

EMBRACING

OUR COMMUNITY



A newsletter from Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Department of Community Health and Education

Summer 2006

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Thomas M. Priselac

One of the many rewarding aspects of Cedars-Sinai's community health and education programs is the opportunity to work with some truly incredible local organizations to make a real impact in improving the health status of our community.

A key principle in our approach to community health is to work in partnership with organizations who know the specific needs of their constituents and how to best reach them to improve their health. By listening to our partners and engaging in an ongoing discussion on how to best work together on behalf of the community, everyone is strengthened.

This issue of *Embracing Our Community* highlights just a few of the many partnerships we have developed with other organizations in the community. Whether it is working with People Coordinated Services in the Crenshaw neighborhood, or partnering with teachers at Los Angeles Unified School District's Queen Anne Place Elementary School in the Mid-City area, or providing meals for local housebound residents through Meals on Wheels, we don't work alone. In each case, these programs are a true collaboration, and we are proud to do our part.

Thank you for your continued interest in our community's health, and your support of our collaborative efforts.

Thomas M. Priselac
President and Chief Executive Officer
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

Nutrition's the Mission

Reaching out to area schools with the Healthy Habits program

Obesity has become a major health problem in the United States. Many children are overweight and increasingly diagnosed with type 2 diabetes – a disease that used to occur mainly in adults. Poor eating habits and inactivity contribute to the obesity epidemic we are living in today. By reaching children at an early age with messages of healthy eating and physical activity, the foundation for a lifelong habit of healthy living can be established.

With that in mind, Cedars-Sinai Community Health Associate Joyce Ho and team developed Healthy Habits, a nutrition and physical activity educational program.

“Our aim with Healthy Habits is to help kids develop good nutrition and exercise habits early on so it becomes a way of life – this goes far in the maintenance of good health,” said Ho.

Healthy Habits kicked off last November with 80 second graders



Queen Anne Place Elementary School students learn the benefits of milk through hands-on activities

at Los Angeles' Queen Anne Place Elementary School.

The five-month program included weekly classroom sessions educating students about good nutrition and hands-on opportunities to sample and make healthy foods.

“We made healthy treats such as fruit smoothies and then sent them home with the recipes to share with their families,” said Ho.

“This is important because the kids are taking what they've learned in the classroom and applying it to their real lives.

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Area Kids Learn the Importance of Handwashing from C.O.A.C.H. for Kids

Busy environments such as schools are havens for germs and that puts both students and staff at risk for contacting and spreading colds, flu and other infections. That's why the C.O.A.C.H. (Community Outreach Assistance for Children's Health) for Kids® mobile medical unit team decided to teach area kids the art of proper handwashing.

"Through hands-on activities we are able to demonstrate to kids, their teachers and parents the importance of handwashing to prevent illness," said Michele Rigsby Pauley, R.N., C.P.N.P., manager of the C.O.A.C.H. team. Rigsby Pauley has been with the program since it started in 1994.

Most recently, the C.O.A.C.H. team worked with students from Centinela Elementary School in Inglewood. More than 200 students and parents were taught proper handwashing skills and had their hands tested before and after each session to make sure they were getting the technique down right.

"We are visiting more area schools and collecting data from each visit to help us better understand infection control issues as well as to help with developing good handwashing skills for long term compliance," added Rigsby Pauley.



Clean hands help to prevent the spread of germs

About C.O.A.C.H. For Kids:

Since 1994, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center has sponsored the C.O.A.C.H. (Community Outreach Assistance for Children's Health) for Kids® program in an effort to bring free health and dental care services to low-income children – from infancy to age 18.

Staffed by Cedars-Sinai professionals, two fully equipped mobile units – "medical clinics on wheels" – visit economically disadvantaged neighborhoods (including schools, community centers and shelters) throughout Los Angeles County on a regularly scheduled basis. Preventive care, such as immunizations and screenings, are available in addition to the diagnosis and treatment of minor illnesses.

The program also features a mental health program reaching out to parents with lectures and resources on issues such as finding housing, good parenting skills and domestic violence. The C.O.A.C.H. program also features Healthy Smiles, a program providing dental education and screening services to kids in need.

C.O.A.C.H. collaborates with more than 200 public and private community

organizations. Since its inception in April 1994, the C.O.A.C.H. for Kids program has provided more than 97,000 patient visits (medical, dental, case management, mental health and health education) to over 40,000 low-income children and their families.



The C.O.A.C.H. for Kids team in action

The C.O.A.C.H. team includes:

- 1 program manager
- 1 medical director
- 2 nurse practitioners
- 2 registered nurses
- 3 social workers
- 1 dental hygienist
- 3 outreach workers/health educators
- 2 mobile clinic operators

C.O.A.C.H. Team Recent Highlights:

Hurricane Katrina Support –

Since Hurricane Katrina devastated parts of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama last August, members of the C.O.A.C.H. team have traveled to relief sites to offer health care services to families in need. The first trip was sponsored by Cedars-Sinai and took the team to relief sites in Texas.

Literacy Outreach – C.O.A.C.H.

participates in the national Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) literacy campaign. As part of this effort, each month the C.O.A.C.H. team receives and donates 150 books to Los Angeles area children.

Seniors Log On To New Technology With Computer Donation From Cedars-Sinai

It's intimidating enough for those born in the computer age to stay on top of the latest technology – from gadgets to lingo, it seems to change daily.

With the help of an innovative program sponsored by People Coordinated Services Center (PCS) in the Crenshaw district and Cedars-Sinai, seniors now have free access to a new Computer Lab at PCS featuring computers and computer training.

To equip the Lab, Cedars-Sinai donated 22 computers and printers as well as technical staff to install everything. Other community partners including the Los Angeles Department of Aging and The Los Angeles Unified School District's Manual Arts-Crenshaw Adult School, donated laptops and instructors to the program.

Computer classes are held every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoon, with an average of 25 seniors in each class.

“The program teaches basic computer skills to seniors such as writing documents, sending e-mail messages and surfing the Internet,” said Logan Williams, manager of Community Education, Prevention and Senior Services at Cedars-Sinai.

“By offering access to computers, it not only helps seniors stay in touch with friends and family, but also keeps them active and informed,” added Williams. “When we first opened the computer lab last September, it was heartwarming to see how excited the seniors were to use a computer for the first time.”



Crenshaw area seniors are busy learning computer skills in classes at the People Coordinated Services Center

In addition to the computer donations, the Cedars-Sinai Community Health team has been working with PCS for more than a decade to provide seniors in need with a variety of health screenings and immunizations.

Learning More About Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels is a national nonprofit organization that provides home-delivered meals to individuals who are housebound including the elderly, disabled, chronically or temporarily ill.

The Beverly Hills Chapter of Meals on Wheels began in 1978 on the Cedars-Sinai campus with a vision by Marion Weinstein and Revered James Morrison.

Weinstein was concerned that some patients leaving the hospital might be housebound upon discharge and as a result, have trouble getting food. She wanted a way to assist them in their time of need. She shared her vision with Rev. Morrison of The Presbyterian Church in Beverly Hills and soon the Meals on Wheels, Beverly Hills Chapter, was born. Though Weinstein is now deceased, Rev. Morrison still presides as Chair of the Chapter.

How Meals on Wheels Works

Every Monday through Friday, the Meals on Wheels team of 12-15 volunteers delivers a nutritious hot lunch and dinner to individuals in need throughout Beverly Hills and the adjacent area.

The program is located on the Cedars-Sinai campus but is an independent organization. Meals are prepared by the Cedars-Sinai

Food Services Department, and Program Coordinator Pat Jacobson, works closely with staff to ensure each client's individual dietary needs are met – diabetic, renal (for dialysis patients) and kosher meals are all available.

Jacobson notes that referrals to the program come from a variety of sources including Cedars-Sinai Medical staff, area social workers and health care professionals.

For Jacobson, who has headed up the program for 8 years, the deliveries are about much more than the food.

“People need contact with other people to continue to thrive,” added Jacobson.

“Our food deliveries are a way to connect with these homebound individuals and let them know someone cares and is there to lend comfort in their time of need.”

If you would like to learn more about Meals on Wheels, please contact Pat Jacobson at (310) 423-3517.



about community health at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

For more than a century, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center has extended helping hands to meet the community's diverse health care needs.

Community benefit activities are delivered through more than 20 Cedars-Sinai departments, with many specialists contributing their expertise in specific areas. Cedars-Sinai commits to a planned and sustained approach to working with the community and partnering with community-based organizations in the deliver of community health services.

With over 5,000 programs, and close to 200,000 individual community benefit program encounters, Cedars-Sinai is a leader in striving to improve the health of our community.

To learn more about Community Health at Cedars-Sinai go to www.csmc.edu and search "Community Health."



CEDARS-SINAI MEDICAL CENTER.
Community Health and Education
8700 Beverly Blvd., TSB 210
Los Angeles, CA 90048

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For questions or comments, please contact Cindy Levey at cindy.levey@cshs.org or (310) 423-9597.



The Healthy Habits team exercises with students from Queen Anne Place Elementary School

"The kids are teaching their families new, healthier habits," added Ho.

In addition to classroom work, the Queen Anne Place kids enjoyed leaving the classroom setting for the playground for games that get their bodies moving, planned by the Cedars-Sinai team.

The Healthy Habits program at Queen Anne Place culminated this month with a second grade fair featuring activities for students and teachers.

Ho is extending the program to other area schools and looks forward to expanding the curriculum with the help of the Community Health team as well as local teachers.