



In the library at Lake Middle School, Lt. Governor Barbara O'Brien plays peek-a-boo with one-year-old Miguelangel Arzola alongside his aunt, Ester Avelar, and her 11-year-old daughter, Araceli Jimenes. On November 15, in a news conference at the school, The Colorado Trust and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment announced new funding to expand school-based health clinics statewide.

# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

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CommunityConnection is a quarterly e-newsletter from The Colorado Trust

## SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS PROVIDE LIFELINE

At night, after tucking her daughter safely into bed, Terencia Beauvais-Nikl could finally kiss Mackenzie on the cheek. Then, she would treasure the moment when a peaceful smile would light up the child's face.

During the day, Mackenzie fought off kisses and any other affection. The neurological brain disorders that have haunted her since birth filled her with aggression. At times, she lashed out at her mother, punching her and grabbing her around the neck. Then, horrified at her own behavior, she would talk of killing herself.

At the age of 12, in 6th grade, Mackenzie has found a new cocoon. At Lake Middle School in Denver, health experts are always available at the school-based health center. Mackenzie can stop in for help with mental or physical ailments. Now, when she steps off the bus after school, she greets her mother with that same brilliant smile that used to appear only in her sleep.

"I see it every day now," Beauvais-Nikl said. "I was so anxious about her starting middle school. But, here, she's safe. She's cared for. She's not just a number in this huge group of kids. And, she's learning and doing homework. She still has struggles. But this place is a lifeline."

Clinics like the one at Lake Middle School got a boost when The Colorado Trust awarded \$1 million over the next two years to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to expand health clinics in schools across the state. Currently, there are 40 clinics statewide with an additional four planned for the next year.

Terencia Beauvais-Nikl knows that there are countless children for whom school-based care is vital. She said the clinic has helped her daughter with a range of issues from the simple to the complex. Mackenzie used to fight immunizations and it would take several adults to hold her down. This year, because of her relationship with the clinic staff, getting six shots was relatively painless.

Mackenzie's mental health needs are much more complex. She was just two weeks old when Beauvais-Nikl and her husband adopted Mackenzie. They soon realized that something was amiss. Eventually, doctors diagnosed Mackenzie with bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and developmental issues on the autism spectrum.

For her mom, the clinic support is vital. "It really helps to have wraparound services. Everyone knows Mackenzie." As mother and daughter talk, they are always touching, fingers intertwined or shoulders nestled together. "I cry when I think about how far she has come," said Beauvais-Nikl.

For more information about The Trust's Colorado School Health Improvement efforts, please contact Laurel Petralia, Program Officer, 303-837-1200 or [laurel@coloradotrusted.org](mailto:laurel@coloradotrusted.org).



Mackenzie Beauvais-Nikl is a 6th-grader at Lake Middle School where she is receiving mental health care at the school-based health center. Mackenzie describes the clinic as "heaven."

## GREETINGS FROM IRENE M. IBARRA



Irene M. Ibarra, President and CEO,  
The Colorado Trust.

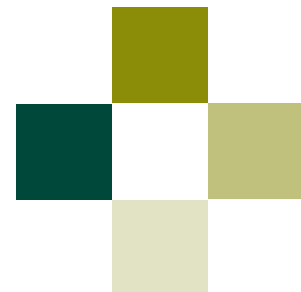
Children are our most precious resource. Yet 14 % – approximately 180,000 – of the children in our state are uninsured.

While health insurance coverage is one of the strongest predictors of whether children have access to health care, even insured children aren't guaranteed access to affordable, appropriate, high-quality care.

To grow, learn and thrive, all children need timely access to physical, oral and mental health services, and school-based clinics are an important strategy to improve child health. These clinics provide a familiar, easy way for families to make sure that their children receive immunizations, have access to primary and preventive care, and improved access to specialized care for complicated illnesses. In turn, these children are likely to have better school attendance and academic performance levels, and fewer hospitalizations and visits to the emergency room – especially for such treatable conditions as asthma attacks or ear infections.

With funding from The Trust, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment will be able to double its reach over the next two years in providing community grants to strengthen existing school-based health centers and to establish new centers across the state. Additionally, we're pleased to support the Colorado Children's Campaign in leading a task force of educators, parents and health providers to develop a statewide plan that will streamline, strengthen and sustain a system of integrated school health.

Through this two-pronged approach, those who know best what's needed to improve and sustain school-based health centers will come together to ensure that this strategy helps to provide quality physical, dental and behavioral health care that is accessible and affordable for all Colorado kids.



## STRENGTHENING PATIENT CARE AND SAFETY

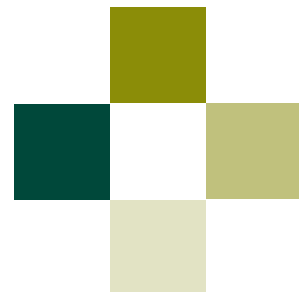


Over 40,000 incidents of medical harm occur in the United States every day, making medical errors the fifth leading cause of death nationwide, according to the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI). To help implement and strengthen systems and safeguards that prevent such problems as hospital-acquired infections, adverse drug events, surgical errors, pressure ulcers and other medical complications, IHI has launched the national 5 Million Lives Campaign to prevent five million incidents of medical harm over two years.

The Colorado Trust has committed \$3.9 million to support this campaign statewide, as well as other patient safety efforts. The Colorado 5 Million Lives Campaign builds on the successful Colorado 100k Lives Campaign and provides support to 45 acute care hospitals to further strengthen their quality improvement systems and help to ensure safe patient care. Additional grants from The Trust are available to Colorado's remaining 29 acute care hospitals to participate in the campaign's educational programs and technical assistance trainings.

The Trust is also supporting a partnership to develop a shared statewide patient safety strategy, and the development of technologically simulated scenarios to help health care providers learn how to provide safe care.

For more information about these efforts to improve the quality of patient care, please contact Laurel Petralia, Program Officer, 303-837-1200 or [laurel@coloradotrust.org](mailto:laurel@coloradotrust.org).



## BULLYING PREVENTION EVALUATION FINDINGS PROMISING

With two years' of evaluation data completed for The Trust's Bullying Prevention initiative, the findings show that bullying is prevalent in Colorado – particularly in middle schools – and that lower levels of bullying are directly associated with higher levels of academic achievement. These and other outcomes are briefly summarized in *Evaluation Findings from Years 1 and 2* – a fact sheet that provides an overview of bullying in Colorado and a snapshot of recommendations to prevent bullying. As well, *Evaluation Findings for Safe2Tell Hotline* quantifies the use and effectiveness of the anonymous hotline that enables students – as well as teachers, parents and others – to provide information about situations that make them feel unsafe, such as bullying, without fear of retribution for reporting such situations.

Evaluation data from the Bullying Prevention initiative is also referenced in *Prevalence and Predictors of Internet Bullying*, a new study that compares and contrasts the prevalence of Internet bullying with physical and verbal bullying among elementary, middle and high school students. A brief synopsis of the study, including the finding that methods aimed at reducing verbal abuse can also limit cyber-bullying, is provided in a news release from the University of California, Riverside where the study was conducted by researchers Kirk Williams, Ph.D., and Nancy Guerra, Ed.D., who also serve as evaluators of the Bullying Prevention initiative. A related article in *The New York Times – More Teens Victimized by Cyber-Bullies* – also references the study that appeared in the December 2007 issue of the *Journal of Adolescent Health*.

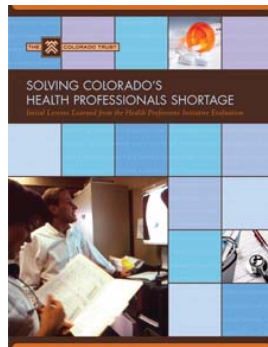
For additional information about the Bullying Prevention evaluation, contact Nancy Csuti, Dr. P.H., Director of Evaluation, 303-837-1200 or [nancy@coloradotrusted.org](mailto:nancy@coloradotrusted.org).



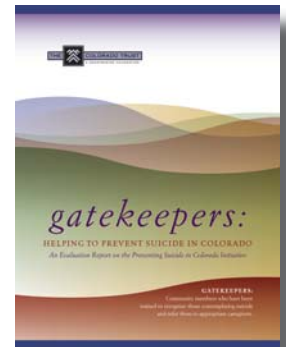
## NEW EVALUATION PUBLICATIONS

The following publications were recently released by The Colorado Trust (available at [www.coloradotrust.org](http://www.coloradotrust.org)):

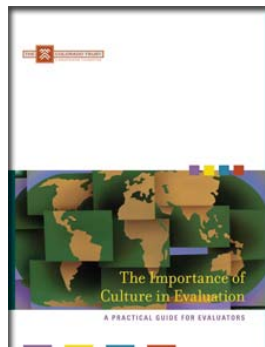
*Solving Colorado's Health Professions Shortage – Initial Lessons Learned from the Health Professions Initiative Evaluation* explores promising strategies to strengthen health professions training, including creating awareness and readiness among students, supporting and expanding training opportunities, and promoting employer efforts and community partnerships to recruit and retain health professionals.



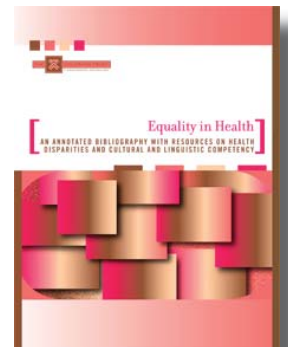
*Gatekeepers: Helping to Prevent Suicide in Colorado* identifies promising practices of how gatekeepers – community members trained in recognizing and responding to individuals at risk of suicide – use their understanding and skills to positively intervene and prevent suicide deaths.



*The Importance of Culture in Evaluation: a Practical Guide for Evaluators* provides insights to help evaluators better understand the influence of different cultures, and to assess and improve their own work based on this understanding.



*Equality in Health: An Annotated Bibliography with Resources on Health Disparities and Cultural and Linguistic Competency* is a compilation of resources to help improve understanding of cultural competency and address health disparities.



For additional information about these evaluations, contact Nancy Csuti, Dr. P.H., Director of Evaluation, 303-837-1200 or [nancy@coloradotrust.org](mailto:nancy@coloradotrust.org).

## GRANTEES' STORIES OF CHANGE AND IMPROVEMENT

The following new Stories of Change and Improvement (available at [www.coloradotrust.org](http://www.coloradotrust.org)) are among several others that highlight grantees' efforts to improve the health and well-being of Coloradans:



### Healthy Aging

#### Sight-Impaired Senior Keeps Her Independence

*Colorado Center for the Blind*

With in-home training, weekly support groups and classes, Marie Dambrosky and other sight-impaired seniors are gaining the necessary skills and confidence to lead independent lives.



### Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families

#### Path to Citizenship

*Littleton Immigrant Integration Initiative*

Yeny Jeffers, originally from El Salvador, credits hard work, mentorship and friendships for paving her path to citizenship.

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Efforts by The Colorado Trust and its grantees to advance the health and well-being of the people of Colorado included Trust support for the following recent events:

- Center for African American Health – Annual Dinner
- Center for Women’s Health Research (University of Colorado School of Medicine) – Annual Luncheon
- Colorado Children’s Campaign – Annual Luncheon
- Colorado Hospital Association – Annual Meeting
- Colorado Nonprofit Association – Fall Conference & Exhibition
- Colorado Patient Safety Coalition – Seventh Annual Colorado Patient Safety Conference
- Culture of Data Conference – Breakfast Event
- Denver Health, School-based Health Centers – 20th Anniversary Luncheon
- Girl Scouts Mile Hi Council – Women of Distinction Dinner
- Latin American Research and Service Agency – 6th Bernie Valdez Awards Luncheon
- Mental Health America of Colorado – Annual Tribute Dinner
- National Philanthropy Day in Colorado – Awards Luncheon
- Samaritan Institute – National Awards Dinner
- Women’s Foundation of Colorado Luncheon – 20th Anniversary Luncheon