)
- Young, Ms. Andrea (Vice President of the National Black Child Development Institute)

Advisory Committee

- Catoe, Dr. Bette (Pediatrician, Member of Med-Chi)
- Collins, Dr. Millicent (Pediatrician, Member of Med-Chi)
- Kurtz, Dr. Gwendolyn (Nurse, Member of Black Nurse's Association and of AMCS)
- Grant-Mills, Dr. Donna (Dentist, Assistant Professor, Howard University School of Dentistry)
- Jackson, Dr. Beverly (Director, Head Start for the District of Columbia)
- Randolph, Dr. Patricia (Audiologist, Member of AMCS of DC)
- Sanders, Dr. Charles (Dentist, Former Dean of the Howard University Dental School)
- Tompkins, Mrs. Laura (Project Financial Manager, Member of AMCS of DC)
- Reed, Mrs. Junienne B., (Project Administrative Assistant, Community Servant)

Overview

Two health education and screening sessions:

- Kenilworth Elementary School on April 23, 2005, from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m.
- Turner Elementary School on May 7, 2005, from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m.

Contents of Each Health Education and Screening Session

- Health screenings provided by pediatricians and family health practitioners and assisted by senior medical school students;
- Dental screenings provided by dentists and assisted by senior dental school students;
- Speech-language screenings provided by audiologists and speech- language pathologists and assisted by their students;

Contents of Each Session (Cont.)

- Immunizations provided by the District of Columbia Department of Health Immunization Division;
- Two workshops provided for parents/guardians – one conducted by a nutritionist and the other conducted by a group of physicians and dentists on the topics, “Nutrition” and “Ask the Doctors”, respectively;

Content of Each Session (Cont.)

- Assistance in enrolling families in CHIPS and other health insurance programs;
- A videotape shown on dental health (“Dental Health: A Guide for African Americans”);
- Games and age appropriate videotapes, and
- Continental breakfast and lunch for all attendees.

Problems

- Getting families to attend early morning sessions and activities;
- Motivating the community to take advantage of the health screening and health education programs;
- Getting parents to attend the workshops;
- Screening children who were not in the appropriate age range because their parents requested that we screen them.

Opportunities

- To include dental screening and to promote dental health as a key component of general health;
- To give each child a dental kit consisting of a tooth brush, tooth paste, dental floss, age appropriate literature, etc.;
- To give each parent oral health literature;
- To work in collaboration with several organizations/groups/institutions.

Opportunities

- To mobilize physicians, dentists, nurses, audiologists, nutritionists, and others to participate in this program;
- To work with an automated immunization system through the DC Department of Health and to see how the system can be used that system to retrieve and update information;
- To provide a much needed service for the targeted population to be screened by physicians, dentists, nurses, audiologists, speech language pathologists, and senior students of medicine and dentistry;

Opportunities

- To make available health education programs designed for parents/guardians of the targeted population of children;
- To know that many health professionals and community members are willing to participate in future programs of this type;
- To work with an Advisory Committee committed to the goals and objectives of the Healthy Children Program.

Opportunities (Cont.)

- To advocate (coalition) for school readiness in the area of health for all children;
- To advance the development of a health education policy for the District of Columbia, as well as nationally, with regard to free health screenings, immunizations, and health education for families on welfare and other economically disadvantaged people;

Results

- Health and dental screenings were conducted on ninety-six (96) children.
- Of the 38 children referred by the primary physicians for additional speech and hearing testing, all showed delays in speech or hearing.
- Immunizations were provided to at least 40 children.
- Eight children were identified as needing further ophthalmic testing.

Results

- Dental screenings revealed that most of the children need following-up care.
- Several families requested information on health insurances. Only seven (7) of them initiated the application process.
- The Advisory Committee evaluated every component of the program as very good to excellent, except attendance at the health education workshops.

Lessons Learned

- Few parents and children arrived before 10:00 a.m. The bulk of the population arrived between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Future sessions will be scheduled from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.
- Sites selected in the future should permit scheduling of all services in fairly close proximity to each other.
- Hearing and language development may be a serious problem in this population. Nearly forty (40) percent of the children screened were referred for further testing.

Lessons Learned

- The workshops were not well-attended. However, many parents were educated by having the opportunity for dialogue with the doctor and dentist as their children were being screened.
- The Immunization Division of the Department of Health was extremely responsive to our request to provide immunizations to the children.
- The community was grateful that they had access to our Kellogg-sponsored program.

Conclusion

AMCS is a local affiliate of the Auxiliary to the National Medical Association, Inc. (ANMA)

ANMA is planning to implement the Healthy Children's program in three or four urban cities during the spring 2006.