



Children's in the Community Spring 2022 Newsletter

Children's in the Community is a quarterly newsletter that highlights UPMC Children's efforts in the community, celebrates the successes and achievements of program partners, and connects people and partners to important resources.

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Today's school nurse is so much more than the stereotype of "ice, lice and band-aids."

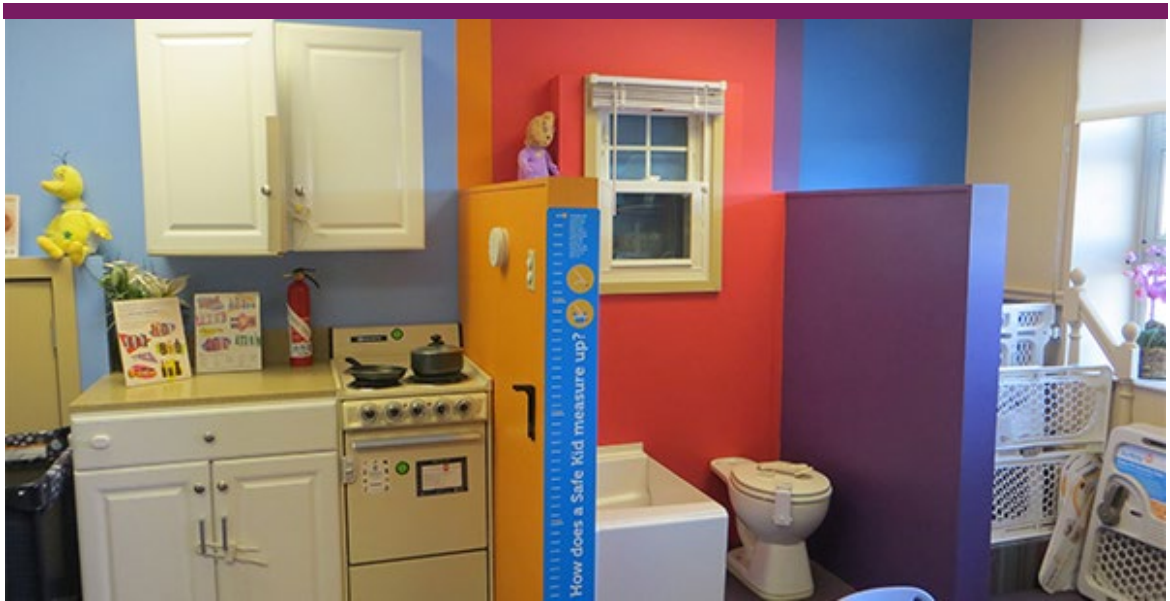
School nurses serve as a **critical health hub** for students, ensuring that students are **ready for learning** by **managing complex, chronic conditions**; identifying and **addressing mental health issues**; **leveling the field** on health disparities and promoting healthy behaviors; enrolling children in health insurance and **connecting families to healthcare providers**; **handling medical emergencies**...and now, navigating through the COVID-19 pandemic by testing, **tracking and vaccinating** students and school personnel.



School nurses are essential...for healthy kids...healthy schools...and healthy communities.

Celebrating School Nurse Partners

School nurses and nurse practitioners are critical to the health and safety of children, and to helping them establish lifelong healthy behaviors. UPMC Children's is proud to partner with all school nurses and especially grateful to the 25 regional school nurses and practitioners who helped establish and now serve on the School Nurse Advisory Group. Together with Children's Community Health, Clinical Resource Management, and the PA Pediatric Health Network, school nurse advisors collaborate on strategies for increasing communication and collaboration across the healthcare spectrum with a goal of helping young people, and the families who care for them, reach their full potential. For more information about the School Nurse Advisory Group, contact [Kristi Burry](#).



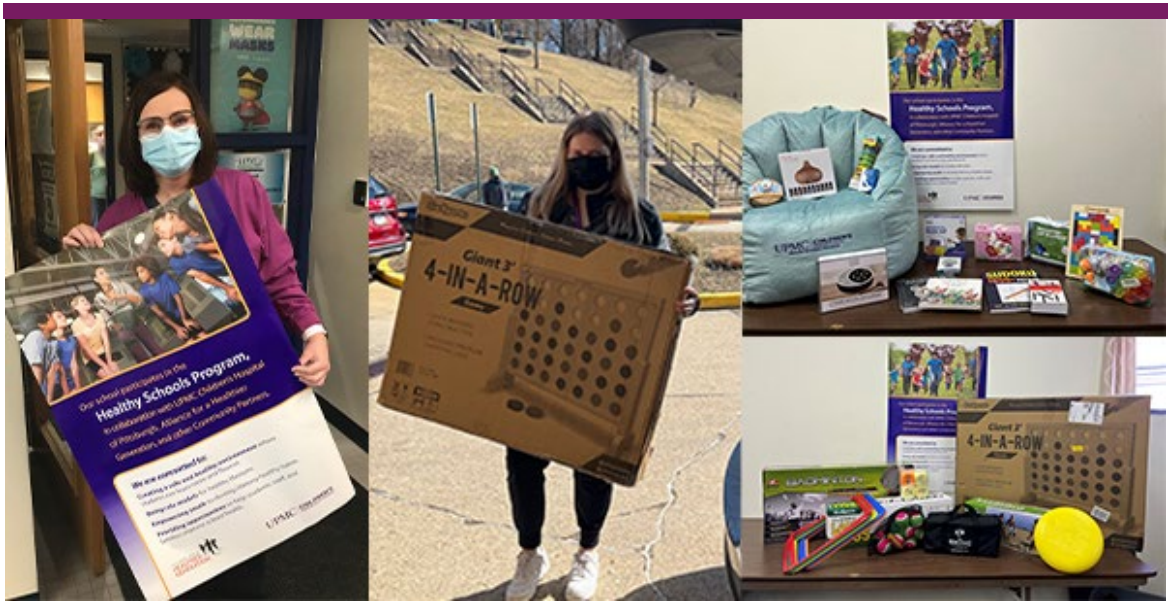
Re-Opening UPMC Children's Safety Center

The Injury Prevention team at UPMC Children's is pleased to announce the re-opening of the hospital's Safety Center to the public. Please visit or refer your clients and families to the Safety Center to complete a home safety assessment and to receive education, hands-on skill development, and up to three safety resources at no cost. Resources include stair gates, smoke detectors, cabinet latches, and firearm locks. Most resources are geared to children from birth to 5 years, but we also have bike helmets for all ages. Bring your child with you and we can get them properly fitted. The center is in the main hospital on the 6th Floor in the Family Resource Center. Just stop at the front desk in the lobby of the hospital to sign in and show your ID (driver's license, etc.). The Safety Center is open Monday through Friday from noon to 4 p.m. No appointment is necessary but if you want to call ahead, please contact [412-864-9783](tel:412-864-9783) or contact [Chris Vitale](#). We look forward to welcoming the community and working together to keep children safe at home.



Working Together to Provide Groceries to Families in Need

UPMC Children's has partnered with Giant Eagle to provide free groceries to patients and families who reported food insecurity during their hospital visit. This partnership was made possible by Bento, a technology platform that allows participants to order groceries exclusively via text message. When orders are placed, participants pick up their groceries from the curbside pickup of participating Giant Eagle locations. Thanks to our partners, this free service has been extended to 40 families for eight weeks. We look forward to continued work with Giant Eagle to improve food access for patients and families served by UPMC Children's Hospital.



Awarding Healthy Schools Partners

Congratulations to 49 Healthy Schools partners who received incentive prizes for their commitment to creating a healthier school environment for youth and school staff. Each school participated in the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's [Thriving Schools Integrated Assessment](#) to become eligible for the incentive, and chose from seven health and wellness-themed kits curated by the Community Health Team at UPMC Children's including; Staff Wellness Room, Student Calm Down Room, Recess Kit, Walk to School Safety, Active Hallways, Healthy Lunchrooms, and a Healthy Schools Snack Cart. We are excited to offer this incentive to committed school partners and further enable them to create a supportive and health-promoting school community. Contact [Brianna Adamcik](#) for more information.



Encouraging Healthy Hygiene and Self-care

Twin Rivers Elementary School in McKeesport Area School District hosted a *Love Yourself* week that began Monday, February 14th. This week was dedicated to teaching students about wellness and self-care. All students were gifted a self-care package filled with personal care items and UPMC Children's Community Health team visited the school to talk with students in grades K–5 about personal hygiene and keeping their bodies healthy.

Keeping Kids Safe from Lead

Lead exposure, even in small amounts, can cause significant harm to a child. Luckily, effective solutions are available at no cost to households in Allegheny County. UPMC Children's has partnered with Allegheny County Economic Development to identify patients who have elevated blood lead levels and connect their families to the Allegheny Lead Safe Homes program, which provides free lead testing and renovations for those who qualify. UPMC Children's Community Health will be assisting families with support throughout the application and onboarding process. Contact [Abby Carpenter](#) to learn more.



Supporting Men as Fathers, Partners, and Community Members

Family Care Connection (FCC) offers a variety of opportunities for men to engage in programs and services that encourage them in their roles as fathers, husbands, partners, and community members. Through four meeting groups, there is quality programming accommodating the unique needs of each community.

In Mt. Oliver, families have participated in virtual parent-child activities accompanied with educational materials, such as "Reading Together with Dad" and "Indoor Scavenger Hunt" activities. The Lawrenceville location has encouraged men to communicate with each other about everyday issues through open discussion forums while FCC East (Braddock, Rankin, and Turtle Creek) families have stayed connected to local resources via mentoring activities and the *Men Connected* monthly newsletter. And in Penn Hills, staff work hand in hand with community supports to advocate for fathers and families who are experiencing lead contamination and poisoning from their homes.

We also recently launched, "Caught Being a Dad," an outreach project that involves rewarding men throughout Allegheny County with supportive resources to enhance quality time spent with their children in the community. Resources include a gift card, information about family center

services, and educational materials on fathering. In December, all the Men Connected groups came together for a field trip to the Santa Trolley at the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum. This was a great chance for families from different communities to meet and have a unique learning experience. Be on the lookout for more events from the Men Connected groups. For more information, please contact, [Shane Isasky](#) or John Burwell.



Welcoming New Babies (and New Staff) to Hello Baby

The UPMC Children's Family Care Connection (FCC) welcomed Arianna Boff into her new role as service coordinator at the beginning of 2022. Arianna joins colleagues Leah and Darla in advancing Allegheny County's [Hello Baby](#) initiative. With Arianna's help, the team is better positioned to serve the 30+ families who are referred to the program each month. The Hello Baby team will also be able to provide more robust programming to reach new parents through take-home learning activity kits, virtual programs and engaging social media. Contact [Darla Sherlock](#) to learn more about [Hello Baby](#).

Increasing Access to Evidence-based Parenting Programs

The Early Childhood Collaborative of [The Pittsburgh Study](#) is working to increase access to evidence-based parenting programs for families with young children, especially for those facing economic challenges and health disparities. This effort has led to a new initiative funded by the PA Department of Health in collaboration with the Allegheny County Health Department's WIC program aimed at promoting cardiovascular health in mothers of infants facing health concerns such as gestational diabetes and hypertension. A second project in collaboration with Allegheny County's Department of Human Services (DHS) supports use of parenting programs, including Family Check-Up, for families who participate in Hello Baby, have received support from Child Protective Services, or request childcare support through DHS' Early Learning Resource Center. For more information about the Early Childhood Collaborative of The Pittsburgh Study, please contact [Chelsea Weaver Krug](#).



Supporting Families through the Basic Needs Fund

The UPMC Children's Community Health Basic Needs Fund has seen significant growth in the past year both in funding and requests. As families continue to work through job instability, rising cost of living and

childcare challenges, it is critical to come alongside and build on their existing strengths. Providing resources that are just out of reach in times of crisis, such as winter coats, utility bill payments, and car repair costs enables parents to focus on stability and care for their children. We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to UPMC Children's Hospital Foundation and to all our partners and funders for enabling us to grow this fund and readily support social and basic needs for more families in our community. Learn more about the [Basic Needs Fund](#).

Connecting the Community to COVID-19 Testing and Vaccination Locations

Looking for COVID-19 testing or vaccination locations? UPMC Children's Community Health has simplified the search by developing comprehensive and user-friendly community guides. By scanning the QR codes, you can view a list of different providers and search for [tests](#) and [vaccines](#) close to you. Please feel free to share these guides with your network!

Community Partner Spotlight

Giant Eagle brings Fresh Food to Pittsburgh Neighborhoods

The Giant Eagle Mobile Market is officially open for business! The mobile market will be bringing fresh food to five Pittsburgh neighborhoods with historically low food access, visiting community sites in Larimer, Sheraden, Braddock, Rankin, and Homewood. The Giant Eagle mobile market accepts credit, debit, SNAP/EBT, and gift cards. See full schedule below!

Full Launch Week

Community Stop	Address	Recurring Schedule
The Kingsley Association	6435 Frankstown Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15206	Thursdays, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Jasmine Nyree Campus	3011 Landis Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15204	Fridays, Noon – 3 p.m.
Heritage Community Initiatives	404 Braddock Avenue, Braddock, PA 15104	Saturdays, 1 – 3:30 p.m.
Emmanuel Pittsburgh	245 Third Avenue, Rankin, PA 15014	Sundays, Noon – 3 p.m.
YWCA Greater Pittsburgh	6907 Frankstown Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15208	Mondays, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.



Community Staff Spotlight: Elaine Jans

Congratulations to Elaine Jans for celebrating 30 years with UPMC Children's Family Care Connection!

What does it take to spend 30 years of one's career with a single employer? Elaine shared that the connection and opportunities she has gained from her work, in addition to room for growth and flexibility for her

family have kept her committed to working for UPMC for 30 years. In her own words,

"I was hired through a grant, so I began with the belief I would be working for Family Care Connection (FCC) for 3 years. Being provided the autonomy and support to develop and implement a program within the family support model was exciting and encouraging. Now, 30 years later, I feel grateful for the ways in which FCC has provided me opportunities to grow and shift into new roles and positions. It's led me to develop a deep sense of loyalty and accountability to UPMC Children's FCC. Even with those opportunities, I doubt I would have continued for this long if it weren't for the connections I have made with amazing people. The staff and the families, some of whom I still am in contact with from my first days of work at Rankin FCC. So many families I have encountered through my years here have inspired me."

Her teammates (some of whom have known her for 20+ years) comment: "Elaine always goes the extra mile for staff and families. She brings a wide breadth of experience to FCC and Community Health and is an asset to our team."

"Elaine's humor, ability to listen and understand, and words of encouragement are always a source of grounding for me. She is a reminder of everything that is good in the field of family support."

"Elaine is selfless, witty, steady and kind-hearted. Working alongside her is an honor and a delight. We are thankful for each year and each day."

Cheers to you, Elaine! Congratulations on 30 years with UPMC Children's FCC, and 30 years of supporting children, families, and communities.

Children's Community Health works together with health care and community partners to improve health outcomes, reduce health disparities, and elevate quality of life for children and families in the communities where they live, learn, work, and play. Visit [UPMC Children's Community Health](#) to learn more about our services and programs. Contact [Anne Marie Kuchera](#) for questions or more information.
