

WCCAO: A PARTNER IN BUILDING A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Since 1965, Washington County Community Action Organization (WCCAO) has been serving the economically disadvantaged in Washington County - over 38,000 - by providing for basic needs and promoting long term self-sufficiency.

Because most of these families do not have access to adequate health care, health needs go unmet until they reach a costly crisis stage, often ending in the emergency room. Only one of three WCCAO clients is eligible for Medicaid. The other two-thirds are uninsured.

Health Services Provided through Head Start

Upon enrollment into WCCAO's Child Development Program (Head Start and State PreKindergarten), each family receives a packet of information that lists the health requirements, available resources and information on how to prepare young children for health services. Follow-up support is provided to families to assure that the physical and dental exam requirements have been met and treatment obtained. On-site vision, hearing, developmental, social and emotional screenings occur for each child. In addition, nutritional and growth assessments are performed. These services are provided by staff and specialists in the fields of speech and language, nutrition and mental health.

Physical exams for 3 and 4 year old low-income children, which includes:

- ★ Immunizations
- ★ Blood Pressure
- ★ Hematocrit/Hemoglobin
- ★ Tuberculosis Screening
- ★ Health History Review
- ★ Well Child Physical

Vision and Hearing Screening

Nutritional and Growth Assessment

Dental Exam

Developmental Screening

Individualized support and services to meet the special needs of disabled children

Follow-up on identified health problems to assure appropriate diagnosis and treatment

Health and Dental Education, including:

- ★ Safety
- ★ Hygiene
- ★ Wellness practices and prevention
- ★ Accessing health services and resources
- ★ First Aid

Health Services to Low Income Families & Individuals

Working in partnership with other community agencies, WCCAO provides the following services and assistance to low income residents:

- Teaching families how appropriately to access health care services and medical providers.
- Linking families with health care resources such as Medicaid and Medicare and with St. Vincent Hospital Family Health Care Clinic to receive free health care.
- Cancer prevention and early detection education targeted in communities which have a high incidence of cancer.
- Referring low income, pregnant women to Healthy Start for prenatal services.
- Referring eligible low income women and children to the Health Department for services.
- Referring eligible low income and migrant families to the Virginia Garcia Clinic and County Health Department for low or no cost health care services.
- Providing parenting education to prevent neglect and abuse, as well as anger management programs.
- Arranging for low income women enrolled in Portland Community College's New Directions self-sufficiency program to obtain family health coverage at no cost for two years through Kaiser Permanente.