

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield

Caring Habits strengthens lives of families and youth in Venango County

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LOW BANDWIDTH VERSION

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield awards \$7,500 grant to Caring Habits to boost community health and self-esteem

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield recently awarded a \$7,500 grant to support the Take Pride with Caring Habits program in Venango County. This grant, in partnership with a Samuel Justice Charitable Trust grant, will implement the promotion of 12 monthly health themes in Venango County. The research-based project seeks to inspire a healthier, more unified community where children are encouraged to become more successful in school and life.

"Caring Habits teaches children to turn thoughtful ideas into habitual actions," said Jim Martin, Highmark's Northwest Pennsylvania Community Affairs director. "With our grant, children will be properly educated to discover that mutual respect and good attitudes will foster a successful and healthy life."

The project will incorporate a monthly system of 12 habit-forming messages about health, caring, respect and successful living. The health promotion elements include colorful displays, community media, school literacy curriculum, home activities, programming and useful monthly materials such as bookmarks, flyers and pencils. The monthly behavior and health habits combine different social health habits and physical health habits every month.

The 12 social health habits revolve around patience, listening, positive attitudes, being appreciative, being adventurous, becoming involved, lending a hand and more. The 12 physical health habits that will be targeted are:

- **Nutrition and obesity**
- **Safety**
- **Stress reduction**
- **Healthy hearts**
- **Minds and spirits**
- **First aid and CPR**
- **Staying drug-free and smoke-free**
- **Anger management**
- **Exercising**
- **Improving health**

- **Hygiene and cleanliness**
- **Overall health education**

"The 12 Caring Habits' model expands healthy energy into the homes and families and into the lives of all children. It particularly includes and uplifts the children of poorer, often disenfranchised families because it doesn't cost money to be part of this project. Anyone can lend a hand or share a smile," said Elaine Parke, CEO and founder of All of Us, Inc., which is the organization that will implement the Take Pride with Caring Habits program. "Through a consistent monthly coordinated multi-media routine of materials and healthy programming, all community residents, pre-schoolers, school students, staff and families are inspired to act and think 'in monthly concert.'"

Company Background In 2005, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield provided financial support of \$140 million for programs in support of its corporate mission to provide access to affordable, quality health care enabling individuals to live longer, healthier lives. The company serves 3.1 million members and employs more than 5,000 people in the region.

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, an association of independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans.

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