



Grant will fund new models for meeting health needs of immigrant children, homeless youth

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HARTFORD, Conn. (Oct. 2, 2017) – With a grant from the Connecticut Health Foundation, the Center for Children’s Advocacy will develop an in-school model for identifying the mental and physical health needs of immigrant children and helping them get the care they need.

The grant is one of eight awarded this quarter by the Connecticut Health Foundation, the state’s largest independent health philanthropy.

The Center for Children’s Advocacy will develop the model in one public school system, with the goal of developing a framework that can be adapted and used by other schools. The \$65,000 grant will also enable the Hartford-based Center for Children’s Advocacy to develop systemic reforms and processes to ensure that homeless youth can access mental and physical health care.

The number of immigrant children in Connecticut has been rising, and many arrive after fleeing abuse, neglect, or other life-threatening conditions in their home countries.

One aspect of the project will be to develop a school-based model to identify and respond to the health needs of immigrant children, with a focus on addressing traumatic stress, providing in-school supports, and connecting children to care providers in the community. This project will build on work the Center for Children’s Advocacy recently began – with funding from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund – to develop a model to address the educational needs of immigrant children.

“Schools are a touchpoint for nearly all immigrant children, and they could also be a successful resource for ensuring that their mental and physical health needs are met,” said Martha Stone, executive director of the Center for Children’s Advocacy. “There are very few models nationwide of school-based services for children with trauma histories and interrupted education, and schools do not know how to meet the many needs of these children. We are eager to develop and implement an effective model.”

As part of the grant, the Center for Children’s Advocacy will also work to better meet the needs homeless youth, who face challenges that can include a lack of insurance, limited knowledge of available health care services, and, for those who are on their own, difficulty receiving treatment that requires parental consent. The Center for Children’s Advocacy plans to develop and implement standard processes to identify homeless youth and young adults who need health care, match them to services, and help them navigate the health care system.

“This project focuses on two groups of children that have high needs and few support systems,” said Patricia Baker, president and CEO of the Connecticut Health Foundation. “This work has the potential to create lasting improvements to ensure that children, teens, and young adults get the care they need to address trauma and other mental and physical health challenges.”sto train 10 community health ambassadors in 2017 and 2018 to advocate for effective preventive health interventions with their families, neighbors, and program participants. The organization is also working to expand the program to additional low-income neighborhoods in New Haven.

About the Connecticut Health Foundation

The Connecticut Health Foundation is the state’s largest independent health philanthropy dedicated to improving lives by changing health systems. Since it was established in 1999, the foundation has supported innovative grantmaking, public policy research technical assistance and convening to achieve its mission – to improve the health of the people of Connecticut. Over the past 18 years, the Connecticut Health Foundation has awarded grants totaling more than \$59 million in 45 cities and towns throughout the state.