



MOTHER & CHILD HEALTH COALITION

A bistate catalyst for improving maternal, child and family health in the greater Kansas City community

F A L L 2 0 1 4 N E W S L E T T E R

Important Message from Susan McLoughlin, Executive Director

Mother & Child Health Coalition (MCHC) received word on August 28 that the Kansas City Healthy Start program would not be funded for 2015. Although MCHC's application was approved, funding was not awarded.

We firmly believe that the services provided by Kansas City Healthy Start contribute significantly to the strength and wellness of the Kansas City metropolitan community as a whole.

Since 1997, Kansas City Healthy Start (KCHS), the largest program of MCHC, has enrolled over 5,100 women and their babies in the Kansas City metro area. Service areas include nine ZIP codes in Jackson County, MO and six in Wyandotte County, KS. As a bi-state, home visitation program that seeks to improve the health of underserved pregnant women and babies, and to decrease infant mortality and ethnic disparities, KCHS offers outreach and recruitment, case management, depression screening, inter-conception care and health education. Fathers, and/or male significant others of the children are also included in the provision of services. KCHS has served thousands more in outreach activities.

Federal funding, through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services represents a significant portion of the overall MCHC budget. Annual funding helped provide for services of KCHS care coordination teams through sub-contracted community agencies, as well as the management team, operating expenses and the program evaluation contract through UMKC. The care coordination teams worked directly with program participants in their homes, providing personalized case management to pregnant women, and women with children under the age of two, in sections of the Kansas City metropolitan area with the highest infant mortality rates, on both sides of the state line. Each year, the program has enrolled at least 300 participants and their babies, helped them to navigate the health care system and access needed community services, provided education on health management issues such as weight and substance abuse management, and provided critical support based on individual needs. A free monthly childbirth class provided much-needed education on healthy pregnancy and delivery for mothers who didn't have access to costly classes provided elsewhere.

The Kansas City Healthy Start program includes the Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Program (FIMR) which seeks to reduce infant mortality by identifying gaps in services and needed resources. Infant mortality rates (the number of infant deaths per 1,000 births), in the bi-state metro area are higher than the national average; of even greater concern, the rate for African American babies in Wyandotte County is among the highest in the nation. According to Mary Jean Brown, coordinator of the



Mother & Child Health Coalition's

2014 Annual Legislative Program

Children's Health and Well-being:

**A Priority for Bi-state,
Metropolitan Kansas City
Friday, October 24, 2014
8:00 a.m. - noon
Overland Park Marriott
10800 Metcalf Avenue
Overland Park, KS 66210
More information soon at
www.mchc.net**



COMING EVENTS

Mark your calendars now for these important events.
For details or to register, and for other scheduled meetings,
go to www.mchc.net

- Wednesday, Nov. 19** 5 - 6:30 p.m. Come shop at **Stuff**, to benefit MCHC! 316 W. 63rd St. KCMO 64113
- Thursday, Nov. 20**, 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. Safe Kids Quarterly Meeting, "Driven to Distraction"
Wyandotte County Health Department
- Thursday, Dec. 4**, 9:00 a.m. MAIC Annual Awards Program
Spring 2015 - MCHC 30th Anniversary Celebration!!!

FIMR program, "If you don't have a healthy mother, your chances of having a healthy baby are lowered." Since 2005, the FIMR program has reviewed 179 cases of fetal and infant deaths. Results indicate that mothers with a loss experienced one or more of four health problems: late or no pre-natal care, obesity, addiction to alcohol, tobacco or other drugs, and asthma. The first three are also national trends; asthma was found to be unique to the Kansas City metro area. According to the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, "The presence of FIMR programs serving the major metropolitan areas in Missouri will bring about a more thorough understanding of the contributing factors of fetal and infant deaths, as well as a larger engagement of community health professionals and institutions to improve maternal and child health throughout the state."

In 2009, Kansas was designated as a state with one of the highest infant mortality rates in the nation, with one out of every nine black babies dying before their first birthday. As a

Every child deserves a healthy start; it is the best gift a community can give its children and itself.
Mother & Child Health Coalition works together with community partners and families
to promote wellness and advocate excellence in health care.

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MCHC is a United Way Agency.



OUR NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

Your valuable financial and in-kind support helps us continue our many programs and activities. Our heart-felt thanks to the following individual members and organizational partners joining or renewing their membership during the period of JULY - AUGUST- SEPT 2014. Please let us know of any errors or omissions.

(R- Renewing)

Individuals

Amaya Dairi (R), Morgan Bell, Kristy Blomquist, Rosemary Boudreaux (R), Patricia Cobb, Aubrey Driscoll, Jennifer Fulk, Kathy Leeper, Monica Mansell, Selia Moya (R), Latasha Reed (R), Maria Reyes (R), Wilaiporn Rojjanasrirat (R), Melissa Roseman, Beth Sevart (R), Kristen Shuler (R), Cindy Waits, Karen Wambach, Ina Willers.

**Sustainer Level (\$2,000):
Research Medical Center (R)**

**Benefactor Level (\$1,000):
UMKC Institute for Human
Development (R)**

(Mike Abel, Cynthia Beckman, Carl Calkins, Kathy Fuger, Vim Horn, Tom McVeigh, Melissa Newkirk, Derrick Willis)

**Women's Clinic of Kansas City
-increased their level of support!**
(Janna Rust, Deborah Neel)

**Donor Level (\$250):
Priority Care Pediatrics, LLC (R)**
(Jennifer Cauble, Sharon K. DeMoss)

Breastfeeding News

Mother & Child Health Coalition has received grant funding from the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City in the amount of \$65,000 to support a formative evaluation of the facilitators and barriers to breastfeeding in the greater Kansas City area. This evaluation will help identify important factors leading to effective interventions, thus increasing the likelihood of positive impacts on breastfeeding initiation, continuation and exclusivity.

On Thursday, April 3rd, Missouri Governor Nixon signed into law HB 1320, which was unanimously approved by the Missouri General Assembly. This law provides women the right to breastfeed in public without threat of being accused of either indecent exposure or abuse, and allows a breastfeeding woman to be excused from jury duty with a physician's written letter. This is an important step towards reaching the US Department of Health and Human Services' Healthy People 2020 goals of increasing initiation and duration of breastfeeding. MCHC's goal is to equip providers to assist patients to meet or exceed Healthy People 2020 goals.

For more information about MCHC's efforts to encourage breastfeeding, contact Paul Cesare, Coalition coordinator, at pcesare@mchc.net.

*For a current calendar of
MCHC committee meetings
and other activities,
go to [http://mchc.net/news/
calendar](http://mchc.net/news/calendar). Find your niche!*

**MCHC BOARD OF DIRECTORS
2014 - 2015**

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- Miguel Jaramillo
- Scott Kedrowski
- Anna Lambertson
- Clara Reyes
- Wilaiporn Rojjanasrirat
- Kara Shelman

MCHC STAFF DIRECTORY

- Susan McLoughlin**, Executive Director
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- Anne Biswell**, Communications Coordinator
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- Jean Craig**, KC Healthy Start Project Director
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- Gina Hopkins**, Financial Manager
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- Frieda Tresvan**, Director of Education & Health Promotion - Ext. 251; ftresvan@mchc.net
- Regina Weir**, Immunization and Childhood Injury Prevention Coordinator Ext. 244; rweir@mchc.net

Teens and Distraction: A Look at Teens' Driving and Walking Behaviors

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for U.S. teenagers. Mile for mile, teenagers are three times more likely to be involved in a crash compared with other drivers.

Driving without distraction is also important for parents. Not only are you hauling precious cargo, but kids (especially teens) are looking to you to figure out acceptable driving behavior. Don't let your kids down. Let them know that distracted driving is dangerous driving and that they need to drive device free.

Teens also account for 50 percent of all pedestrian deaths among kids ages 19 and under. And injuries among older teens are on the rise – an increase of 25 percent over the previous five years. Distraction is a likely reason.

Safe Kids Metro KC's November 20 Quarterly meeting will be focused on teens' distracted behaviors and what we can do about it.

You may join, or renew your membership in the Coalition during the Quarterly meetings or at any time on our secure Website:
<http://www.mchc.net/join.htm>.
Individual membership is still only \$25 per year.
Contact us for information on organizational memberships.
Thank you for your support!



Safe Kids Metro KC Honored by Destination Safe

Safe Kids Metro KC was one of eight organizations receiving awards on Friday, Sept. 5 from Destination Safe Coalition at their 10th anniversary luncheon, held at the Sylvester Powell Jr. Community Center. The event was organized to recognize their partners “for contributions that help create a safer transportation system for the Kansas City region, and move us closer to Destination Safe’s *Towards Zero*

Fatalities goal.” Program coordinator, Regina Weir was proud to accept the award in recognition of Safe Kids’ injury prevention program and activities. Under the heading of “Education and Advocacy Awards,” Regina was recognized “for her years of leadership in the Safe Kids Metro KC injury prevention program. Regina works to organize car seat fitting events and annually promotes a ‘Walk This Way’ event at area elementary schools. Safe Kids Metro KC serves Clay, Jackson and Platte counties in Missouri, and Wyandotte county in Kansas.”

Safe Kids Metro KC is an eight-year-old coalition of Safe Kids Worldwide, based in Washington D.C., working to prevent unintentional injuries to children under the age of 19, by providing direct service and education to children, parents and caregivers to bring about behavior change. Safe Kids Metro KC is proudly led by Mother & Child Health Coalition. www.mchc.net

Destination Safe, under Mid America Regional Council, was formed in 2004 to establish the region’s transportation safety priorities, coordinate regional safety planning and implement efforts that improve transportation system safety, decreasing roadway deaths and injuries. Destination Safe provides public information and education including pedestrian safety and child passenger safety. www.marc.org/transportation/safety

For more information, contact Regina Weir, Program Coordinator
Mid America Immunization Coalition and Safe Kids Metro KC
(816) 283-6242 ext. 244 rweir@mchc.net

Child Heatstroke Prevention - It’s Up to All of Us

On Thursday, July 31, Safe Kids Metro KC (a program of Mother & Child Health Coalition) organized a press conference at St. Mark Child and Family Development Center, aimed at increasing public awareness of the dangers of leaving kids in hot cars. Partners in the event included United Inner City Services, Safe Kids Johnson County, KS Highway Patrol, MoDOT, KCMO Fire and Police departments, Children’s Mercy Hospital, and KidsAndCars.org.

As of the newsletter publication date, 27 children have died in hot vehicles somewhere in the United States. This is unacceptable.

MoDOT and KC SCOUT proved to be major partners in the effort to prevent heatstroke deaths this summer. They posted the message “*Where’s Baby? Look Before You Lock*” on their electronic highway signs all across the state of Missouri during July and part of August. Now, they have agreed to print the message on the Missouri State driver education booklets. Look for it next time you’re at the DMV!



One of many highway signs posted during July courtesy of the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) and KC SCOUT.



VACCINES WORK!

Independence HD to Offer Vaccines for Children

The Independence Health Department (IHD), is expanding their vaccination program. Historically, the IHD has focused on Influenza vaccinations for city employees and residents. Now, as providers in the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program they will have vaccines for children who are Medicaid-eligible, uninsured- or underinsured-children who have health insurance but the insurance does not cover vaccines. They are also able to provide vaccines through their VaxCare program for those with certain commercial insurance. A partnership with the Independence school district to provide Tdap vaccine to the middle school children and influenza vaccine to all children in the district (K-12) and staff will open doors of opportunity to promote other needed vaccinations. No walk-in clinics have been scheduled but plans are underway to participate in Health Fairs, Back to School Programs and other events to provide education and vaccines to the community. Congratulations to IHD on this wonderful new project!

Free Flu Clinics Scheduled

It’s flu season and once again, MAIC is planning a series of clinics to provide free flu shots within the greater Kansas City metro area. Clinics are planned in various locations throughout the city, in partnership with Walgreens Pharmacies and the US Dept. of Health and Human Services, Region VII. Please help us to publicize the clinics and make sure we use all 3,000 doses we will have available. For a schedule, go to www.mchc.net. We will need lots of volunteers, too.

For more information, call Frieda Tresvan at (816) 283-6242 ext. 251.

response to this very disturbing statistic, the Kansas governor appointed a Blue Ribbon Panel on Infant Mortality to bring together several organizations in Kansas with a broad range of expertise, including many that have been working for years to address infant mortality risk factors and improve birth outcomes. The Panel has helped focus efforts among partners and generated new collaborative initiatives. It has been my privilege to serve on this panel and share information about MCHC's Healthy Start and FIMR programs, which contributed to the establishment of three FIMR programs in Kansas, including the one in Wyandotte County.

In 2012, there were approximately 1,500 births in the KCHS ZIP code areas of Kansas City, Missouri, which are the lowest-income areas of the city. KCHS improved the health outcomes for babies in the program, helping to prevent pre-term birth and decreasing the over-all infant mortality rate. KCHS contributed to a decline in the overall infant mortality between 2001 and 2009 from a rate of approximately 12.9 to 11.6. During that same time period, the infant mortality rate in 64132, a ZIP code area **not** included in the Healthy Start service area, increased from 14.7 to 20.8. MCHC had planned to implement the Healthy Start program in the 64132 ZIP code when new funding for 2015 was awarded. Over the next five years, the plan was for 4,000 women and their babies to be served.

Partnerships with other local organizations provide additional services to KCHS program participants. These include: Family Conservancy – mental health referrals; Gentlemen of the Roundtable – male involvement; Happy Bottoms –diapers; Safe Kids Metro KC and its partners – car seats and education on child passenger safety, information and tips to combat child heatstroke deaths; Safe Haven for Newborns- technical assistance and education about the Safe Haven law and its implementation; SIDS Resources – cribs and education for a safe sleep environment.

KCHS participants have access to services of certified breastfeeding educators and lactation consultants, as well as post-partum depression screening and referral to mental health resources.

Because Missouri and Kansas have both so far declined to expand Medicaid,

the loss of the Healthy Start program creates a further burden on local families already struggling to make ends meet.

Rachaquilyn Thompson, a single mother of three, enrolled in the Healthy Start program when she was pregnant with her fourth child. At the time, she was unemployed and very discouraged. Her Healthy Start family support worker was able to give her the support she needed to help her regain her confidence and build the life she wanted for herself and her kids. Today, she is a licensed cosmetologist, providing her skills and services through a local beauty shop. *"I thank (my family support worker) and Healthy Start for my new beginning,"* said Rachaquilyn. *"This journey I've been on, I started on a dead end and now my path is open."*

Jean Craig, PhD has served Kansas City Healthy Start as program director for the past 11 years. According to Dr. Craig, *"Along with other Healthy Start projects that also were not funded for 2015, we believe that not having this funding in our communities will create a significant void in providing what has proven to be, in many cases, life-changing services. Collectively, the goals and objectives of all Healthy Start projects is to reduce the nation's infant mortality rate. We must all continue to work to assure that every child has a healthy start, and achieve the Healthy People 2020 goals set by the US Department of Health and Human Services."*

Should additional funding become available for Healthy Start in 2015, we are assured that MCHC will be considered. In the meantime, KCHS will continue to provide limited services until the end of the fiscal year, March 31, 2015. These include referral and resource information, diapers, cribs, car seats and breastfeeding supplies.

MCHC is vigorously pursuing a variety of other funding options to maintain some of the Healthy Start program components, and the important work of the other programs under MCHC -- Safe Kids Metro KC, Mid America Immunization Coalition and Breastfeeding Public Awareness. We've accomplished much together, and our plans for the future include many exciting activities, such as a series of safe sleep clinics and flu clinics September-December, the annual Legislative Quarterly meeting October 24, the Safe Kids Quarterly meeting November 20

and the annual MAIC immunization hero awards meeting December 4. In addition, we are busy working on plans to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Mother & Child Health Coalition in the spring of 2015.

The Board of Directors, especially the Executive and Finance Committees, have been working diligently to sort out the submission review process surrounding the Healthy Start grant applications, and determine a road going forward. Our legislators have been actively supporting us in this effort.

MCHC Board chair Phyllis Larimore, RN PhD (c), expressed, "I am grateful to US Senators Claire McCaskill and Roy Blunt for taking a stand in support of organizations that are serving the most at-risk members of our communities. I look forward to HRSA review and reinstatement of funding for these agencies, including MCHC, which has been a strong leader in maternal and child health issues in the Kansas City metro area for many years."

At this critical juncture, we need your help, and your ideas as well. As we look forward to a future of a healthy start for all our children, we ask all our members, partners and friends to join with us and renew your commitment to support the work of Mother & Child Health Coalition.

There are many ways that you can support MCHC with your time, talent and treasure, and help us to positively impact the lives of families in our community:

- Attend Coalition meetings, conferences and activities;
- Join one of the committees and volunteer your expertise to our programs;
- Contribute financially as an individual member and encourage your employer to support MCHC as an organizational partner- see www.mchc.net for details;
- Help us to publicize the great work we do through your contacts and social media platforms.

Thank you so much for your continued support.

Susan McLoughlin, Executive Director

**Healthier families
lead to healthier communities
for all of us.**