

Project HEALTH Programs

Hospital-Based Advocacy Programs

Family Help Desk/Community Resource Center provides families entering pediatric primary care clinics with information, referrals, and advocacy on issues such as housing, job training, child care, and food. *(All Sites)*

Adolescent Resource Center provides guidance and mentoring to teens visiting primary care clinics. *(Boston)*

Project Baby works to ensure that new mothers leave the hospital with information on how to obtain basic necessities such as health insurance and infant car seats. *(Boston)*

Advocating Success for Kids works with parents, doctors, and teachers to address the individual needs of children with learning disabilities and behavioral problems. *(Boston)*

Women's Resource Center provides women and their families with information, support, and advocacy on health-related issues. *(Boston)*



Community-Based After-School Programs

Asthma Swimming Program teaches children with asthma the science behind their asthma and strategies for managing their disease while improving their lung capacity through swimming. *(All Sites)*

Diabetes Program provides children who have Type 1 diabetes with mentoring, peer support, lessons on the science behind diabetes, and strategies for managing symptoms. *(New York)*

Girls Fitness & Nutrition (FitNut) and Boys Sports & Nutrition (SportNut) Programs combines exercise and lessons on nutrition to improve the health of adolescents who are obese or at risk of obesity. *(FitNut: All Sites; SportNut: Boston)*

Ujima provides peer group activities, tutoring, and mentoring to immune-compromised children. *(New York)*

STRIVE provides mentoring, tutoring, health education, college preparation, and peer support for teenagers with sickle cell disease. *(Boston, New York, DC)*



Major funders of Project HEALTH include:

The Novartis US Foundation
The Aetna Foundation
The Ruddle Memorial Youth Foundation
AMERIGROUP Foundation
The Child Health Center Board
First Data Western Union Foundation

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Our Mission

Project HEALTH works to ensure that every child grows up free from the obstacles imposed by poor health.

Our Model

Project HEALTH brings together creative and energetic college volunteers with experienced and dedicated health professionals to break the link between poverty and negative pediatric health outcomes and provide inner-city children with equal opportunity to lead healthy lives. The model consists of three components:

Service

Project HEALTH undergraduate volunteers invest their time in developing and implementing public health programs for children. They leverage the resources of urban medical centers, universities, and community organizations to broaden the scope of health care and health education available to families in their areas.

Mentoring

Each program is matched with one or more mentors: physicians, lawyers, nurses, and social workers who educate volunteers about the specific medical and social needs of children in urban communities, connect them to community resources, and guide their work.

Reflection

At weekly reflection sessions, volunteers place the work they do with individual families into broader social contexts. By bringing in health professionals, professors, community leaders, and policymakers, reflection sessions allow volunteers to address a range of topics—from program evaluation to trends in public policy—and consider how to increase the impact of their programs.



Our Programs

Project HEALTH's programs improve child health through two kinds of interventions:

Hospital-Based Advocacy Programs use clinic visits as a point of entry to address the broad-ranging issues that affect child health. Volunteers in these programs extend the scope of care at urban medical centers by connecting families with community and government resources critical to their health and economic survival and directly advocating for them in these systems.

Community-Based After-School Programs provide health education, mentoring, tutoring, and structured physical activity to children and youth with chronic illnesses. These programs extend health care into the settings where children live their lives every day, enabling participants and their families to incorporate practices that improve their health into their daily lives.

Our Impact

In the past year, Project HEALTH volunteers have had a substantial impact on the lives of 3,000 families throughout Boston, Providence, New York, and the District of Columbia. Project HEALTH programs:

Improve Health Outcomes in Urban Youth

Evaluation data shows that 100% of the participants in the Boston Girls Fitness and Nutrition Program improved in at least one fitness measure: sit-ups, push-ups, flexibility, and/or heart rate.

Connect Families with Critical Resources

The Harlem Community Resource Center connects over 200 families per year to resources they need. The Fall 2002 program successfully resolved 62% of its cases, which dealt with such issues as child care, food, and job training.

Empower Families to Meet Their Own Health Needs

The mother of one DC Asthma Swim participant commented, "I've noticed so many improvements in [my daughter]. She knows more about how asthma affects her body. She has made friends with other children who understand what it is like to have asthma, and she has become a much better swimmer."

Develop Critical Undergraduate Leadership Skills

Project HEALTH transforms the life paths of its college volunteers. As one Project HEALTH alumna and current medical student explains, "Put simply, my involvement in Project HEALTH has not only deepened my commitment to public service but also motivated me to become a public leader and public actor."

Our Network

In February 1996, Project HEALTH began as a pilot program in Boston with ten undergraduate volunteers. Since then, the organization has expanded to New York, Providence, and Washington, DC. Three hundred volunteers from colleges in these four cities now put in more than 65,000 hours of service per year.

The Project HEALTH network includes many individual and organizational partners without whom our work would not be possible. Major institutional partners include the following:

Boston

Boston Medical Center
Children's Hospital Boston
Harvard University
Hennigan Community Center
Madison Park Community Center

New York

Columbia University
Community Impact
Harlem Hospital Center
Harlem YMCA

Providence

Brown University
Boys and Girls Club of Providence,
Southside branch
Lifespan/Rhode Island Hospital/
Hasbro Children's Hospital
Swearer Center for Public Service

Washington, DC

Anthony Bowen YMCA
Children's National Medical Center
The George Washington University
Greater Washington Boys and Girls Club,
Eastern Branch

