

CANI Fighting Poverty. Building Hope.

Chronicles

A Bigger Picture of Health

CANI has many partnerships in the community, but one in particular is directly focused on better health outcomes.

In collaboration with Parkview Health, CANI uses the services of a Community Nurse, Renee Schiebel, solely charged with bridging the gap between health-related needs and community resources. Health-related needs are a significant concern for the agency's clients. For example, according to the CANI Community Assessment done in 2009, 70-80 percent of adults in a household did not have health insurance. Medical issues and lack of health insurance can contribute to lack of employment and financial instability.

In an attempt to address these issues, Renee identifies health care needs, provides education, makes referrals and provides access to care. Renee provides these services primarily in Allen and Noble counties.

In regards to resources and referrals, Renee's work extends beyond an individual's immediate needs. She works with CANI staff to educate them about programs available. The objective is to ensure CANI staff will have increased knowledge and referral resources regarding the medical needs of their clients.

Initially, Renee conducted a client health needs assessment in every department of CANI, to determine where there might be gaps in education and resources. According to Renee, the largest group CANI received data

from was adults between 19 to 64 years of age. Among the findings: 85 percent of the clients surveyed had children, and 50 percent of the clients surveyed were currently pregnant. Sixty one percent of the clients indicated they could use assistance in applying for health insurance. Fifty percent of the clients had health conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, seizures, and heart disease. Fifty percent of the clients requested more information about immunizations, prenatal care, nutrition, and financial assistance for medications. This data helps Renee to determine her approach, and bridge the gap between needs and services.

Serving as a liaison of sorts is critical to her success, according to Connie Kerrigan, Manager of Community Nursing and Women's Services, who oversees the community nursing program.

"(Renee has the ability to recognize) the opportunity to realize how other agencies we work with can come together with others and serve more people," Connie added.

The part about serving more people is especially significant. Renee previously held a position as the CANI Head Start Health Coordinator, where she worked with families in the Head Start program through funding from Parkview Health. The Health



Renee educates both staff and clients in her new role as the Community Nurse.

Coordinator facilitates vision and hearing screenings and provides parents with information and resources about relevant health topics, such as: proper hygiene, dental care, nutrition and poison prevention.

Connie said Parkview saw the needs presented by the Head Start families, but they were unable to address all of them. Instead, this approach is more intentional and serves a wider breadth of the population. According to Connie, this position helps bring a "bigger picture of health" to those served.

Renee assumed her new role in August 2011, and has been busy serving families since. The position is funded through Parkview Hospital's and Parkview Noble Hospital's community benefit programs.

CONTENTS



A Bigger Picture of Health

Learn how a community nurse is making an impact on client health through education, outreach and referrals.

page 1



What Does It Mean to Empower Parents?

A family enrolled in CANI Early Head Start sees a big return on investment.

page 3



Improving Rural Health: a Hands-on Approach

CANI has expanded its focus on rural outreach with a new school-based position.

page 4



CANI Golf 2012: A Swinging Success

The results are in and everyone's a winner!

page 4



"Can I help?" Yes, Evan can!

A Fort Wayne man has donated his time and treasure to the CED program.

page 5



Full-day Classrooms Mean Extra Attention

Find out how more time in the Head Start classroom benefits children and parents.

page 6

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CANI Mission

CANI helps communities, families, and individuals remove the causes and conditions of poverty.

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LaGrange, IN 46761
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The following offices only provide
childcare assistance...

Elkhart
23631 US 33, Suite D
Elkhart, IN 46517
574-830-5376

Kosciusko
1515 Provident Drive
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CANI Hours of Operation

7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Monday - Thursday

7:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Friday

**CANI WILL BE CLOSED JULY 4TH, IN
OBSERVANCE OF INDEPENDENCE DAY.**



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO EMPOWER PARENTS?

Unfortunately, there is no manual that comes with becoming a parent.

However, there are resources available in the community, like Early Head Start, to help make life a little easier for mothers and fathers. CANI Early Head Start (EHS) is a home visiting program that promotes healthy prenatal outcomes for pregnant women, enhances the development of infants and toddlers, and promotes healthy family functioning through partnerships with families and the community.

Just ask Kisha Brooks, one of the Early Head Start parents, and she will tell you firsthand about the value of the program. Early Head Start recognizes parents as their children's first and most important teachers. One of the most important goals of this program is to give parents the information they need to empower them to embrace that role.

And empowerment is what CANI meant for Kisha Brooks. Before Early Head Start, Kisha, a Fort Wayne mother of eight, said she struggled to connect with her son, D'rayus. The 3-year old had a speech disability, and therefore was behind in his verbal development. It was not uncommon for him to get the milk out of the fridge, place it in

front of his mother, to show her what he wanted. He was behind developmentally, and needed some extra attention.



Kisha Brooks is learning how to better understand her children's needs through CANI's Early Head Start program.

That was all before the family was connected to Home Visitor Chantell Davis. Chantell worked with Kisha on weekly visits to learn

how to keep and maintain D'rayus' attention, be patient, consistent and not give into his demands all the time. "I've learned a lot of stuff," she said about her time in the program.

She also encouraged D'rayus to use his communication skills better through use of alphabet cards, matching activities, and other interaction. In short, she learned better how to understand the ways her child was growing, changing and socializing.

It was not just about learning, however. Action is an equal part of the experience. As Chantell shared, the family goal was positive parenting with an action plan. Kisha created a daily schedule to hang on the wall for reference, and to keep the family on track. Speaking of staying on track, she has set a specific goal for herself. She is going back to school to earn her phlebotomy certification and has aspirations to work in a renal center.

In the meantime, Kisha has plans to continue with the program, and encourages other eligible parents to look into it:

"If they're looking for a better way to connect with their child, the program would be good," she said.



Photo Caption: Demetri Beachem, Renaay Walker, Jaddarius Woods, Thavanh Xayarath, and Robert Ward participated in the Great American Cleanup by picking up trash on campus, as students enrolled in the JAG program at South Side High School. JAG's mission is to keep young people in school through graduation and provide work-based learning experiences that will lead to career advancement opportunities or enrollment in a postsecondary institution that leads to a rewarding career. JAG program requirements call for 20 percent of the time participating in community service.

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IMPROVING RURAL HEALTH: A HANDS-ON APPROACH

Most of us take our visits to a family doctor for granted. For families living in rural Indiana, seeing a physician regularly is not always possible, due to various factors like cost and lack of access to a provider.

CANI, through its Covering Kids and Families (CKF) program and other partners, are working to change that, with a new outreach position in Noble County. Twenty percent of children in Noble County are uninsured, and therefore likely do not see a health care provider regularly, according to CKF Program Supervisor Paige Wilkins.

Lack of insurance and consistent health care translates into big picture consequences. Often families living in poverty will wait until a condition, like diabetes or asthma, cannot go without treatment any longer then end up with an expensive ER bill, and the maintenance treatment can often be costly. All of this could have been avoided by receiving preventative care from a physician.

These circumstances coupled with a high unemployment rate and other demographics drives the need for programs like CKF Lack of medical insurance is the No. 1 cause of bankruptcy and foreclosure in the United States, Paige noted. By providing options to access affordable health care, families do not have to choose between basic needs--like food and shelter--and paying for healthcare. And of

course with regular health care usually comes better overall health.

The Outreach and Enrollment Coordinator is charged with the development, implementation and retention in Noble County, with school based outreach as a primary focus. So, why the focus on the school system?

Being on-site at schools allows for direct contact with those most in need, according to Paige. The number of children on free and reduced lunches often indicates the need and eligibility for state-and local assistance programs. By the end of the three years, the goal is to enroll 450 children and their parents in the state-funded health insurance plans, in Noble County.

How exactly will this goal be accomplished? The Outreach and Enrollment Coordinator will provide technical assistance to schools, partnering agencies and clients regarding enrollment in Medicaid, SCHIP(State Children's Health Insurance Program), and other public and private health coverage programs. The Coordinator will assist with eligibility determination, application preparation, data collection, reporting, and outreach activities.

In addition to Noble County, CANI has indicated its dedication to serving rural areas through expansion of the CKF program into Elkhart and Kosciusko counties in the past



Stock Photo

Outreach events are designed to educate the public about the state-funded insurance programs available. Among the program's goals is to ensure families have access to consistent healthcare. Access to healthcare can be even more difficult in rural areas. CANI, the Covering Kids and Families Coalition, and other partners are working to change that.

year.

The Outreach and Enrollment Coordinator position is made possible through a consortium of partners: Indiana Rural Health Association, CKF Indiana, Parkview Noble Hospital, East Noble Schools, ASK, and Neighborhood Health Clinics.

CANI GOLF 2012: A SWINGING SUCCESS

What do you get when you add equal parts great weather, enthusiastic golfers, generous sponsors, and hard-working staff? CANI Golf 2012 of course!

The event took place June 7th at Noble Hawk Golf Links in Kendallville. More than \$23,000 was raised to help Fight Poverty and Build Hope.

The winner of CANI Golf 2012 was the Noble Hawk team and the Runner-Up was the Glynn Hines team. Other prizes were awarded as follows:

Closest to the Pin: Mark Bains

Women's Longest Drive: Danelle Biberstine

Men's Longest Drive: Justin Libey

Hit the Green: Jim Snyder

Putting Contest: Troy Sell

Skins Game: Glynn Hines team and Joeys Child Care team

The golfers united at the end of the day for a delicious steak dinner (steaks provided by Performance

Food Group) and an awards ceremony.

CANI would like to extend a warm thank you to all our sponsors:

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Executive Director Steve Hoffman sends the golfers off for CANI Golf 2012. The event held June 7 raised over \$23,000 to support CANI's mission. This year's Event Sponsor was Do It Best Corp.

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“CAN I HELP?” YES, EVAN CAN!

What's the next best thing to working at CANI? Volunteering of course! That is at least how Evan Neubacher feels about his experience volunteering in CANI's Center for Community and Economic Development (CCED).

The Fort Wayne native returned to his roots in hopes of starting a microfinance initiative in 2011, after earning a graduate degree in international economics at the University of San Francisco. Microfinance had long interested him, having gone abroad to do relief work in Uganda and Rwanda. Microfinance is a general term to describe financial services to low-income individuals or to those who do not have access to typical banking services. Microfinance is also the idea that low-income individuals are capable of lifting themselves out of poverty if given access to financial services. He first discovered the concept while an undergraduate at Purdue University, and it “seemed to fit” with his ideals. Upon his return from the west coast, he was in talks with a friend who shared his ambition, but quickly learned it would take a lot more time than previously anticipated. He later connected with CANI Community and Economic Development Manager Jose Hernandez, through a mutual friend. Jose educated him about what CANI does in the community. Evan saw a natural intersection between the agency's work and his own dreams.

Now about four months in, he has already learned a great deal about CANI's benefits to the community. Since April 2012, he has assisted with “a little bit of everything”- intake, meeting with clients, outreach events, and planning for the Foundations course.

Evan said he enjoys volunteering because it allows him the opportunity to work on a project in his field of study.

“(Microfinance) differs from all other development work, because it's a relief, not a Band-Aid...it gives people the opportunity to succeed when they wouldn't necessarily have the opportunity. It evens the playing field.”

This experience is truly a win-win situation for both Evan and the agency. Jose lays out the specific benefits to this program”



Photo Submitted
Evan reflects on his work in Africa as instrumental in his career path. He has found volunteering at CANI to be a great way to learn more about microfinance while helping others.

“Having Evan as a volunteer has increased our exposure to a different audience that we had not yet reached. His efforts have increased our application numbers. He started April 1st and has provided 43 hours of volunteer time through the end of April. I'm happy that he is part our team”

Looking to the future, Evan shared his dreams of starting a non-profit. In the interim, he is considering applying for the AmeriCorps program, whereby he can continue to serve the community, and gain additional skills.

CANI SUBDIVISION MAKES DREAMS REALITY FOR RESIDENTS



It was an exciting day for CANI May 21, as agency staff and board members celebrated the formal opening of Hopewell Pointe with an open house and ribbon cutting ceremony. Pictured from left are CANI board members Randy Holler and Dawn Gallaway, Executive Director Steve Hoffman, Hopewell Pointe resident Melinda Bruner, and CANI board member Madeleine Baker.

CANI and Keller Development co-hosted an open-house and ribbon-cutting ceremony, May 21 at 8033 Community Lane, in celebration of the completion of Hopewell Pointe in Waynedale. Members of the media, Greater Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce, government officials, CANI staff, Keller Development staff, and local partners were all in attendance. The highlight of the event was the from-the-heart testimonials provided by two homeowners including Melinda Bruner:

“It is a dream to own my own home...I have an autistic son, and for him to be able to come in here—it's not a real cramped space, he's got his own area now—it's very nice to have the area to run, to have a stable environment that I can raise my children in and they get their education.” (Melinda's story was featured in the 2011 Annual report published in May.)

FULL-DAY CLASSROOMS MEAN EXTRA ATTENTION

CANI Head Start does its part in helping families afford quality childcare, and subsequently maintain employment or pursue educational opportunities. A unique program at one of its sites is one way CANI works to achieve this outcome.

CANI Head Start at Hanna-Creighton offers full-day/year-round classes to the benefit of parents who might not be able to afford childcare otherwise. The Head Start parents who apply for and are recipients of child care vouchers can use the voucher to subsidize or pay for the entire cost of childcare. This means parents have more time to focus on supporting their families through employment, or bettering themselves through higher education, according to Center Supervisor Annie Henderson.

The site has two full-day classrooms, which can accommodate up to 40 children. So, what does a typical day look like? Teachers follow the same HighScope curriculum in the morning as for every other class. And in the afternoon the children take a nap, eat a snack, participate in small and large group activities, and enjoy time outside. The

snack and recreational time are important components, because they ensure the children are getting both the nutrition and physical activity they need to grow and stay healthy.

Another intangible benefit is the extra time and attention the teachers spend with the preschoolers.

"I love the full-day (program) because I have them all day/year-long. It is an opportunity to pinpoint what skills they have, or lack," said Jan Maust, who has been a teacher at CANI Head Start for 17 years.

The teachers have the ability to start a project in the morning, and carry it to completion in the afternoon, if needed.



The full-day CANI Head Start program is one way CANI tries to provide low-income families with an advantage. More time spent in the classroom can translate into enhanced performance in kindergarten.

Another benefit: each classroom serves 20 families each, as opposed to the standard 15, which allows the teachers to get to know them better, Jan noted.

In short, this program is a win-win-win for all involved. That is, it works to the advantage of the parents, children, and the staff.

CANI HEAD START NOW ENROLLING

CANI Head Start is now enrolling children ages 3 to 5 in a FREE pre-school program in Allen, Noble and Whitley counties. CANI Head Start is a free, comprehensive development program. It meets educational, health, nutritional, and social service needs of low-income preschool children, ages 3 to 5, and their families in Allen, Noble, and Whitley counties. To qualify, families must be at or below 100 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, with an exception that 10 percent may be enrolled who are considered over-income.

**For more information, contact
CANI Head Start
227 E. Washington Blvd., Fort Wayne, IN 46802
(260) 420-2833**



CANI Thanks Our Donors

We'd like to thank the individuals, businesses, foundations, and organizations that have recently supported CANI. Your financial gifts and in-kind contributions help us fight poverty and build hope - thank you for all you do!

The following donations have been received since our last issue.

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We inadvertently omitted the Volunteer Center @ RSVP from our list of in-kind donors in our 2011 annual report. In 2011, the Center's volunteers provided 691 hours of service to CANI at a value of \$14,759.76. This places the Volunteer Center @ RSVP in the \$10,000 and above category of donors – or as we call it – Hero! Yes, these volunteers are truly heroes and we sincerely apologize for the omission.



GREAT NEWS FOR WORKING FAMILIES

Low and moderate income Allen County residents claimed more than \$3 million in tax refunds this year, thanks to the Free Tax Preparation Program coordinated by United Way of Allen County and the Volunteer Center @ RSVP. This is a 22 percent increase over last year's \$2.5 million. A total of 2,029 area residents received free tax assistance provided by dozens of IRS certified tax volunteers. CANI was among the sites for free tax preparation help.

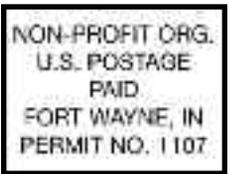
CANI Kudos

“I would like to commend all staff members I encountered; as everyone was very friendly and helpful. Once again, thank you very much for your assistance. Your organization is very much needed in the community.”

-Energy Assistance Program Recipient



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