



MOTHER & CHILD HEALTH COALITION

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

W I N T E R 2 0 0 9 N E W S L E T T E R

KANSAS CITY HEALTHY START CELEBRATES 12 YEARS OF SUCCESS

In 2009, the Kansas City Healthy Start (KCHS) program will celebrate a dozen years of serving the metropolitan areas within nine ZIP codes of Jackson County, Missouri and six ZIP codes in Wyandotte County, Kansas. Designed to decrease the infant mortality rate, eliminate health care disparities, and improve the health of pregnant women and infants, this program has touched thousands in outreach and hundreds of families for case management. Based on a "home visiting" model along with a fathering initiative, KCHS staff have remained strong and steady. The majority of the staff have been with the program since its implementation. With teamwork, this level of commitment, and the many partnerships and collaborations in the community, there's only one word for the future of KCHS – SUCCESS! Thank you all for your hard work and dedication!



KC Healthy Start staff at the Holiday Celebration December 19, 2008

From left, back row: Aracely Sierra-Christenson, Melissa Posey, Margarita Juarez, Vanessa Perez, Hayat Abdul-lahi, Janet Rhone. **Seated:** Rita Muehlbach, Pat Martin, Carolyn McGlothen, Mary Sanders; **front:** Jean Craig, director. **Not pictured:** Melonie Gilmore, LaVera Jackson, Trudy Lewis, Remona Miller, Malika Sterling, Tyrone Yarbrough.

JANUARY QUARTERLY MEETING

"Helping Adolescents Face Their Ever-Changing and Challenging World"

**Friday, January 23, 2009
8:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Research Medical Center
Brookside Campus, Curry Auditorium
6675 Holmes, KCMO 64131**

Don't miss the opportunity to join your colleagues in learning about and understanding the destructiveness of bullying, the emotional, medical and educational challenges for youth today, and how we can help them flourish in a challenging and often confusing world.

Speakers include Randy Wiler, national expert on bullying prevention, Bob Batterson, M.D., child psychiatrist from Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics, Pamela Peterson, executive director of the Genesis School, and a teen, also from Genesis School.

2009 CELEBRATING HEALTHY MOTHERHOOD LUNCHEON Thursday, May 7, 2009

Have you marked your calendar? The annual Luncheon will be held at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center Hotel in Kansas City, Missouri, with Consuela Kickbusch, featured speaker. For information on sponsorship levels, call the MCHC office at (816) 283-6242 ext. 253 or email smcloughlin@mchc.net.



Pat Martin, (left) KC Healthy Start clinical nurse family advocate, instructs Tasha Scott in birthing techniques during a KCHS Childbirth Class. Samantha and Jason Gilliam observe while they wait their turn. The monthly classes are open to all and are held at Grace & Holy Trinity Cathedral. Contact Pat for information at (816) 283-6242 ext. 252 or at pmartin@mchc.net.



MCHC MISSION: Every child deserves a healthy start. It is the best gift a community gives to its children and itself. The Mother & Child Health Coalition works together with community partners to promote wellness and advocate excellence in health care for mothers, children and families.

6400 Prospect Ave., Suite 216, KCMO 64132 (816) 283-6242 phone (816) 283-0307 FAX www.mchc.net

MCHC IS A UNITED WAY AGENCY



FOR OUR NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

Your valuable financial and in-kind support helps us continue our many programs and activities. Our heartfelt thanks to the following new and renewing Coalition members and partners for the period of October – December 2008:

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS UNDER ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

SUSTAINERS

Children’s Mercy Family Health Partners

Dorothy Aust; Chris Beurman; Melody Derks; Lisa Gabel; Kelly Goetz; Sheryl Kennard; Suzie Lewis; Sydney Mackesty; Stevana McCullough; Cindy Mense; Kim Picker; Veronica Posey-Fallah; Denise Rector; Audrey Roberts; Melody Rusk; JoAnne Shay

Truman Medical Centers

Thelma Agustin; Charlene Burnett; Kay Connelly; LoAnne Garrett; Judith Hendrix; Kim Holland; Sirpa Lawson; Loretta Macek; Pam McCoy-Bean; Crystal Ross; Melissa Salazar; Beth Severt; Shanna Widener; Catheryn Willdermoor; Erin York

BENEFACTORS:

Carondelet Health

Elizabeth Anderson; Phyllis Bailey; Shannon Crall; Johanna Danahy; Jennifer Jakubielski; Sandy Kapka; Karen Lee; Mary Reinkemeyer; Stacy Richter; Denise Rosser; Diane Schaefer

Swope Health Services

Valtra Brown; William Pankey; Ernestine Persley; Marquita Taylor

PATRON:

Project EAGLE

LaVera Jackson; Remona Miller; Martha Staker; Malika Sterling; Bertha Thomas

DONOR:

Planned Parenthood

Sarah Aanstad; Erica Titus



FedEx FUNDING HELPS KIDS PRACTICE SAFE WALKING

Following in-school education on safe walking practices, 90 students from Mark Twain Elementary School in KCK walked to nearby Kensington Park as part of International Walk to School Day. While there, they went in small groups to safety stations to learn about seat belt use, fire prevention, dangers posed by stray dogs and what to do if encountering one while walking, and Halloween safety. In addition, FedEx staff brought their truck to show students the difficulty of seeing walkers from inside a large vehicle.

School faculty, staff, volunteers and Safe Kids Metro KC (SKMKC) partners from the Mid-America Regional Council, Children’s Mercy Hospitals and Clinics, Unified Government Public Health, Park Rangers and Fire Department and staff from the FedEx Front Street facility helped with this event.

FedEx funding through Safe Kids USA also allowed SKMKC coordinator, Deb Bumgardner, to create Halloween safety displays for 25 Mid-Continent Public Libraries in Clay, Platte and Jackson counties.

Safe Kids USA provided reflective trick-or-treat bags, reflective pumpkin zipper pulls, and safe walking and driving posters that were enlarged for use on the displays.



Deb Bumgardner, coordinator of Safe Kids Metro KC, with some of the 25 fun and creative Halloween safety displays that she made for the Mid-Continent Library system.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

We welcome and thank the following new and renewing members:

Tracey Allen-Ehrhart, Brenda Bohaty, Theresa Campbell, Alice Criger, Betty Crooker, Markesha Dozier, Kim Fletcher, Sandy Grantello, Hibba Haider, Dorothy Harvey, Cheri Hunt, Elena Huston, Dr. Norge Jerome, Margarita Juarez, Wendy Landes, Katherine Lorand, Angel McDonald, Stephene Moore, Nicole Morrow, Mendy Moyer, Kirsten Myers, Betty Novak, Debra Ohnoutka, Tam Oleszczak, Sally Riley, Kathleen Sanchez, Nathalie Shirley, Aracely Sierra-Christenson, LeAnne Tays, Lori Van Fleet.



WELCOME, LISA!

Lisa Petersen, new administrative assistant for MCHC, comes to us from International Family Missions in El

Paso, Texas where she worked as the office manager/orphanage liaison. She was married in September and moved up to the Kansas City area to be closer to family.

Lisa is originally from Hutchinson, Kansas. She graduated with her B.A. from Grace University in urban studies and Bible with an emphasis in psychology. Lisa has worked in the non-profit sector with at-risk youth, and faith-based volunteer outreach organizations for the last 5 years. She recently studied Spanish through an intensive course in Xela, Guatemala for four and a half months where she learned to speak proficient Spanish.

Lisa always strives to make a difference in any way possible. She is very excited about being a part of the MCHC and Healthy Start team!

You may join, or renew your membership in the Coalition during the Quarterly meetings or on our secure website: <http://www.mchc.net/join.htm>. Individual membership is \$25/year.

MCHC STAFF DIRECTORY

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Check out our NEW
WEBSITE at
www.mchc.net... and
let us know what you
think!

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LOCAL IMMUNIZATION HEROES HONORED

The Mid America Immunization Coalition honored their immunization heroes at their Annual Awards Meeting on December 3, 2008.

Recognized for their leadership in promoting immunizations were:

- **The Kansas City Star** for publicly confirming the value of immunizations through monthly promotion of BEE WISE Mondays. Reporters Alan Bavley and Edward Eveld received the Community Partnership Award for excellence in reporting immunization issues.
- **Teresa Gerard** of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City received the Systems Award for bringing together area groups benefitting from and dedicated to promoting bi-state immunization registries.
- **Thad Wilson**, MAIC chair and associate dean of the UMKC School of Nursing, received the Ultimate Immunization Hero Award for setting an example of steadfast leadership and commitment to the health and welfare of the community and beyond.

Always a giver of well-deserved awards, MAIC received two awards in November from sanofi pasteur for efforts in promoting adolescent immunizations.



Members of the MAIC Steering Committee from left to right: Teresa Gerard, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City; Rebecca White, MODHSS; Judy Moore Nichols, KCMO Health Dept.; Heather Keitges, sanofi pasteur; Cindy Olson-Burgess, Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics; Rhonda Luther, MODHSS; Thad Wilson, UMKC School of Nursing; Danielle Thornton, Unified Gov't Health Dept.; and Gwendolyn Nickles, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City.

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR BREASTFEEDING

Once in a while an idea comes along that is truly beneficial to all. Breastfeeding in the workplace is one such idea.

The US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration has developed a tool kit called "The Business Case for Breastfeeding." The Office on Women's Health is promoting the use of the tool kit with a \$10,000 grant to state breastfeeding coalitions, for which the KS Breastfeeding Coalition has applied. MCHC is a member of the KS Breastfeeding Coalition and is excited about the opportunity to partner on such a promising endeavor.

The grant would assist breastfeeding advocates in the Wichita and Kansas

City areas, as well as other places in the state of Kansas, by equipping them with the tools to discuss (with employers) the benefits of breastfeeding for businesses. These include reduced health care costs; reduced absenteeism; lower turnover rates; higher productivity and loyalty; and positive public relations.

To promote breastfeeding in the workplace, MCHC's Breastfeeding Committee has begun giving an annual award to a local business for its pro-breastfeeding environment and policies. This tool kit will only enhance the committee's work. If you would like to be a part of this initiative with MCHC, contact Paul Cesare, coalition coordinator, at pcesare@mchc.net or 816-283-6242 ext. 239.



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Lou Edwards,
2008 MCHC Chairperson

As we finish up the Holiday season, a part of this is looking forward to the New Year. Even though the economic times have had some dismal forecasts, it is our creative responsibility to look forward with expectation of a better tomorrow for the work in which we are engaged. One avenue that seeks to make this happen is taking note of the Mother & Child Health Coalition (MCHC). MCHC works to bring about change in the greater Kansas City community -- change that affects the lives of families as they are challenged, as individual and personalized units, by the current economic climate.

Mother & Child Health Coalition operates out of its mission to build upon moral principals focused particularly on caring for mothers and children. The programs of MCHC offer some fundamental support to families for wellness, prevention and safety. This results not only in healthier families, but in a healthier community.

For 2009, MCHC has a strategic plan that is truly strategic. The plan includes four priorities for MCHC to follow and implement. This includes efforts to reach out to the business community in order to engage them in building health and wellness. A part of this is to engage people in community. Through the 2009 plan, the Coalition will be working to become the "go to" organization. There are specific areas addressed in the plan that provide a road map for MCHC in reaching that goal. For example, in an effort to be more visible in the community, MCHC will be writing more articles for community publications and participating in community forums. It is hoped this will increase the standing of MCHC in the community as the organization that effectively understands the vital importance of mother and child health.

MCHC recognizes and understands that the future waits expectantly for their increased participation in the community. They believe that "the most effective way to

enhance the health of women, children and families is through prevention, intervention and education." <http://www.mchc.net/about/> We all do realize that much of our daily lives will continue to be familiar to us, in spite of new and radical pressures. This could lead us to eventually fall into "business as usual" habits and attitudes.

However, as we are being counseled repeatedly by our leaders and professional sources, some serious challenges are ahead. Our responses must be creative and realistic. We are responsible to bring the best efforts into pursuing our future, determined to exercise positive and thoughtful impact regardless of what economic setbacks await us. We continue to strive for excellence and goodness for our community, noting those who need our help. With a greater scope in mind of what community means, we intend not only to survive, but to thrive.



Would your agency like to display your materials at one of our upcoming Quarterly meetings? Please call Rita Muehlbach at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting date at (816) 283-6242 ext. 251, or contact her via e-mail at: rmuehlbach@mchc.net.

Friday, Jan. 23, 2009
Friday, April 24, 2009
Friday, July 24, 2009

MCHC BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2008-2009

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OCTOBER QUARTERLY MEETING REPORT

On October 24th, Mother & Child Health Coalition held its Annual Legislative Program. The event focused on access to health care and early childhood education with presenters Carrie Shapton, Partnership for Children; Emily Schwartz, Citizens for Missouri's Children; and Gary Brunk, Kansas Action for Children.

Attendees learned that early childhood education greatly affects how successful a person will be as an adult, as 90% of the brain develops before the age of five. Ms. Shapton reported that Missouri preschool costs \$2,540 per child/year, while the state's prison system costs \$14,392 per adult/year. Likewise, with health care, the concept of paying less now, or paying more later was also discussed. Ms. Schwartz talked about families who do not have access to health insurance and that they tend to use the emergency room for their primary care, which costs much more.

Mr. Brunk noted that among UNICEF's rankings of 21 industrialized countries, the U.S.A. ranks 18th in overall child well-being.