

CareSource Foundation Awards Grant to Combat Childhood Obesity

Dayton, OH, March 2, 2009 -- The CareSource Foundation announced today it will award its first major Signature Grant to *GetUp Montgomery County*, a regional initiative to combat childhood obesity and promote healthy lifestyles.

CareSource Signature Grants, a new addition to the CareSource Foundation, provide investments into projects that make significant impact on the areas of childhood obesity and issues of the uninsured.

Montgomery County Health Commissioner James W. Gross explains, “We have a serious obesity problem in our community. Almost two-thirds of our population are obese or overweight which adds to early onset diabetes, complications of asthma and all kinds of health issues, particularly for children. We must stem the tide on this trend starting today.”

“Helping people make better lifestyle choices and providing access to great alternatives is the key to making Montgomery County one of the healthiest communities in the country,” Commissioner Gross adds.

GetUp Montgomery County is a multi-year, healthy lifestyle initiative that envisions hundreds of community partners and advocates. The Montgomery County Human Services levy provides base funding while the CareSource grant of \$175,000 will provide salary and office space for the soon-to-be-named Project Director.

Cathy Ponitz, executive director of the CareSource Foundation, stresses, “Over the last few decades families have changed. Lifestyles have changed. Eating habits and exercise options have changed. Combine those issues and you have the makings of significant health risks. We see that trend taking hold in real life every day.”

“We have made a significant investment into our partnership with Public Health,” says CareSource President and CEO, Pam Morris. “But the real investment is in our children and our families. By investing now we avoid huge, potentially devastating, outcomes down the road.”

GetUp Montgomery County is currently establishing partnerships throughout the region including schools, neighborhood centers, social agencies, trade associations, parks

and recreation, faith-based organizations, service clubs, daycares, colleges and universities, hospitals and healthcare centers, governmental and private groups, media and others to ensure a highly coordinated and collaborative approach.

CareSource anticipates a long-term approach. “This is not a ‘fix it quick’ issue. That’s why we engaged. We have the infrastructure, creativity and understanding of children’s health to create a longer reach into the problem. We are so excited about the project’s potential,” says Ponitz.

GetUp Montgomery County’s approach will include Web-based, social marketing and community-wide activities to encourage healthier lifestyles and choices. “While a marketing campaign is an important component of this effort, the real key to success will be our effectiveness in bringing all parts of our community together to deliver a consistent message that sticks,” Gross stated. “Parents and caregivers also need to realize the powerful influence they have on our kids.”

Public Health Dayton & Montgomery County is leading this initiative, with other principal partners including CareSource, Montgomery County Commission, Children’s Medical Center, and Wright State University’s Center for Healthy Communities playing key roles.

About the CareSource Foundation

The CareSource Foundation was developed to provide strategic health care solutions for the underserved through grants, outreach, medical expertise, community partnerships and volunteerism. The Foundation is launching new priority funding areas for 2009 including signature grants focused on the uninsured and healthy lifestyles/childhood obesity. For more information about the Foundation, visit www.caresourcefoundation.com.

About CareSource

CareSource offers a full spectrum of services for the administration of public-sector health care programs. Among these services are general administration, including claims processing, case and medical management, provider relations, decision support informatics, quality improvement, and regulatory compliance, member services,

including a member call center and 24-hour nurse advice line, and financial consultation and turnaround.

CareSource also provides services to nonprofit managed care plans that serve more than 700,000 Medicaid and Medicare special needs consumers in Ohio and Michigan. For more information about CareSource, visit www.caresource.com.

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