



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

Jim Doyle, Governor
Karen E. Timberlake, Secretary

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Child Wellness and Prevention Program Starts Today in Milwaukee

Project LAUNCH to Expand and Enhance Wellness Services for Young Children and Families

The Department of Health Services announces a new partnership with the City of Milwaukee Health Department to help improve the health of young children and their families in Milwaukee. Project LAUNCH will promote the wellness of children from birth to 8 years of age by addressing the physical, emotional, social, cognitive and behavioral aspects of their development.

“The better start we can give our children, the healthier and happier they will be as adolescents and adults,” says DHS Secretary Karen Timberlake. “We want to give our families and children the support they need. Project LAUNCH will target families burdened with issues associated with poverty including a high percentage of infants born at low birth weight, late entry of pregnant women into prenatal care, childhood lead poisoning, high rates of sexually transmitted diseases, high rates of unemployment, lack of education, excessive use of drugs, high crime rates, and high teen pregnancy rate.”

“The City of Milwaukee Health Department will use a wide range of evidence-based public health strategies to ensure the wellness of children in our community,” says City of Milwaukee Health Commissioner of Health Bevan Baker. “These strategies will expand services provided through our Empowering Families of Milwaukee and Nurse-Family Partnership home visitation programs and will include the provision of mental health consultation for childcare and early education providers, integration of behavioral health and primary care, developmental assessments, family strengthening programs, and parenting skills training.”

“In addition, the Health Department will coordinate a Young Child Wellness Council in Milwaukee to develop a comprehensive child wellness system of care within the city,” Baker says. The Council will consist of representatives from public health, private health systems, mental health providers, child welfare, early childhood agencies, and local family resource centers.

Project LAUNCH will work with expectant and parenting families and their children from birth up to 8 years old living in 53204, 53205, 53206, 53208, 53210, 53212, 53218, and 53233 zip codes.

Wisconsin was one of twelve states to receive a Project LAUNCH grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA), which provides grants in the amount of \$850,000 each year. Wisconsin’s Project LAUNCH grant begins today, October 1, 2009, and will be available for the next five years through 2014. DHS will contract with the Center for Urban Population Health to undertake SAMHSA’s required evaluation of this project.

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