



HEALTH BEAT



Volume 1, Issue 7

August 11, 2008

Calendar of Events:

- **August 6**—WOW
- **August 12**—TIKE Immunization Clinic, BCHD Eastern Health District, 620 N Caroline Street, 9:30 AM—2:00 PM
- **August 12**—Join Mayor Dixon and Cabinet Members for a Neighborhood Conversation from 6:00-8:00 at Loyola College, Andrew White Student Hall, 2nd Floor, 4501 N Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21210.
- **August 13**—TIKE Immunization Clinic, BCHD Druid Health District, 1515 W North Avenue, 9:30 AM—2:00 PM
- **August 13**—WOW
- **August 14**—TIKE Immunization Clinic, BCHD Eastern Health District, 620 N Caroline Street, 9:30 AM—2:00 PM
- **August 16**—TIKE Immunization Clinic, First Mount Calvary Baptist Church, 1142 N Fulton Avenue, 10:00 AM—1:00 PM
- **August 18**—TIKE Immunization Clinic, East Baltimore Development Inc., 1731 E Chase Street, 10:00 AM—2:00 PM
- **August 19**—TIKE Immunization Clinic, BCHD Eastern Health District, 620 N Caroline Street, 9:30 AM—2:00 PM
- **August 20**—TIKE Immunization Clinic, BCHD Druid Health District, 1515 W North Avenue, 9:30 AM—2:00 PM
- **August 20**—WOW
- **August 21**—TIKE Immunization Clinic, BCHD Eastern Health District, 620 N Caroline Street, 9:30 AM—2:00 PM
- **August 23**—TIKE Immunization Clinic, Manna Bible, 3043 W Belvedere Avenue, 10:00 AM—1:00 PM
- **August 25**—Research Rounds
- **August 26**—TIKE Immunization Clinic, BCHD Eastern Health District, 620 N Caroline Street, 9:30 AM—2:00 PM
- **August 27**—TIKE Immunization Clinic, BCHD Druid Health District, 1515 W North Avenue, 9:30 AM—2:00 PM
- **August 28**—TIKE Immunization Clinic, BCHD Eastern Health District, 620 N Caroline Street, 9:30 AM—2:00 PM
- **August 27**—WOW

Message from the Commissioner

This month's newsletter focuses on Baltimore Healthcare Access, Inc., a quasi-public agency that oversees a range of critical health services.

Since I became Health Commissioner in December 2005, I have been impressed by the accomplishments of the agency and the dedication of its staff.

The core function of Healthcare Access is enrolling city residents in health insurance. In recent years, Healthcare Access has set up a tracking system for buprenorphine patients, overseen a network of more than 75 volunteering college students on three campuses, promoted smoking cessation to pregnant women, led

outreach efforts to the homeless, and helped frequent callers to 911. Healthcare Access also works closely with the Division of Maternal Child Health in evaluating high-risk families and referring them for home visiting.

I would encourage everyone to visit Healthcare Access's website and download their guide to low-cost or no-cost health care in Baltimore. This is a great resource to referrals for residents we may encounter in all sorts of activities. I'd also encourage everyone to keep the Healthcare Access number 410 649 0500 handy for anyone who needs health insurance.

I hope the rest of your summer is relaxing and peaceful.

Homeless Service Provider Appreciation Day

On September 18, 2008, the Tuberculosis (TB) Control Program will celebrate the strong partnerships that have been established and maintained between the TB Control Program and several of Baltimore City's homeless service providers. Continued collaboration has allowed for successful TB infection control among our homeless population. By working together, we have raised TB awareness and knowledge, identified individuals infected with *Mycobacterium Tuberculosis*, developed an important link to TB care and implemented environmental controls to decrease TB transmission.

The following organizations are being recognized for their outstanding support in furthering our efforts to eliminate TB in Baltimore City:

- American Rescue Workers
- Baltimore Rescue Mission
- City Emergency Winter Shelter
- Health Care for the Homeless
- Beans and Bread

Employee Spotlight: Baltimore HealthCare Access



Risselly Toledo is this month's Employee Spotlight!

This month Baltimore HealthCare Access highlights Risselly Toledo! Risselly has been with Baltimore HealthCare Access since March of 2006 starting as an Outreach Advocate for Medicaid enrollees. Her current assignment as lead on the Operation CARE project is by all accounts her most challenging and she loves it!

Operation CARE began in May of this year to combat a serious problem in Baltimore's busy public ambulance service - repeat non-emergency 911 callers. About 2,000 of the roughly

150,000 calls to the City's 911 system were from the same 91 people. Many of these repeat callers lack health insurance or have other barriers to getting health care in the community. That is where Risselly comes in. Risselly starts with a home visit and needs assessment including helping those that are uninsured apply for health coverage. Sometimes the caller may have a simple problem such as not having glucometer strips at home. Other times Risselly has to arrange for hospital care, substance abuse treatment, and even adult day care.

Risselly's hands-on approach and tenaciousness have made this new program a phenomenal success. Calls from Operation Care clients are down significantly. Better care for the clients, better resource management for the City - a true win-win situation. Risselly is truly a public servant - the lives she touches in Baltimore are better for her attention and care. Risselly will receive her BSN in Nursing later this month.

The Office of Grants and Policy Development

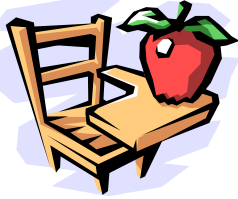
The Office of Grants and Policy Development ensures that the Baltimore City Health Department finds and successfully applies for grants to support its operations. The Office is responsible for writing policies that promote and are consistent with the conduct of the Health Department.

Work Out Wednesdays

Every Wednesday at noon, BCHD employees meet in the Executive Office ready for a 20 minute walk along one of two routes: Inner Harbor or Mount



Back to School Health and Safety Tips



On August 25th, thousands of children across Maryland

will be returning to school after the summer vacation. The following are useful Back-to-School health and safety tips.

HEALTHY LUNCH CHOICES

Use school lunches as a chance to steer your child toward good choices. You can't force a child, but you can make it easier to eat healthy.

- Encourage your child to choose cafeteria meals that include fruits, vegetables, lean meats and whole grains, such as wheat bread instead of white.

- Avoid fried foods when possible and choose milk or water as a drink.
- In addition to old standbys, such as peanut butter and jelly, try pitas or wrap sandwiches stuffed with grilled chicken or veggies.
- Try soups and salads, if your child is willing, and don't forget last night's leftovers as an easy lunchbox filler.

For more information please visit http://kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_fit/nutrition/lunch.html.

BACKPACK SAFETY

Backpacks come in all sizes, colors, fabrics and shapes and help kids of all ages express their own personal sense of style. They can be a useful tool for children if used properly. To prevent injury, the American Academy of Pediatrics

recommends the following:

- Choose a backpack with wide, padded shoulder straps and a padded back.
- Pack light. Organize the backpack to use all of its compartments. Pack heavier items closest to the center of the back. The backpack should never weigh more than 10-20% of the student's body weight.
- Always use both shoulder straps. Slung a backpack over one shoulder can strain muscles.
- Consider a rolling backpack. This type of backpack may be a good choice for students who must tote a heavy load. Remember that rolling backpacks still must be carried up stairs, and they may be difficult to roll in snow.

For additional information please visit http://www.aap.org/advocacy/backpack_safety.PDF.

The Franky Fund

Each year, the Baltimore Animal Rescue & Care Shelter (BARCS) receives hundreds of animals that are seriously sick or injured and in need of immediate medical attention.

Unfortunately, BARCS alone does not have the funding for expensive, specialized treatment of these homeless pets. Without donations to support their life-saving care, sadly many of these animals are humanely euthanized so that they don't suffer—dogs and cats that would otherwise be wonderful pets. The Franky Fund will provide the medical treatment necessary to treat these unfortunate homeless animals. With your help, we can give innocent pets another chance at life. It's a critical situation in need of immediate attention. Please help us help them—today!



Tripod is one of the many animals helped by the Franky Fund.

You can donate* online by going to the BARCS website at baltimoreanimalshelter.org. Checks and money orders can be made out to "Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter, Inc." and mailed to: Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter, Inc., *Franky Fund*, 301 Stockholm Street, Baltimore, MD 21230.

On behalf of all the sick, hurt and homeless animals, BARCS would like to thank you for your generosity!

*All donations are tax-deductible.

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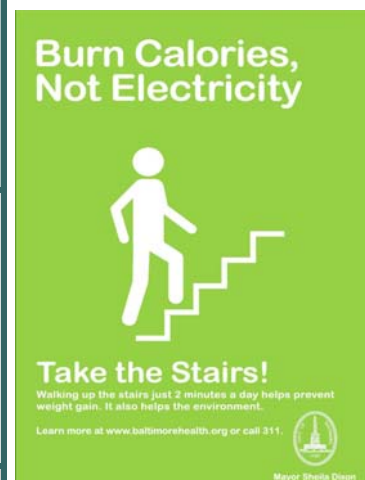
Join BCHD's 2008 Start! Baltimore Heart Walk Team, and help fight the nation's No. 1 and No. 3 killers—heart disease and stroke. The event will take place on Saturday, October 25, 2008, from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM. The 3 mile walk will start in Federal Hill Park and continue through the Inner Harbor. To join the Health Department's team, please contact Shannon Cosgrove at shannon.cosgrove@baltimorecity.gov. For more information on the Heart Walk, please visit www.startgreaterbaltimoremd.org.



The Bureau of STD/HIV Prevention will be providing free HIV and Syphilis testing at the 34th Annual Powwow, August 22-24, 2008, at 400 S. Linwood Avenue.

Take the Stairs

On Monday, August 4th, the Health Department conducted a multi-agency press event with the Department of Public Works and Cleaner Greener Baltimore. The agencies are collaborating on an effort to encourage City employees to "Burn Calories and Not Electricity," by unveiling a new sign to be posted at each elevator door in downtown city buildings.



This sign will be posted in all city buildings, encouraging use of the stairs.

Office of External Affairs

The offices of Legislative Affairs and Public Information have been incorporated into the Office of External Affairs.

The Office of External Affairs is responsible for the legislative and media activities of the Baltimore City Health Department. These duties include the coordinating, planning, monitoring and dissemination of the Department's legislative positions and all internal and external media communications.

The Office of External Affairs will work closely with the Commissioner, Chief of Staff, Deputy Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners and Quasi Presidents to promote the Department's mission, vision and policies.

Save the Date for BARCStoberfest!

Mark your calendars now for BARCS biggest fundraiser of the year! The 4th Annual **BARCStoberfest** will be held on **Saturday, October 18, 2008** in Patterson Park (rain date is Oct. 19). Visit the BARCS website at www.baltimoreanimalshelter.org to learn more about this popular family- and pet-friendly festival and to sign up to be a **sponsor**, **vendor**, **volunteer**, or to **donate** to the silent auction. Visit the BARCS website to learn more.

Join us for Research Rounds on Monday, August 25, in the Maxie Collier Conference Room at 210 Guilford Avenue. **Dr. Randolph Rowel** from Morgan State University's School of Public Health and Policy will be presenting "**Cultural Competence and Emergency Management Services: A Public Health Perspective from the Field.**"

Get ready to go back to school! Check out the immunization clinic schedule on the front of the newsletter. For more information call 396-4454 or visit www.baltimorehealth.org/immunization.html.