



## *We're Working Together for a Better Tomorrow*

### Did You Know?

- There is a 30% rise in obesity and chronic diseases in children under age 11.
- 25% of CMS kindergarteners have visible tooth decay.
- About 13% of children between 9-17 years old have an anxiety disorder.
- Nearly two-thirds of boys and three-quarters of girls in juvenile detention centers have a psychiatric disorder.

### Why Is This Important?

Because this is what a child in Charlotte is facing. This is what the future residents and leaders of Charlotte are struggling to overcome in their childhood. And because of this, **the Junior League of Charlotte has decided to take affirmative action to help improve these facts and provide a better tomorrow for our children.**

Starting this year, the Junior League of Charlotte has adopted a **Healthy Child Initiative (HCI)**. Through the HCI, the Junior League of Charlotte's programs, projects and advocacy will focus on the physical, dental and mental health needs of children aged 0-17 years, and their families, in the Charlotte community. The HCI has four main goals:

- Raise awareness of children's health issues
- Partner with community organizations and agencies to address the needs of children in the areas of physical, dental and mental well being, as well as provide the support mechanisms for the entire family.
- Educate and connect the Charlotte community to vital health and wellness services available for children aged 0-17 years.
- Facilitate on-going dialogue among the community and its leaders regarding the physical, dental and mental well being of children and their families living in Mecklenburg County.

### How Will We Do This?

The Junior League of Charlotte will address each area of HCI - physical, dental and mental - through various programs and projects. Programs and projects such as Kids HealthLink, Kids in Motion, Girls on the Run, Chameleon's Journey, Big Shots Saturday, Family Resource Center at the Levine Children's Hospital, and many more.

#### ***Kids HealthLink:***

This first year event will focus on the physical and dental well-being aspect of our HCI.

- Partnering with the International House to provide needed health services to the under-insured in Charlotte.
- Will have free physicals, vision screenings, dental exams and hearing evaluations.
- Cultural performances and international dancing offered as entertainment and education.
- Free immunizations from the Mecklenburg County Department of Health.

#### ***Mental Health Awareness:***

As part of the Junior League of Charlotte's HCI initiative, the Mental Health Awareness committee is tasked with educating our members and the community on childhood mental health issues, helping connect families with children with mental health issues to local and national agencies and support

groups, and developing a marketing campaign to help diminish the stigmatism associated with children and mental illness.

- Extensive education campaign to Junior League members and the community on mental health issues, and what can be done to support children and their families afflicted with a mental illness.
- Serve as a resource for information on mental health issues, prevention, detection and support groups.
- Develop a traveling educational display to use with community partners and in the CMS system.

***JLC Family Resource Center at Levine Children's Hospital:***

The Junior League Family Resource Center will provide free health information for families looking for answers during the difficult time of dealing with the illness of a child. This center will be open to all Charlotte residents, regardless if they receive healthcare services at CMC or not. We see this center becoming the first place families turn to for support groups, health-related research and information, and getting in touch with national resources related to children and teen health issues.

This 2,700 square-foot-state-of-art facility will be equipped with computers, video and print resources, and will be staffed by a clinical librarian who can help guide families to the correct resources. The Family Resource Center will:

- Act as a regional resource of pediatric clinical information
- Provide a computer center to allow caregivers to explore the Internet for resources and to communicate with others from around the world that may be in their same position
- Nurture the growth of support groups that are facilitated by the professional staff
- Link the clinics, physicians and other healthcare providers to the Charlotte community
- Distribute health information to the Charlotte community
- Enable families who come to Charlotte seeking medical services for their child to focus on their child and not worry about where to stay, getting clothes, etc.
- Facilitate training, educational seminars, workshops, and parent to parent networks
- Help families understand more fully the health-related issues that their family may be facing at that time, and more importantly - what can be expected in the future
- Provide resources for safety, prevention and parenting education

As part of the Junior League of Charlotte's commitment to the Family Resource Center, we will provide:

- Trained volunteers to help facilitate the formation of partnerships between Levine Children's Hospital, other health service organizations and the community to develop preventative physical, dental and mental health education programs.
- Resources to help create, organize and deliver these health education programs to the community through forums, seminars, lecture series and health fairs.
- Assistance in the development of a website to connect families with available health services, preventative health education, support groups, as well as a central resource for teachers, doctors, patients and their families.
- Information for parent-to-parent networks and support groups, and help support the needs of these groups.
- Ensure future volunteer staffing and participation by creating a stable volunteer support group.

***The Junior League of Charlotte -  
Making a difference in this community for over 80 years.  
Today, we're planning another 80 years of  
making a better tomorrow for our children.***