



Children's Health Fund



**National Center for
Disaster Preparedness**

Mailman School of Public Health
Columbia University

From: **The Children's Health Fund**
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**CHILDREN'S HEALTH FUND AND PUBLIC HEALTH EXPERTS AT
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY'S NATIONAL CENTER FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
LEAD HEALTH EDUCATION SESSIONS ON H1N1 VIRUS PREVENTION TO
850 CHILDREN ON FIRST ANNUAL NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE, COMMEMORATING
SEPTEMBER 11**

GLAXO SMITH KLINE AND HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE ARE PARTNERS

HARLEM, NY (September 11, 2009) – The **Children's Health Fund** (CHF), a national New York-based organization that advocates for and develops programs that provide clinical care to disadvantaged and medically underserved children, and public health experts at **Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health's National Center for Disaster Preparedness** (NCDP) today joined employees from GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) to lead a health education series on the H1N1 virus prevention to 850 children at the Harlem Children's Zone.

The event was held as part of the first-ever National Day of Service and Remembrance, a federally-recognized day to commemorate September 11th. Dr. Irwin Redlener, President CHF and Director of NCDP, joined Deirdre Connelly, President, North America Pharmaceuticals for GSK, in a fun and age-appropriate event in which more than fifty volunteers from GSK's NY, NJ, PA and NC offices instructed schoolchildren on simple ways to prevent the H1N1 virus, including washing hands and covering sneezes and coughs. Additionally, volunteer educators hosted hands-on "stations" in art and science to promote health awareness in a fun and engaging way.

"Young people seem to be particularly susceptible to the 2009 H1N1 virus, but there is a great deal that children can do to help curb the spread of the illness," said Dr. Redlener. "We're delighted to join GlaxoSmithKline on this important first National Day of Service to promote flu-prevention vigilance and awareness to these children who will in turn take these critical health messages to their community. We want to make this engaging for children, but the bigger message to the students and the teachers is that we're up against a major public health crisis and basic hygiene, social distancing and general awareness are essential strategies."

The health education stations included:

"Glitterbug" Handwashing Demonstration

- Students and volunteers learned to sing the handwashing song
- Students learned common areas on the hands that are often left unwashed i.e. fingernails, between the fingers, wrists, thumb 'web' and the importance of proper handwashing.

Micro Biology Station

- Students learned the differences between viruses and bacteria
- Students used hands-on learning tools to explore the structures/shapes of germs using Giant Microbes
- Students examined electron microscope images of real viruses and germs including N1H1, influenza, strep throat, and the common cold
- Students learned how germs and viruses can enter the body and cause illness, and about vaccines and how to prevent illness

Art Station

- Students created small handwashing awareness posters
- Posters will be assembled into a large handwashing education mural or banner that will be made visible to the Harlem Community

“Superman” Station

- Students learned how to cover their mouths when they cough or sneeze if they don't have a tissue (into their elbow, like Superman)
- Students participated in a glitter activity to show how easily germs can spread
- Students brainstormed how to stay healthy i.e. eat balanced meals, exercise, get enough sleep, don't share lip gloss/drinks/food etc.
- Students learned what to do if they feel sick i.e. stay home from school, drink fluids, get enough rest etc.

Children's Health Fund (CHF): Founded in 1987 by pediatrician/advocate Irwin Redlener, MD, and singer/songwriter Paul Simon, the Children's Health Fund (CHF) works nationally to advocate on behalf of all children and to develop health care programs for the most medically under-served population-homeless and disadvantaged children. CHF's 22 pediatric programs and 2 affiliates in 15 states and DC have provided essential primary care services in more than 1.8 million patient visits via mobile medical clinics. For more information about CHF visit: www.childrenshealthfund.org

The National Center for Disaster Preparedness (NCDP) at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health is an academically-based resource center dedicated to the study, analysis and enhancement of the nation's ability to prepare for and respond to major disasters, including terrorism. The NCDP has a wide-ranging research, training and education, and advocacy agenda, with a special interest in mega-disasters. Senior faculty and staff have testified at Congressional hearings, presented at numerous conferences and meetings, and consulted with governmental, healthcare, non-profit, industry, and community leaders. The NCDP engages the public health workforce and communities in preparing for catastrophic events, while helping to integrate preparedness efforts into the nation's existing infrastructure. The Center encompasses the CDC-funded Center for Public Health Preparedness at Columbia, which has trained over 15,000 responders in public health preparedness, incident management, and recognition and response to incidents involving weapons of mass destruction using table-top drills, exercises, and distance learning technologies. For more information, visit www.mailman.columbia.edu or www.ncdp.mailman.columbia.edu.

The September 11 anniversary of the terrorist attacks will permanently become a federally-recognized National Day of Service and Remembrance for the first time this year, supported by new legislation signed by President Barack Obama in April. To mark the establishment of this historic observance and pay tribute to the 9/11 victims and those who rose in service in response to the attacks, four prominent national organizations will co-host on the evening of September 11 in New York City a star-supported evening tribute to the 9/11 community and those who have participated in the nationwide “United We Serve” initiative launched by First Lady Michelle Obama on June 22. Organizing the event are MyGoodDeed (www.911dayofservice.org), the 9/11 nonprofit that led the effort to establish 9/11 as a National Day of Service.

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