metropolitan familyhealth network

Healthwise

Stay *Safe* and *Comfortable* in the Summer Sun

July/August 2023

www.MetropolitanFHN.com

A Message from the President and CEO

Dear Friends,

Every August, community health centers across the country celebrate National Health Center Week. This annual event is dedicated to building awareness of the comprehensive, cost-effective health care provided to people in our community by Federally Qualified Health Centers like Metropolitan Family Health Network (MFHN).

We invite you to join us on Tuesday, August 8, 2023 at 11 a.m. for Metropolitan's special celebration of National Health Center Week. *The event will be held at our 935 Garfield Avenue center, and there will be a food drive, clothing drive, giveaways, snacks, entertainment and more. We hope you will join us! Log on to www.MetropolitanFHN.com and our social media platforms for full details.*

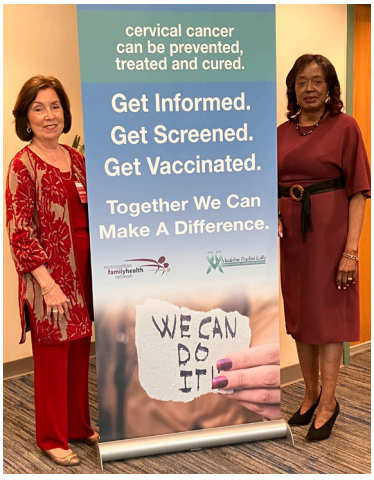
Summer is also a time for back-to-school physicals, immunizations, and dental check-ups, so be sure to schedule your appointments before the rush.

Enjoy your summer!

Joan Dublin

Joan Dublin, RN, MPA, ACHE
President & Chief Executive Officer

MFHN Thanks Madeline Fiadini LoRe Foundation for Generous Gifts



From left, MFL Executive Director Carol Trojan and MFHN President and CEO Joan Dublin.

In May, Madeline Fiadini LoRe (MFL) Foundation Board of Directors Vice President Silvana Buccianti, and MFL Executive Director Carol Trojan presented MFHN with two colposcopes and funding for a full day of free oral cancer screenings. MFHN President and CEO Joan Dublin, and MFHN Chief Operating Officer Scott Carey accepted the gifts.

"Since 2012, our partnership with the Madeline Fiadini LoRe Foundation has benefitted hundreds of patients with life-saving preventive screenings," said Ms. Dublin. "Thanks to their generosity we can continue to provide cancer screenings and more throughout the year. All of us at MFHN are grateful to the Madeline Fiadini LoRe Foundation for their ongoing support."

MFL Board of Directors Vice President Silvana Buccianti and MFHN COO Scott Carey.

How to Be an 'Able' Advocate

One in four adults in the United States lives with a disability. Thirty-three years ago, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) became law, prohibiting discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, transportation, access to government services, and more. Since then, advocates have used their platform to amplify the voices of the disabled; began using diverse terms like "special needs," "differently abled," and "handi-capable" to reflect individual preferences; and formed alliances to support inclusion in everyday activities and create equitable opportunities.

July is Disability Pride Month, a time to recognize the accomplishments of people with disabilities and strengthen alliances. This is also a time to identify barriers that prevent people from living independently and fully engaged in their community, and to help keep these individuals empowered and supported.

Disability should be part of someone's life without defining their identity. Advocacy allows special needs populations to interact fully, participate in more activities, and reject any and all humiliation. Disability rights efforts focus on ensuring disabled people are part of the decision-making processes that impact their health. The disability rights motto is "nothing about us without us."

Disability is not a one-size-fits-all issue. Daily challenges can be visible or invisible. Physical disabilities can affect movement. Cognitive and intellectual disabilities can impact learning and communication. Mental illness can affect the entire family. Sensory perception disabilities can make those affected sensitive to certain sounds, touch, or taste.

Representation goes a long way in disability advocacy. People who lead by example include: Daily Point of Light honoree Jessica Kim, a visually impaired child who created an organization that empowers, educates and connects disabled youth through poetry and programming; Ellie Goldstein, the British model with Down's syndrome; Dr. Victor Pineda, a social development scholar who has spinal muscular atrophy; and Enable Enterprises founder Simon Stevens, who has cerebral palsy and works as a disability consultant, trainer, and advocate. Interviews with people who work to improve lives of their peers, highlight accomplishments, and detail updates on developments impacting the disabled are detailed in Able magazine https://ablemagazine.co.uk.

To be more aware of disability rights, one must engage in active listening; ask people if they need assistance before offering; promote accessibility at home and at public spaces.

MFHN providers can help patients with physical or mental challenges live independent lives and adjust to new challenges. For more information, call 201-478-5800 to schedule an appointment.

Stay Safe and Comfortable in the Sizzling Summer Sun

Summer sports and outings, cultural festivals, street fairs, concerts, long walks, and other activities can be fun even on the hottest and most humid days. **July is UV Safety Awareness Month.** Here's a few tips to protect yourself and your family while enjoying the summer sunshine.

Keep an eye on your vision. Shield your eyes and the sensitive skin around them. Wear sunglasses that provide UVA/UVB protection. Never look directly at the sun.

Loosen and layer up. Tight clothes in a heat wave can be unbearable. Choose lightweight cotton, linen, or rayon in layers you can easily remove. Sunburn can happen within minutes. A shirt over a tank top protects arms and shoulders. Elastic waist pants, chinos, polos, prairie skirts, maxi dresses, and cargo shorts are stylish and comfy.

Put a lid on it. The right hat can protect your scalp, hair, face, ears, and neck from skin cancer. Sunburned scalp can lead to hair loss. Dyed hair fades fast in the sun. Choose floppy oversized hats, baseball caps, bucket hats, and more!

Wear sunscreen. Sun damage can occur while taking mass transit, riding in a car, or walking to the store. Apply a broad-spectrum, SPF 30+ sunscreen.

Seek shade and stay hydrated. Prevent heat exhaustion and heat stroke by limiting time in the sun. Use umbrellas, trees, awnings, and other structures for shade. A reusable water bottle is the go-to summer accessory. Keep it filled.

Keep it fresh. Open windows on breezy days. Pull shades down during heat waves. Use fans or air-conditioning to help beat the heat.

Be mindful of timing. The sun's rays are strongest between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., even on cloudy days. If you have to be outdoors during this time frame, wear protection.

Check yourself. Examine your skin for new growths or moles that change shape or color. Monitor your mental health as well. Studies show that anxiety, depression, and suicides increase when the temperature rises. If you spot something or need assistance, contact your MFHN provider at 201-478-5800.

Tap the Health Benefit of Sweat

Sweating is the body's natural air conditioning. It prevents overheating. One's body temperature can rise when using muscles or just stepping outside on a hot day. When sweat is released, it evaporates from the skin to cool and regulate the body's temperature.

Heavy sweating can cause extreme discomfort and dehydration. Coming out of millions of glands, sweat mixes with bacteria on the skin and hormones from armpits and the groin. This oilier sweat carries an odor associated with gyms and locker rooms.

Excessive heat can trigger sweat that can be embarrassing at school, work, or social activities. One may reach for more deodorant, a shower, cold beverage, and shade. Excessive sweating can cause dehydration and be debilitating and cause weakness and confusion. Drink enough water to replace the sweat that leaves your body throughout the day. Limit caffeine and alcohol, which can increase dehydration, on hot days.

Here are some ways that sweating is good for you:

Sweating burns calories. Sweating while exercising burns fat too. Sweating through movement means you've reached a level of physical activity that benefits your cardiovascular health. Challenge yourself to a sweaty workout as long as you stay hydrated and work at your own pace.

Sweating increases circulation which makes the skin glow with a moisturized and "dewy" look. It opens and unclogs pores, which is like a natural sauna and acne treatment.

Sweating can increase immunity and relieve pain. Sweating from exercise can make immune cells work better and stimulate endorphins, the body's natural painkiller.

Sweating can lower the risk of kidney stones. Sweating limits the body's buildup of salt and calcium in the kidneys and urine, reducing the risk for developing painful kidney stones.

Sweating helps remove toxins. Studies have shown that toxic metals leave the body through sweat. The best way to release the body's impurities is to eat healthful foods, get plenty of sweaty exercise, and stay hydrated.

If you become **overly heated** or experience **dehydration** or **excessive sweating,**

please be sure to contact your MFHN physician at 201-478-5800.

Prepare Your Immune System for Fall and Winter

People of all ages who prepare their health for the colder months ahead will reap the benefits: fewer illnesses, infections, and days sick in bed, or worse – at the hospital.

Vaccine-preventable illnesses send tens of thousands of Americans to the emergency room every fall and winter. Immunizations are like an insurance policy for your body. If you become exposed to a virus for which a vaccine is available, you will be less likely to get sick. Thanks to immunizations the antibodies that your body produces fight potential threats.

August is Immunization Awareness Month. Protect your family by following these tips:

Catch-up on well-child visits. Our pediatricians know your children, chart their growth and development, and address common issues that may prevent them from growing healthy and strong. Make an appointment for a well-child visit before school starts. It's an opportunity to ask questions, update medications, receive needed physical exams, and more!

Ask about vaccine schedules. Schools are breeding grounds for germs. Children learn in tight spaces, often share materials, collaborate on projects, and have physical contact in sports. Immunizations are required in public and most private schools. Your MFHN pediatrician will know which immunizations your child needs, based on their age and medical records. Even if you delayed immunizations, you can protect your child now. If you have concerns, our providers will answer questions about vaccine ingredients, safety, and side effects.

And don't neglect keeping your own shots up to date!

Get long-term protection. Maternal antibodies and breastfeeding do not provide enough protection for toddlers. As your child learns to walk, the antibodies you passed to them at birth will not offer enough protection against disease and illness. Immunizations build the immune system's antibodies to prevent more than a dozen diseases like whooping cough and measles from infecting your child.

Be ready for international travel. Even if your family does not travel, viruses do. Millions of people from other countries visit families in the United States for the fall and winter holidays. Many travelers do not have access to the immunizations that are available here. If you are unvaccinated and become exposed to a virus from touching a doorknob or a bus seat, or are near someone who coughs or sneezes, you may become infected.

Ask your MFHN provider to check your medical records and determine which immunizations you need to stay healthy. Good health is your right…protect it!

The MFHN 2023 Back-to-School Guide

The transition from summer to school need not be stressful. Aside from backpacks and other supplies, your back-to-school checklist should include things your children need for their physical and emotional health. Children can achieve their best academic performance and thrive socially when they feel good about themselves. Follow these tips for a healthy start:

Model healthy behaviors. Introduce more fruit and vegetables into your family's diet. Make family dinner a chance to spend quality time learning about your children's day and helping them practice habits like washing hands before meals, assisting with food prep, and helping to clear the table together.

Schedule a well-child visit in advance of the first day of school. A well-child visit may include a growth assessment and physical exam required for school programs as well as immunization updates. Don't forget a dental checkup-up! Ask us about dental sealants to protect permanent teeth from cavities.

Establish bedtime routines. Kids will be ready for the next day's activities when they are well rested, with 8 to 10 hours of sleep. A good routine includes bathing, changing into pajamas, brushing teeth, reading or listening to music, and a goodnight hug/kiss from their caregiver. Put away electronic devices one hour before bedtime.

Spark conversation. Children often provide short and general answers, like "good," to questions like "how was your day?" Go deep by asking them to tell you about one new thing they learned in school that day, what games they played, subjects they found difficult, and new friends they may have made.

Be your child's advocate. Teachers know your child's strengths and struggles, learning styles, and other factors that affect their learning. You should too. Ask them. After the first month of school talk to teachers about your child's progress.

Follow these "no sharing" rules. Protect your child from head lice and other infections and illnesses. Teach them not to share makeup, lip balm, hair accessories, hats, wigs, combs and brushes, scarves, drinking containers, and eating utensils.

Establish potty time for younger kids. Physical and emotional stress during the first day of kindergarten or first grade can worsen bedwetting or daytime incontinence. If your child struggles with potty time, ask your MFHN pediatrician for assistance. Most bedwetting issues can be eliminated with lifestyle changes like stopping fluids about three hours before bed, emptying the bladder immediately before bed, drinking plenty of water to ease urination during the day, establishing potty times every two hours, and providing emotional support.

Kids' Corner: More Water, Please!

Did you know that more than half of your body is made of water? Without water, you would only live about three days.

When you sip water, it flows through your body to deliver oxygen. Water keeps your brain working. Water makes a pillow for the joints that connect your bones, so you don't get hurt when you play. Water keeps all your organs doing their jobs. Water breaks down food into smaller parts. Water takes waste out of your body when you use the bathroom.

How do you know if you are drinking enough water? It depends on your age, body size, play time, and weather. Your body holds onto water when you don't have enough. It gets rid of water when you have too much. If your urine is light yellow, you are well hydrated. If it's dark or bright yellow, drink more water.

Your body needs about 8 glasses of water a day. This will balance your body temperature and keep you hydrated. Drink water before, during, and after sports practice, a game, playing, or being outside when it's hot. The more you sweat, the more water you need.

Stay healthy with a glass of water!