Innovative Ways to Improve Children’s Health

By
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When Molina Healthcare of Michigan noticed the poor immunization rates in the state’s children, it took action. The company, a leading health care provider for financially vulnerable families, launched “Shots for Shorties” to improve the rates of immunization among African-American children, primarily those from low-income families. The program offers a variety of necessary vaccinations, programs and educational materials full of strategies to increase immunization rates for African-Americans.


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From the time of the program’s launch in 2004 through 2010, the percentage of children under age 2 who received recommended immunizations in the Detroit area rose from 38.3 percent to 70.2 percent. Molina Healthcare of Michigan also released a study showing approximately 6,700 children and nearly 300 provider sites in three counties participated in the program in 2011.

But the Michigan program isn’t the only one Molina Healthcare has launched to improve the standard of health across the United States. Over the past decade, Molina Healthcare has established programs in 15 states to improve children’s health.

One of those programs is Dr. Cleo’s Cooking Club, which includes an interesting new twist on healthy eating habits for children. The cooking club teaches children ages 7 to 12 about healthy food choices, healthy ways to prepare food and the importance of eating healthy foods.

Kathleen O’Guin, Molina Healthcare’s associate vice president of public relations and marketing, said the main goal of the program is to change the way Americans eat.

“By teaching children to eat healthier, they will grow into adults, who in turn, will make healthier choices as well,” she said.

The program aims to teach children about nutrient-rich foods that are easy to prepare and taste great. A typical dinner option would include chili made with spinach and tomatoes and served with whole grain tortillas.

The cooking club has been a huge hit among its participants.
Parent Kristain Mitchell, whose children attended a cooking class, sang the praises of the program in a letter to Molina Healthcare. She sent Molina Healthcare a personal letter to express her gratitude toward the program. Dr. Cleo’s Cooking Club is continuing to teach children throughout the states how to make easy, healthy decision in their everyday lives.

“I have been looking for some kind of program to enroll my children in that would show them that eating healthy does not necessarily mean eating tasteless, bland food,” she said in the letter. “They have enjoyed it and hate to see it end.”

For more information about Molina Healthcare, visit www.MolinaHealthcare.com [3].