

Connecticut Children's Office for Community Child Health

Raising healthy, successful children takes more than just health care.



The Need

Research shows the excellence of medical and surgical care provided to children only accounts for 10 percent of their overall healthy development. To tackle the other 90 percent, Connecticut Children's Office for Community Child Health (the Office) is leading the way in addressing the social, environmental, and behavioral factors that keep children from reaching their full potential.

Connecticut Children's Medical Center formed the Office in 2012 to build stronger child-serving systems across all sectors serving children and families. The Office ensures collaboration between our hospital's 15 community-oriented programs. It also enhances collaboration between those programs and our growing network of community-based partners, which now stands at more than 150 organizations. As a result of its pioneering work, Office programs and innovations are making a difference for children and families in Connecticut and about 30 states around the country.

What We Do

Promoting Healthy Development:

Office programs promote health, early detection of concerns, and intervention for all children, not only for those with complex medical conditions but also for those who are at risk for poor outcomes. We also strengthen families by helping them access support systems and teaching them to advocate for their children.

Building Stronger Child-Serving Systems:

The Office connects a diverse array of existing community-based programs to each other, and to our community-oriented hospital programs, to streamline services for families, reduce duplication in service provision, and ensure programs operate efficiently and effectively.

Enhancing Innovation:

The Office recruits and assists innovators with promising approaches designed to close existing gaps in care and improve health outcomes for children.

Strengthening Clinical Care Delivery:

Office programs have a measurable impact inside our hospital walls through innovations that strengthen clinical care delivery and connect medical center services to community services. Our programs also enhance the quality of care provided by community physicians.



Select Examples of Office Programs:

The Office oversees 15 community-oriented programs that address critical issues in children's lives that have the potential to adversely affect their health and development. Programs and initiatives include:

Our **Help Me Grow National Center** supports early childhood system building efforts in 28 affiliate states by supporting affiliates in developing systems to advance developmental promotion; the earliest possible detection of delays and disorders; and to ensure children and families are referred and linked to community-based resources. Across the country, the Help Me Grow National Network served 81,140 children in 2017.

As an affiliate of the National Network, Help Me Grow Connecticut served 4,065 children last year through its centralized access point, United Way 211 Child Development Infoline, which supports families, community-based providers, and physicians in accessing information and resources to promote optimal child development.

Connecticut Children's Center for Care Coordination (the Center) coordinates medical, developmental, social and legal services for children with complex medical conditions, behavioral concerns, and those at risk for delays and disorders due to poverty and other social factors.

The Center has connected more than 8,500 children to programs and services. In addition, its pilot program embedding care coordinators in Connecticut Children's Emergency Department to connect children in behavioral health crisis to community supports has served more than 530 patients.

Connecticut Children's Co-Management Program expands the capacity of primary care providers to address common problems such as headaches, obesity and anxiety/depression. Primary care physicians utilize referral guidelines developed through the program, which reduces costs by maintaining care for some conditions in the primary care setting while freeing up subspecialists to treat problems that truly warrant their level of care.

Co-Management now offers referral guidelines for 32 conditions, with guidelines for another 18 conditions under development. Since late 2013, clinicians have used resources on the Co-Management referral guidelines webpage nearly 8,000 times. Co-Management resulted in the availability of 1,076 additional patient visit slots in our Endocrinology and Neurology departments over a one-year period.

Connecticut Children's Healthy Homes Program makes children's homes healthier, safer and more energy efficient. The program provides qualified homeowners and tenants with inspections and plans for the removal of lead and safety hazards; financial assistance for remediation; relocation assistance during construction; referrals to low-cost or no-cost weatherization programs to increase energy efficiency; and education about maintaining healthy and safe homes.

To date, Healthy Homes has made more than 2,500 housing units, in which more than 1,600 children under age 6 reside, lead safe; eliminated hazards in about 350 housing units and installed safety equipment in more than 640 additional units; and educated more than 38,000 people about lead hazards.

Connecticut Children's Injury Prevention Center (IPC) engages in research, community outreach, education, training, and public policy advocacy to reduce preventable injuries and violence to children. Its three primary focus areas are teen driving safety, teen suicide prevention, and domestic violence prevention. Throughout its more than 25-year history, IPC has successfully advocated for stronger graduated driver licensing (GDL) laws, child passenger safety laws, bicycle helmet laws, and firearm safety laws.

In a 2010 study of Connecticut's GDL law, IPC researchers documented a 40 percent decrease in motor vehicle crashes among 16-year-old drivers and a 30 percent decrease among 17-year-olds. Crash rates among young drivers with passengers fell even more, with a 65 percent decrease among 16-year-olds and a 53 percent decrease among 17-year-olds.

Hartford Youth HIV Identification and Linkage (HYHIL) Consortium works to prevent the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases among youth. The program provides interactive prevention education, community engagement and outreach, and youth friendly HIV/STD screenings. The consortium also links youth to medical services, employment services and other community resources.

In 2017, the HYHIL Health Interactive Project reached more than 1,650 youth in local schools and more than 3,000 households through social media.

Kohl's Start Childhood Off Right (SCOR) Program is an initiative of the Office that seeks to prevent childhood obesity from birth to age 2. SCOR has re-established a childhood wellness alliance consisting of 26 Hartford partners, organizations, and other stakeholders; it has reached 124 children and families in Hartford through wellness events; it is engaging with the community through media events and social media; and it plans to educate pediatric primary care providers and community outreach workers on counseling families about healthy nutrition and activity.

