

Embracing CEDARS-SINAI MEDICAL CENTER. Our Community

A newsletter produced by the Department of Community Health and Education, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

Dental Health: A Focus on Partnership

Last December, ten-year-old Gabriel Garcia and six-year-old Eddie Larita received free dental checkups through Cedars-Sinai's C.O.A.C.H. (Community Outreach Assistance for Children's Health) Healthy Smiles program. Gabriel and Eddie lack dental insurance and have had minimal opportunities for prior dental care. These free services, including X-rays and any necessary treatments, are made possible through partnerships Cedars-Sinai developed with entities that share the same passion for meeting the health needs of the underserved. These partnerships are with L.A. Care Health Plan, the California Community Foundation and Cedars-Sinai's Ambulatory Care Center Dental Clinic. Together, the C.O.A.C.H. Healthy Smiles program serves our community's low-income and medically underserved children with oral health needs.

In 2003, Cedars-Sinai's C.O.A.C.H. for Kids and Their Families received \$160,000 from L.A. Care Health Plan to provide dental education, screenings and referrals by a registered dental hygienist for children at various community sites and by nurse practitioners on the mobile medical clinics. L.A. Care is a local public agency and health plan serving residents of Los Angeles County through a variety of programs, including Medi-Cal, Healthy Families and Healthy Kids. An additional \$80,000 was awarded in 2004 to enable the continuation of services to low-income communities, including South Los Angeles, Inglewood and Skid Row, and to expand services to new areas, such as Crenshaw, Lennox and Hollywood. The continuation grant also established the C.O.A.C.H. Healthy Smiles Scholarship Fund at two community clinics to cover the cost of dental care for uninsured and underinsured children. C.O.A.C.H. for Kids and Their Families is one of 14 oral health grantees chosen through a competitive process as part of L.A. Care's Oral Health Initiative.

In addition to funding from L.A. Care Health Plan, C.O.A.C.H. Healthy Smiles is supported in part by a grant from the California Community Foundation (CCF), which makes grants to nonprofit organizations serving the communities of L.A. County. The three-year grant of approximately

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Top: Dr. Denis Weintraub with Gabriel Garcia.
Bottom: Healthy Smiles Room with registered dental hygienist Jill Zappia.

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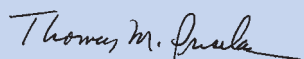
As a nonprofit medical center, we are committed to helping our community, particularly the underserved, grow stronger and healthier. In order to do that, it is crucial that we are knowledgeable of the overall needs and have a practical plan to work with our community partners and donors to achieve the greatest impact possible with the resources available.

That plan is developed as a result of a vigorous process of needs assessment that occurs every three years through a collaborative effort involving Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, other healthcare providers and community partners. Assessment results are used as a roadmap to design services that will best serve our community.

Currently, we are in the process of analyzing data from our most recent Community Needs Assessment and using that information to guide development of innovative programs and partnerships within our geographic target areas.

This process represents the true definition of community collaboration. Our past successes and future achievements for the community are based on a pooling of talent and resources. We continue to take a leadership role, working with other hospitals, health clinics, schools and many other community-based organizations that support our commitment to building a healthier community. We appreciate the efforts of all those who give so generously of themselves and their organizations to make a difference in the lives of our community, one individual at a time.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Priselac
President and Chief Executive Officer

Working with Parents

Cedars-Sinai's Bridges to Health, a school-based program that provides needed services to disadvantaged children and their parents, recently wrapped up a successful parenting class at Queen Anne Elementary School in Los Angeles. Over 30 mothers of elementary-aged children attended the free classes on a weekly basis. Excited and desiring to learn more about being a good parent, the moms quickly bonded with each other and the class facilitator, Claudia Gutierrez. "The moms rearranged their schedules and were very eager to participate in the group," expressed Gutierrez.

The moms participated in group discussions, activities and even homework. For one homework assignment, moms wrote a letter to each of their children. The moms expressed the special and unique qualities they love about their children in writing. The class facilitator then sent the letters so that kids received the special mail at home. The lesson teaches honest communication in families, promotes self-esteem and gets families reading together. Topics covered by the 10-week parenting class included conflict resolution, communicating effectively, and discipline versus punishment.

At the last meeting, the moms graduated from the parenting class by receiving certificates and celebrating with a potluck that the moms coordinated.

Bridges to Health parenting classes are offered at several elementary schools in the Los Angeles area.



A graduating mom receives her certificate

Keeping Seniors Healthy



Jean Shackelford

Sixty-two-year-old Jean Shackelford did not know a vaccine for pneumonia existed until three years ago, when she joined her local senior center, the People's Coordinated Services (PCS) in Crenshaw. Cedars-Sinai was offering its annual free pneumococcal shots to the seniors at PCS. Receiving a pneumococcal vaccine gave Jean a sense of relief and protection because she had suffered from pneumonia several times as a child and once as an adult.

Cedars-Sinai has been partnering with PCS for more than 10 years. In addition to pneumococcal vaccinations, Cedars-Sinai provides influenza vaccinations, cardiovascular screenings and health education lectures to the seniors. Lecture topics (such as weight management and arthritis) complement the senior center's exercise programs, including the walking club and the low-impact exercise class.

"It is easy and convenient that Cedars-Sinai comes here to the senior center. Seniors are getting services most normally would not. My doctor doesn't say to come in for the influenza and pneumococcal shots. And by Cedars-Sinai coming here, we don't need to worry about any transportation problems," explains Shackelford.

Jean has not had pneumonia or the flu since she started getting vaccinated. She encourages her friends to get the shots and tries to demystify the belief that one can get sick from the flu shot.

As a former teacher, Jean understands the importance of education, and is looking forward to more health lectures given by Cedars-Sinai, especially in the fields of nutrition and depression. She wants to stop her bad habits and live healthily so she can enjoy life and continue her travels to visit her daughters and grandchildren.

The Community Needs Assessment

Every three years, Cedars-Sinai assesses the needs of the surrounding community. Cedars-Sinai strives to improve the health of our community through focused programs, staff commitment and strong community partnerships. Leading causes of death in the Cedars-Sinai area are: Heart disease, Cancer, Stroke and Pneumonia/flu. The priority health needs identified include:

For Seniors:

1. Chronic disease
2. Dementia/cognitive impairment
3. Access to healthcare
4. Home care
5. Falls

For Children

1. Access to healthcare
2. Nutrition, overweight and obesity
3. Psychosocial and mental health
4. Asthma
5. Developmental outcomes

For Pregnant Women and Infants

1. Access to healthcare
2. Education on good nutritional habits
3. Education on raising children
4. Premature labor and birth outcomes
5. Teen pregnancy

The Department of Community Health and Education has already begun to include nutrition and physical activity in many community health programs. Additional plans include enhancing current programs to increase access to quality healthcare services and health education. Cedars-Sinai is also committed to decreasing health disparities. Primary care, mental health services, health promotion, disease prevention and health education services are all areas to build upon to meet the needs of the community. Cedars-Sinai looks forward to working with community partners to improve the health of the community.



Making Exercise and Nutrition Fun for Kids

Nationally, nine million children over age six are obese, and the numbers are only growing, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. In December 2004, the American Heart Association reported 10 percent of children ages two to five are overweight – a seven-percent increase since 1994. Research shows that sedentary children who eat foods high in sugar and fat may have poor cognitive skills, high anxiety and hyperactivity. Childhood obesity often leads to adult obesity, which is associated with diabetes, heart disease and hypertension. Some experts indicate that today's children may be the first to have a shorter lifespan than their parents.

Efforts are being made throughout the country to combat childhood obesity. The Department of Community Health and Education at Cedars-Sinai has started working with local schools and clinics to educate children about healthy eating and encourage physical activity through a fun and interactive game. The game is designed to make jumping jacks, jogging, hopping and other physical activity enjoyable. Colorful fruits and vegetables are displayed on a table as a “Rainbow of Food” to attract kids and test their knowledge of nutrition and fun food facts. The “Rainbow of Food and Fun” game has been implemented at several sites. It is evident that kids love to play and want to learn more about fruits, vegetables and foods. They are having fun while exerting energy and learning about healthy eating.

Cedars-Sinai plans to further strengthen partnerships with schools to outreach to children, as well as teachers and parents, in fighting obesity.



Top: 5-year-old Cristofer Callejas playing “Rainbow of Food and Fun”
Bottom: Rainbow of Food and Fun Table

Embracing Our Community Fair

Cedars-Sinai held its second annual Community Benefit Fair: "Embracing Our Community" on July 15 outside on the Plaza Level. Over 20 exhibitors from the community and Medical Center shared information about their programs and services. Employees learned about the many ways Cedars-Sinai provides services and partners with organizations to improve the health of the community. Participating exhibitors included C.O.A.C.H. for Kids, Lifeline, WIC, Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce and LA Department of Health Services.



Department of Community Health and Education

Community benefit activities are integrated and delivered through more than 20 Cedars-Sinai departments, with many specialists contributing their expertise in specific areas. While dozens of Cedars-Sinai departments offer services and lead programs designed to benefit vulnerable populations in the community, caring for the needs of the community is the sole purpose and single focus of the Department of Community Health and Education at Cedars-Sinai. The Department of Community Health and Education is responsible for facilitating a planned and sustained approach to working with the community and partnering with other community-based organizations to increase access to preventive health information and to deliver community health services.

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\$318,000, awarded from CCF's Centinela Medical Care Fund, established the C.O.A.C.H. Healthy Smiles Room at the South Bay Family Health Care Center in Inglewood. This fun and interactive setting is designed for children and their families to learn creative and practical ways to improve oral health. Visual aids, including giant tooth models and toothbrushes, puppets, food replicas and sugar-content displays are used to assist in the educational experience. Oral health screenings and referrals are also provided.

At one C.O.A.C.H. Healthy Smiles program, grant-funded registered dental hygienist Jill Zappia screened Gabriel and Eddie. Given their extreme need for dental care and their lack of insurance, they both qualified for the C.O.A.C.H. Healthy Smiles Scholarship Fund through L.A. Care. By partnering with the Ambulatory Care Center Dental Clinic, C.O.A.C.H. Healthy Smiles was able to refer the two boys to the clinic for examinations, X-rays and treatment. Denis Weintraub, DDS, Director of Dentistry at Cedars-Sinai, committed time to examine Gabriel and Eddie. Treatment plans have been developed, and dental care is being provided for the two boys - both of whom require extensive dental work.

To date, C.O.A.C.H. Healthy Smiles has provided more than 20,000 dental screenings and/or education services at over 50 community sites, and looks forward to continuing partnerships to meet the oral health needs of underserved children in our community.



CEDARS-SINAI MEDICAL CENTER.

Community Health and Education

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