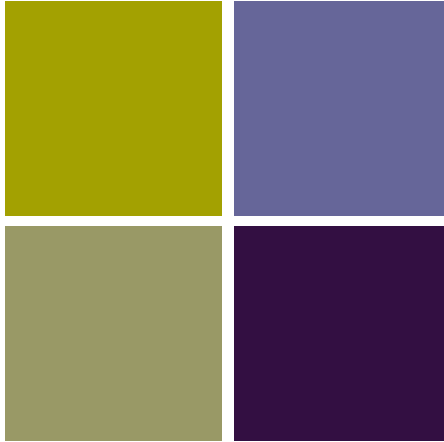




*The Missing Link:
The Value of
Medical-Legal
Partnership in a
Healthy Start
Program.*

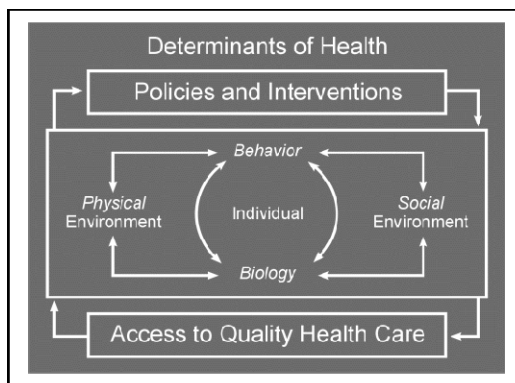


Shannon Mace, JD, MPH

CityMatCH Conference
San Francisco, CA
18 September 2011

Background of Medical-Legal Partnership (MLP)

- Established in 1993 by Dr. Barry Zuckerman
- Partnered with more than 235 health institutions
- Served more than 34,000 individuals
- Trained over 10,000 healthcare workers
- Determinants of Health Model



Source: National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership 2010 Network Site Survey Executive Summary

MLP Connection to Health

- Improved physical environment
- Increased access to health care
- Increased access to basic necessities
- Decreased stress
- Increased access to educational services



+ Health, Education and Legal Assistance Project: A Medical-Legal Partnership (HELP: MLP)

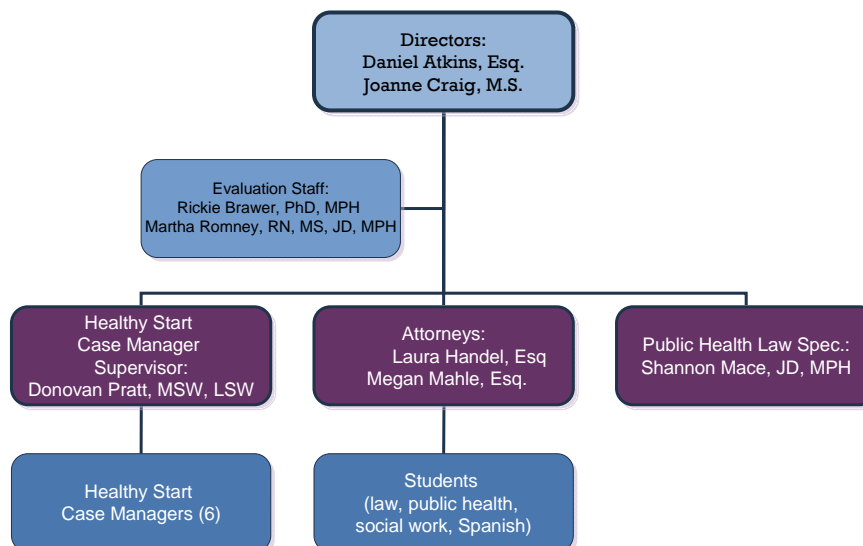
- Collaboration between Crozer-Keystone Healthy Start and Widener University School of Law in Chester, Pennsylvania
- One of three national Healthy Start project demonstration grantees (HRSA's MCH Bureau)
- Served over 100 participants and 150 individuals
- Provided more than 24 hours of formal training to CKHS staff



+ Project Goals

- Overall Goal: Eliminate disparities in perinatal health
- Project Aims:
 - Identify the unmet legal needs of program participants.
 - Train Healthy Start staff to identify and address unmet legal needs of program participants.
 - Provide direct legal services to participants to improve overall health and well-being.
 - Educate multi-disciplinary students of the value of public service and the ways in which legal advocacy can help vulnerable populations.

Healthy Start: HELP: MLP Organizational Chart



+ Referral Process

- Healthy Start case managers and staff receive trainings about potential legal issues of participants
- Healthy Start case managers use an integrated legal needs screening tool to identify unmet legal needs of participants
- When an unmet legal need is identified the participant is referred to HELP: MLP staff attorneys
- Attorney contacts the participant within 24 hours to begin addressing the problem
- Evaluation staff contact participant for follow up interview after obtaining informed consent



+ Evaluation Methods

- Partnered with Public Health Experts to collect qualitative and quantitative data with Healthy Start staff and program participants
- Program Participants:
 - Collected data through telephone interviews 3-4 weeks after cases closed and review of case notes
 - Measured satisfaction, stress, and health
- Healthy Start Staff:
 - Conducted pre and post tests during trainings and follow up interviews at end of grant period
 - Measured: satisfaction, knowledge and beliefs

+ HELP: MLP Results (Oct.- May)

- Resolved 54 legal issues benefiting over 150 program participants and family members
- Provided 45 case consultations with Healthy Start staff
- Conducted 14 trainings on a variety of legal issues to HS staff and Community Partners
- Produced 13 brochures on a variety of legal issues
- Trained 14 students from multiple disciplines (law, public health, psychology, nursing, social work and Spanish)

+ HELP: MLP Trainings

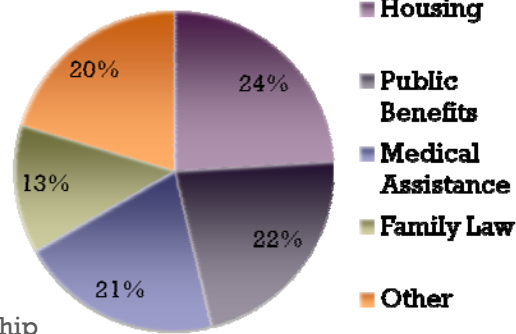
- MLP staff has provided more than 24 hours of training and technical assistance for Healthy Start staff
- Trainings help increase knowledge and understanding of the law, processes, procedures, rules, entitlements and systems negotiation
- Training topics:
 - Overview of I-HELP model
 - Guardianship, abuse and neglect
 - Public benefits
 - Domestic violence
 - Social Security Disability
- Brochures:
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/General Assistance
 - Medicaid/State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP)
 - Medicaid/Family Planning
 - Head Start/Early Intervention

Legal Needs Addressed

■ 54 legal cases have been resolved by HELP: MLP at CKHS

■ Legal issues include:

- Tenant rights
- Public housing
- Medicaid appeals
- Domestic violence
- Public utilities
- Custody and guardianship
- Utility shut offs
- Medical consent issues
- Special Education



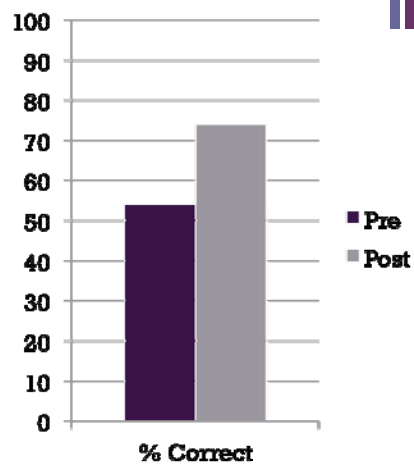
+ Impact on Healthy Start Case Managers and Staff

■ Training Outcomes:

- Increased professional knowledge and capacity to advocate for participants
- Majority of staff rated trainings as "excellent"

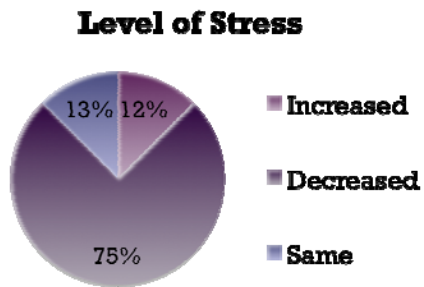
■ Other Benefits to Staff:

- Reported reduction in stress
- More time to devote to other cases
- Effectuating policy and practice changes in bureaucracies that were once barriers to care



+ Impact on Program Participants

- At the time data was collected 23 participants had closed cases
- Of those 23, 8 participated in a follow-up interview (34.7% response rate)
- Data was collected measuring satisfaction, stress, health, and self-efficacy
- All respondents were satisfied with the clinic including length of time to see the attorney and level of communication



+ Challenges

- Shortened grant period (9 months opposed to 12)
- Obtaining IRB approval from 3 institutions
- Small sample size
- Loss to follow-up



+ Quotes

- “The Case Managers are very skilled and resourceful but MLP has taken them to a different level. Where they were awesome before- they are superhuman now” ~ Project Administrator
- “I didn’t know what would happen before I met with the attorney. Now I know I always have a place to be” ~ Program Participant
- “Having an organization within our office whose sole purpose was to fight for people, who ordinarily wouldn’t have a voice was priceless.” ~ HS Case Manager

+ Thank you!

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**For more information about MLP see the
National Center:
www.medical-legalpartnership.org**