



Children's Health Fund

National Network

23 programs and 2 affiliates in 18 states and the District of Columbia



Harlem Children's Health Project



The Harlem Children's Health Project (HCHP), an innovative comprehensive health resource center that is designed to improve the health of children in Central Harlem, provides health assessments, medical care, oral health services, mental health services, referrals, health education and the Neuberger Berman Health Promotion Learning Lab.

The HCHP is a school-based health center that provides medical, dental and mental health services, all under one roof. Next to the patient waiting room, a high-tech computer lab with interactive health education software attracts young people's interest. What makes this health center even more unique is its location on the fifth floor of Harlem Children Zone's Promise Academy, a New York City charter school for middle and high school students. HCHP's comprehensive, on-site clinical and health-education services are available to all students year-round, regardless of a family's ability to pay. HCHP extends its reach into the community by working with various Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) programs, performing focused health screenings, outreach and referrals through the "Healthy Connections" program. Students with unmet health needs are linked to existing community health services, such as eye doctors, dentists, or social services.

HCHP extends its reach beyond the scope of the schools through health education efforts that serve the entire community. HCHP provides access to health education technology; educates students and families on urgent health issues; promotes healthy lifestyle choices; and establishes replicable education models for use in other communities. The core of the educational programming takes place in the Neuberger Berman Health Promotion Learning Lab, the aforementioned computer lab inside HCHP's school based health center. The Learning Lab provides interactive software and computer learning stations - as well as Children's Health Fund(CHF)'s own field-tested health education materials - to educate Promise Academy students, faculty members, parents and the larger HCZ community about personal, community and public health.

By incorporating CHF's clinical and support services with the Harlem Children's Zone's comprehensive approach to rebuilding Central Harlem, thousands of children and their families benefit from increased access to continuous, high-quality health care. Acting as a health care advocate for the community, the HCHP helps to assure that existing health resources are well-utilized, and that Central Harlem residents make informed choices about how to access the best health care for their children and families.

Serving Communities in Need

The patient population served by the HCHP is 90% African American and 10% Hispanic, and approximately 40% are on Medicaid. Central Harlem is a highly vulnerable community. Given racial and ethnic disparities, this population - 97% of whom are African-American or Hispanic - is at tremendous risk. More than 25% of residents are children. Factors that make residents more vulnerable include a high percentage of adults who did not graduate from high school (34%), people living below the federal poverty level (35%), and people who feel that the neighborhood is unsafe (47%). Central Harlem is higher than the citywide average for: late or no prenatal care (36%), low birth weight (11%), infant mortality (12.4 per 1,000), pediatric asthma hospitalizations, and overweight and obesity. Hospitalizations reflect social problems. Adult hospitalization rates are higher than the citywide rate for: alcohol-related conditions (2.5 times higher), mental illness (80% higher), diabetes (80% higher), and drug-related conditions (55% higher).

Available Services

- Comprehensive physical examinations and immunizations;
- Management of acute and chronic illnesses;
- GYN care and referrals;
- Nutrition assessment, cholesterol screening and body weight monitoring;
- HIV/STD testing and counseling;
- Screening, referral, and follow-up services for vision, hearing, dental, health insurance, etc.;
- Substance abuse assessment and referrals;
- Comprehensive dental care including preventive and restorative care;
- Individual and group therapy;
- Technology based health education; and
- Informational workshops for parents and staff.

Program Sites

Clinical services are provided to children at three Promise Academy sites: Promise Academy I Elementary School, Promise Academy I Middle/High School, and Promise Academy II Elementary School. Healthy Connections services (screenings, referrals, follow-ups, and/or workshops) are offered to children in the three aforementioned schools, HCZ Community Center/After School Program, two HCZ Universal Pre-K programs (The Harlem Gems and the Uptown Gems), two high school programs (Learn to Earn and Leadership Academy), three Peacemaker schools (PS 242, PS 76, PS 133), PS 175 (a non-Peacemaker school), and Countee Cullen Beacon Programs. The Neuberger Berman Health Promotion Learning Lab (HPLL) has provided learning opportunities for the three Promise Academy schools listed above, two Universal Pre-K programs, T.R.U.C.E., and two HCZ Beacon Programs (Countee Cullen and Booker T. Washington) and HCZ Community Center/After School Program. The HPLL also works with non-HCZ schools and programs such as PS 115 (an elementary school in Washington Heights that was featured in the movie "Mad Hot Ballroom"), YAI (National Institute for People with Disabilities Network), and more.

PROGRAM FACTS

Home Institution/Affiliation:

Harlem Children's Zone, Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, and New York-Presbyterian Hospital

Year Established:

May 2006

Electronic Health Records Implemented:

2009

STAFF

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