



*"Health-related problems play a major role in limiting [students'] motivation and ability to learn... This is why reducing educationally relevant health disparities must be a fundamental part of school reform."*

*Charles E. Basch, Teachers College,  
Columbia University*

In this season for giving thanks, many of us are grateful for good health and decent medical care. But for too many children in our region, poor health, malnutrition and lack of access to medical care take a toll on their academic achievement.

That's why **Community Schools Collaboration offers Health programs, which help young people enter the classroom healthy and ready to learn.** Health is one of CSC's three critical components, along with Expanded Learning and Family Engagement.

We partner with community health providers to offer a host of services on site at our school locations, including physicals, immunizations, dental and vision exams, sports and recreation, nutrition and health education.

Please read on to learn more about the ways CSC is improving the health of young people so they can succeed. From all of us at CSC, we wish you a happy - and healthy - Thanksgiving.

## Teens Taking Charge of Their Health

Adolescence can be a time of risk, but CSC's Peer Health Councils are proving that teens not only care about their health, they are leading the way in tackling the health challenges young people face. **This year, CSC students on two high school campuses are taking on one of the most troubling issues: teen drug and alcohol use.**



At each of CSC's three high school campuses, a Peer Health Council brings students together to develop solutions to student health concerns. After surveying their peers, the Health Councils at Tyee and Evergreen determined that drug and alcohol use are serious issues among their classmates. Here are some of the students' findings:

- 70% of youth surveyed said they have used drugs or alcohol.
- 60% of students would not seek help for drug or alcohol use, and 95% would not see a Drug or Alcohol Counselor. Reasons cited include not trusting that adults would be willing to help, and fearing that seeking help would get them in trouble with their parents or their school. **(cont'd on p. 3)**

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## Special Thanks

**Special thanks to Health supporters and partners:**

Action for Healthy Kids  
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City of SeaTac  
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## CSC Youth Share at National Conference



How important is the youth voice in addressing student health? Just ask Josias Jean Pierre and Meseret Alemu, two of Community Schools Collaboration's **Peer Health Leaders**.

Josias and Meseret were two of only four young people who took part in this year's annual American School Health Association conference titled, "Healthy Students... Successful Learners." At the October 13-

16, 2010 gathering in Kansas City, Missouri, more than 1,000 school-based health professionals and educators shared research and ideas about how to support the physical and mental health of children and teens. Meseret and Josias contributed the critically important student perspective to this event.

With the support of CSC Health Director Meagan Darrow and Health Coordinator Amanda Howard, Meseret and Josias, along with two students from the Tacoma School of the Arts, presented on the topic "Engaging Youth in School Health." The students provided attendees with guidance on how to create effective peer health leadership groups in their own communities, and received the highest possible rating for the quality of their workshop. *(cont'd on p. 3)*

## Global Health Focus on SeaTac and Tukwila

The Seattle area is home to world-class hospitals and health providers, and yet many in South King County lack access to care and struggle with poor health. To overcome these disparities, the **G2L: Global to Local** initiative was launched in October.



Four of King County's largest health care institutions—Washington Global Health Alliance, Public Health-Seattle & King County, HealthPoint and Swedish—have joined together with a number of community-based organizations, including Community Schools Collaboration, to implement strategies that have successfully reached underserved communities around the globe.

SeaTac and Tukwila, two cities that are central to CSC's programs, were chosen as pilot sites. With large refugee and immigrant populations, SeaTac and Tukwila are among the most diverse communities in the region. Compared to the rest of King County, these cities have twice the rate of uninsured adults, twice the number of children in poverty, 20% higher death rates, and 2.8 times higher rates of teen births.

The health and community partners are currently meeting to identify needs and outline holistic strategies, which will include ideas such as community health workers, immunization campaigns, and creative uses of technology to deliver health information and care in ways that reach the diverse communities of South King County.

CSC is proud to serve on the Community Advisory and Governance Boards of G2L as we strive to help our students, families, schools and communities become healthier and stronger.

To learn more about **G2L: Global to Local**, please see:

"The Global to Local Initiative: Improving Health in South King County"  
<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/partnerships/G2L.aspx>

A powerful video introduction to G2L on YouTube:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0q-VMvimWhI>

## Facts & Figures

### CSC Health 2009-10 Children served:

Dental screenings: 624  
Additional dental services: 422  
Physicals: 212  
Girls on the Run: 160 girls  
Vaccinations: 70 children, 145 vaccines  
Eye exams and glasses: 8

## Partner Spotlight

**Children lose an estimated 51 million school hours per year due to dental-related illness.\***



The SmileMobile is coming to SeaTac! From Nov. 29-Dec. 3, 2010, this "dental clinic on wheels" will provide exams and follow-up treatment to children who don't have access to dental care.

Sponsored by the WA Dental Service with Seattle Children's Hospital, the SmileMobile provides services for children with serious dental needs. At our schools, CSC handles the logistics and ensures that children most in need of services receive them.

The Smile Mobile will visit Madrona Elementary, 20301 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave South in SeaTac on these days and times:

- Mon. 11/29, 12:45 - 4 PM
- Tue. 11/30, 9:45 AM - 4 PM
- Follow-up appointments on a space available basis through December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Please join us in thanking the SmileMobile for keeping bright smiles on the faces of our children.

*\* Statistic provided by the National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center*

## Teens Taking Charge of Their Health *(cont'd from p. 1)*

The Peer Leaders are addressing teen drug and alcohol use with two approaches. First, the students are letting school health policy makers know that drug policies are too often punitive rather than preventative, and they're making suggestions to improve confidentiality and access to counseling for youth seeking help.

Second, the young people have decided that prevention is the key. At Evergreen, the Peer Leaders are planning a resource fair to give their classmates information about safe, fun, drug-free activities in their communities. At Tyee, the Council has chosen to provide outreach and education to youth at Chinook Middle School in order to reach students before they engage in high-risk behaviors.

Since their start in 2008, the Peer Health Councils have become some of CSC's most successful youth leadership programs. CSC Health Coordinator Amanda Howard and U. of Washington Social Work intern Betti Ann Yancey meet with each council two times per week to provide training on leadership skills, advocacy, and health education, including helping the students work toward Certified Peer Educator credentials.

The Peer Health Councils are also reaching out across the state and nation. During a recent trip to Western Washington University, the youth learned about peer health counseling at the university level. In October, two Peer Health Leaders presented their work before health professionals and educators at the American School Health Association's national conference (see story in this newsletter). And finally, the Peer Health Leaders are active participants in Washington's annual Healthy Schools Summit, which ensures healthy, successful students by encouraging school, community and family partnerships. Together, students are helping other young people to take charge of their health!

## CSC Youth Share at National Conference *(cont'd from p. 2)*

Meseret, a senior at the Health Sciences & Human Services High School on the Evergreen campus, notes that at the conference, "I was given the opportunity to advocate for all the youth who weren't there. My presence put a face behind the statistics about youth of color from low income backgrounds. I showed [people] that students do care about their health, but need to be given a chance to speak."

***"If you believe you can make a change, you can—no matter who says you can't or how many people make fun of you—because of what your goal is."***

***Josias Jean Pierre***

***"I showed teachers, principals, and organizations that students do care about their health, but need to be given a chance to speak."***

***Meseret Alemu***

For Josias, a senior at the Academy of Citizenship and Empowerment at Tyee Educational Complex, the Peer Health Council opened his eyes to the magnitude of problems facing his peers. "I knew drugs and alcohol were bad, but I didn't think it affected me because I wasn't using," he says. "Now I know it's a big issue affecting everyone, because it's killing youth." But Peer Leaders can make a difference. "When kids have an issue, they're more comfortable confiding in another kid, because they think an adult will tell their parents."

Meseret agrees. She describes the biggest benefits of being a peer leader as, "being able to confront issues that have been neglected, and making sure the voices of my peers are heard."

Josias adds that the Peer Health Council is preparing him to achieve his dreams of not only going to college to study counseling psychology, but also of changing the world. "The best part about being a Peer Leader is going to a new level of responsibility, where everyone is depending on you to make a difference. If you believe you can make a change, you can—no matter who says you can't or how many people make fun of you—because of what your goal is."

## About CSC

Community Schools Collaboration (CSC) is an innovative non-profit organization that builds partnerships to create the conditions in which all students can thrive.

CSC coordinates resources and delivers direct services for more than 2,300 students and their families at 16 community schools in the Tukwila and Highline School Districts of South King County, Washington.

Our **mission** is to engage and collaborate with schools and community partners using culturally competent strategies to support child, youth, and family success.

Our **vision** is that all students will graduate from high school prepared for college, career, and citizenship and with positive choices for the future.

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