



Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut, Inc.

For Immediate Release

July 27, 2011

Children's Health Tool Kit: A Community Prescription for School Readiness

The Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut (CHDI) has just released "**A Tool Kit for Integrating Child Health Services into Community Early Childhood Initiatives**" designed to help communities address health issues as part of their school readiness efforts. The implementation of the **Tool Kit's** recommendations should create a fully integrated system that coordinates early care and education as well as family services and supports with a comprehensive healthcare network to ensure optimal healthy child development and readiness for school success. The four-step process outlined in this guide involves:

1. Determining the major child health issues experienced by young children in your community
2. Identifying and collecting data consistent with a Results-Based Accountability framework
3. Engaging child health providers in working with your community to promote school readiness
4. Evaluating the effectiveness of your health collaborative in reaching its population results and system objectives

Each step in the process is supported by a straightforward set of tools that identify key measurements, provide comparative performance benchmarks and data sources that are either publicly available or collectable with simple surveys. The **Tool Kit** also provides survey drafts, a template for creating an inventory of available services as well as evaluation methods and interpretation guides to identify a community's health resource strengths and weaknesses. In addition, it describes and provides checklists and information on a variety of support resources. Finally, there are easy-to-use survey tools designed to elicit information from parents and caregivers and health care providers. The **Tool Kit** is intended for use by communities involved in the William Casper Graustein Memorial Discovery Fund Initiative as well as other communities working to develop comprehensive early childhood plans to achieve school readiness for all children.

The *Tool Kit* has been published to facilitate local implementation of the evidence-based, best practices described in CHDI's 2009 publication, "**A Framework for Child Health Services Supporting the Healthy Development and School Readiness of Connecticut's Children**". The *Framework* articulates the full continuum of child health services from primary care to highly specialized services and describes health services role within the broader context of other sectors that serve children and families (e.g., early care and education). Its recommendations focus on access to child health services, office-based education activities to enable primary care practices to function as "medical homes", developmental screening and surveillance, care coordination services across practices and mid-level assessment capacity to enable rapid and more efficient evaluation and appropriate treatment of at-risk children.

Both the *Tool Kit* and the *Framework* are available for download on CHDI's website: www.chdi.org under **Publications**. To obtain printed copies or if you have any questions, please contact *Cindy Langer* at langer@uchc.edu or 860-679-1538.