

Serving Princeton

Edition #2, 2014

Princeton Human Services Commission

Princeton, NJ



Health Department and Human Services Team Up to save WIC

By Jeffrey Grosser, Princeton Health Officer

Due to declining enrollment, the Children's Home Society (CHS) of Mercer County notified Princeton that their Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) clinic would be shutting its doors in May 2014. I was set to take over as Health Officer for Princeton when I heard this devastating news.

Not only does WIC provide supplemental nutritious foods to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, postpartum women, as well as infants, and children up to the age of five, the clinics also serve as a "home base" for a healthy start to a baby's life. Additional benefits of the clinic include nutrition education, counseling, breastfeeding support, immunization screening, and healthcare referrals.

I knew Ms. Neira, director of Human Services meant business when she quickly welcomed me to Princeton, and then changed subjects saying, "We have some work to do to keep WIC in Princeton."

After devoting nearly every single day to various outreach events publicizing the Princeton WIC Clinic to "flyering" Princeton neighborhoods, door-to-door with information in both Spanish and English, WIC Clinic enrollment has begun to improve. The clinic will now remain open until December 2014.

Ms. Neira and I continue to stay devoted to improving the Princeton WIC clinic in terms of enrollment but also services offered. The teamwork and willingness to collaborate has been invigorating and a foundation for future success between the Princeton Health Department and Princeton Human Services.

TRAINING AND JOBS FOR PRINCETON'S TEENS

Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

By: Paul Rorem, Human Services Commissioner

Again this year close to thirty Princeton teenagers not only have summer jobs through the Princeton Human Services "Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)," they also have valuable job training in interviewing skills, committing to a daily schedule, and shouldering regular employment duties. Personal development into a dependable employee is central to the program, whatever the job.

This summer twenty-eight Princeton teens are working at fourteen different sites in Princeton.. Their stipends are funded by the town's Human Services Department.

On the interview day (the match-making "job fair"), Maria Hernandez of the Princeton Public Schools said that our young people "immediately gain valuable experience, if just in how to present oneself for an interview." Christine Colosimo of the YWCA Dance Department (Ballet Camp) added, "This is a fabulous program. They work well with the young children, and learn responsible self-scheduling, just showing up on time"... (is a lesson well learned)!

Pictured here with this year's participants, coordinators Bethany Andrade and Calvin Reed monitor the summer activities and organize several "employment development workshops." One such session featured goal-setting and financial management; others welcomed guest speakers in specific career areas suggested by this year's youth. Whatever the job, says Neal Snyder, Princeton's Tax Assessor, these young people are building their resumes....: "facing the public, eye contact, just shaking hands."

Bethany described the SYEP program as "preparing young people for a brighter future and eliminating employment barriers for teens in our community"... on such foundations are futures built.

Elisa's Corner

Executive Director of
Princeton Human Services



Great things are not done by one person, they are done by a team of people.

Teamwork is the perfect word to describe the successes of the Human Services Department. In this newsletter, you will read about other Human Services projects which

are a result of the great collaboration between municipal departments and our community.

On July 14, 2014, the Human Services Commission, the town of Princeton, and our community partners New Labor, and the Latin American Legal Defense Fund (LALDEF), had one big reason to celebrate our team efforts over the past eighteen months. The Princeton Council passed a landscaper's registration ordinance in which wage theft violations were cited as a reason to suspend or revoke a landscaper's registration. At the council meeting, about twenty landscape workers were present, and five gave testimony of their personal experiences with wage theft, and thanked the Council for taking action and for considering the ordinance.

This is just one example of great teamwork that took place behind the scenes.

It is a great feeling to be part of a team that is committed and passionate for the work they do and invested in the community they serve.

I recently celebrated my one year anniversary working for Princeton and I'm amazed to see everything we have accomplished. Although there are so many things to celebrate and be proud of, there is more work to be done.



Wheels Rodeo 2014

By Elizabeth Bidwell Bates
Human Services Commissioner



Early birds started to gather at the annual Wheels Rodeo in the Community Park Pool Parking lot on May 17th, a line wound down Witherspoon Street when registration started at 10:00 am.

Officer Dan Federico developed a check-list of steps to follow for the kids, which once completed entitled them to a free slice of pizza.

First off: free helmets, then helmet safety checking. The bike safety check was next and after bike safety instruction helmeted kids zoomed around the road course set up by the police.

Parents munching on hot dogs and pizza chatted with each other as their children, were being face painted, transforming them into superheroes and charming cats.

DJ Rueda and his daughter came up with a perfect mix of music not to "square", not too "far out" and not too loud.

The rescue squad ambulance and stretcher that zipped up and down were big hits. The raffle which capped off the event offered prizes of two bikes, a family membership to the Community Park Pool, high-tech helmets, bicycle bells and lights .

To the many participants who donated their time, services, helmets and prizes, they are all greatly appreciated.

It takes community effort to produce such a diverse, cheerful community event and we are thankful for the Princeton Community.



Princeton Human Services

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Our mission: Through advocacy, leadership, and collaboration, the Department of Human Services helps to improve the quality of life of individuals in our community who are vulnerable, economically disadvantaged, or otherwise in need.
Our services: General Assistance • Emergency Assistance • Rental Assistance • NJSNAP (Food Stamps) • Summer Youth Employment Program • Back Pack and School Supplies Drive • Holiday Gift Drive • Wage Theft • Information and Referral.