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New Signage!

Our new wayfinding signs debuted in early 2015. These signs, posted throughout the inside of our building and at both outside entrances, help residents and visitors find our services. The next time you visit us check them out!



What words come to mind when you think of Public Health?

Public health promotes health, prevents disease, and prolongs life through organized efforts of society. This includes health education, sanitation, control of diseases, and regulation of pollution. Public health works to prevent health problems before they occur.

In public health, what should come to mind first is the health of communities and society as a whole. Thus, in public health the focus shifts from the individual to the population, from me to us. In fact, the vision of public health *is Healthy People in Healthy Communities*.

Doctors treat individual patients one-on-one for a specific disease or injury. Thus, patients need medical care only part of the time, when they are ill. Public health professionals, on the other hand, monitor and diagnose the health concerns of entire communities and promote healthy practices and behaviors in individuals to keep our populations healthy. **Communities need public health all of the time in order to stay healthy.**

Public health services may go unnoticed within a community because they are often (but not always) preventive versus reactive. For example, which community service are you more likely to notice - an environmental health specialist inspecting the safety of a local food service establishment, or a fire truck speeding down the street with its lights and sirens on? Despite having a relatively 'low profile' status, public health services play a key role in assuring the health and well being of communities.

Throughout this report, you will find “word clouds” - a visual image of words that represent the work and results of our services. All have a common word—**HEALTH!** While you peruse this report, think of what words come to your mind when you read about our services.



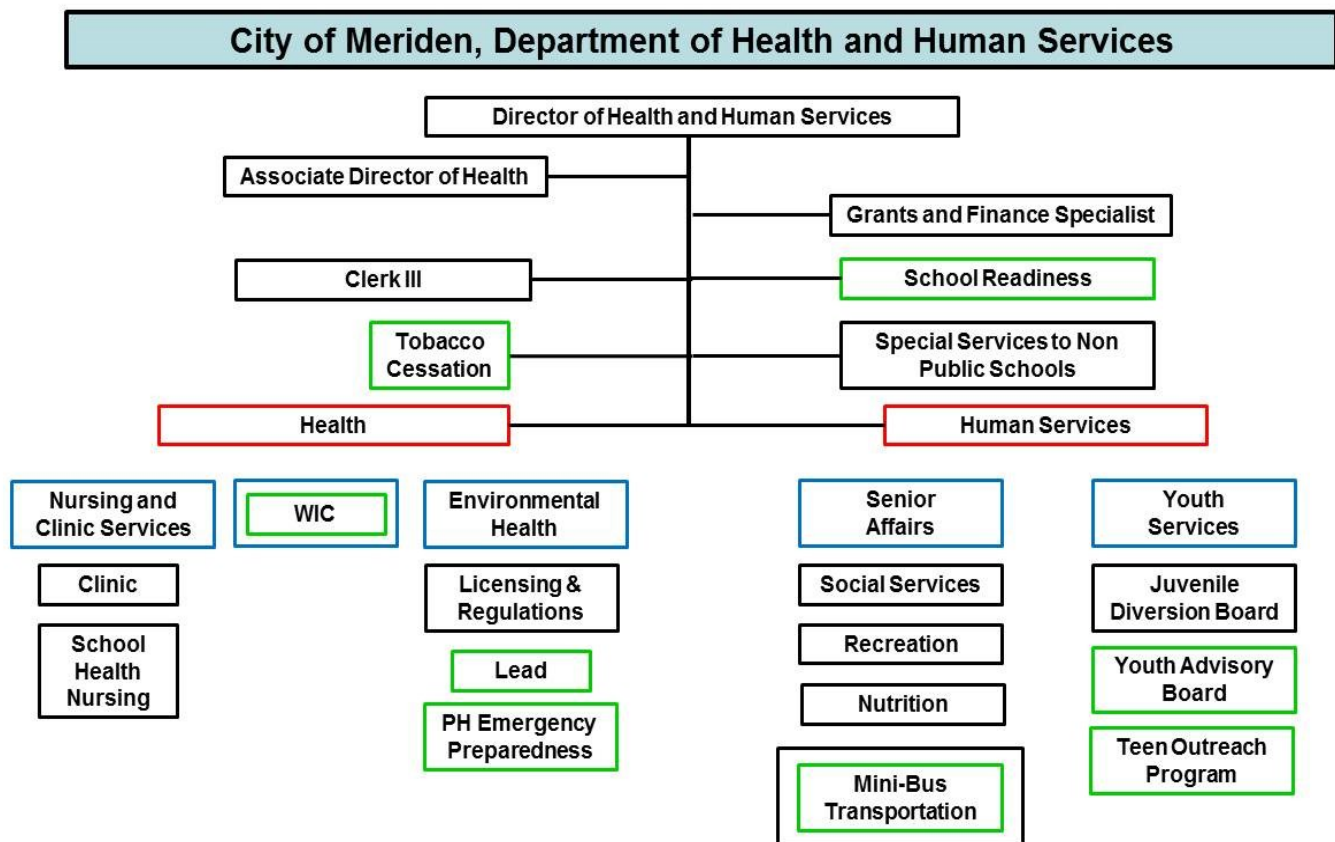
Our Department

Our Department encompasses both Health and Human Services, which are often 2 separate municipal departments. We are a full-time local health department located at 165 Miller Street in Meriden, right up the street from the Meriden Public Library; our Senior Center is located at 22 West Main Street in downtown next to the Police Department.

Our mission is to protect and promote the physical and environmental well-being of the citizens of Meriden. We accomplish this through direct services, enforcing the public health code, wellness promotion and active support of community efforts. All of our services fall under one of the Ten Essential Public Health Services. We serve all 60,868 Meriden residents!

Our office consists of 42 full and 23 part-time employees. This number grows over the summer as we hire youth through our summer youth employment program.

Below is our organizational chart.



Key: Green = grant funded, blue = department, red = division, black = general fund

Department Funding



Our 2014/15 general fund budget was \$2,723,328. Our complete general fund budget document can be found at www.meridentc.gov (click on Government, then Budget Process).

The vast majority of our programs and services are grant funded—in fact in 2014/15 our grant budget was over \$5,500,000! Below is a chart of our grants for fiscal year 2015.

Our Department also serves as the fiduciary for Casa Boricua, and subcontract funds to the Meriden YMCA Child Day Care program through School Readiness.

Grant	Source	Amount
Public Health Emergency Preparedness	Connecticut Dept. of Public Health	\$55,320
School Readiness	State of CT, Office of Early Childhood	\$4,069,664
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	Connecticut Dept. of Public Health	\$822,527
Tobacco Cessation	Connecticut Dept. of Public Health	\$62,000
Lead Poisoning Prevention	Connecticut Dept. of Public Health	\$45,467
Senior Injury Prevention	Connecticut Dept. of Public Health (Public Health Block Grant)	\$13,207
Senior Center—Mini-bus Transportation	Area Agency on Aging, Dial-A-Ride)	\$70,113
TOP—Teen Outreach Program	Connecticut Dept. of Social Services	\$68,913
Summer and Year Round Youth Employment	Workforce Alliance, local foundations (Meriden Foundation, Napier, Liberty Bank, Cuno), Department of Children and Families	\$159,500 (summer) \$64,000 (year round)
Positive Youth Development programs—Play by the Rules and Girls Circle	Urban Youth Afterschool Programming	\$10,000
Support Services for High School Youth	CDBG (Community Development Block Grant)	\$25,000
Per Capita	Connecticut Dept. of Public Health	\$71,552

Environmental Health



The Environmental Health section promotes and enforces environmentally sound practices to safeguard the health of the public. This is done primarily through the enforcement of state and local public health codes. Our 4 registered sanitarians and 1 supervisor do this by:

- Licensing and inspecting all food service establishments in Meriden, including itinerant and temporary food vendors and conduct inspections of larger events;
- Licensing and inspecting all barbershop, hairdressing and cosmetology shops;
- Inspecting and issuing permits for all public swimming pools;
- Inspecting all child care facilities;
- Conducts site inspections and requests paint stabilization, or investigates and orders abatement of sources of lead when a child has elevated blood lead levels (these are dependent on blood lead level of child). See the picture below of one of our staff testing a windowsill for lead-based paint using an XRF (x-ray fluorescence) machine; and
- Investigating complaints and ordering corrective action for various types of public health nuisances, which include garbage, bulky waste, stagnant water, mold, bed bugs, rodents, odor, sewage and lead paint.

From July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 our staff:

- Conducted 1,182 food service establishment inspections.
- Addressed 843 nuisance complaints.
- Conducted 65 initial inspections and 19 re-inspections at barbershops, hairdressing, and cosmetology establishments.
- Submitted 338 laboratory samples for lead, surface water, and other concerns.
- Issued 327 food service licenses.
- Inspected 21 child care facilities in Meriden.
- Conducted 328 childhood lead inspections (almost double from last year!).
- Purchased new lightweight mobile printers to use with our ViewPermit table-based inspection program.
- Continue to walk our more challenging areas in the city on a regular basis, above and beyond the Code Walks with other city officials.



Food truck and other festivals have had a great impact on the Environmental Health section. Any food truck, person, or organization preparing and selling food at festivals, farmers market, concerts or other public event must apply for a temporary food permit from the Health Department. This is so we know what is being served and that the individual/organization follows safe food handling practices to keep the public safe.

In 2014/15 we issued 243 temporary food permits and conducted 239 temporary food inspections, versus 114 and 93 in 2013/14, respectively.

Senior Affairs

The Max E. Muravnick Meriden Senior Citizens' Center is a hub for activities and services for Meriden residents age 55 and over, and is a visible symbol of Meriden's concern about its older residents. As a multi-purpose senior center, we are a community facility in which older people can meet with one another to fulfill many of their social, physical, emotional and intellectual needs. It is also a focal point for services to older persons which can enhance their dignity, support their independence and encourage their involvement with the community. The Senior Center is located at 22 West Main Street in downtown Meriden. There is no fee to join the Senior Center; out of town residents may join for a minimal annual fee.

The Senior Center offers:

- Exercise programs, such as Zumba, Strength & Tone, Tai Chi and Yoga.
- Weekly art classes, including art, ceramics, creative writing and sewing/quilting.
- A computer lab, billiards room, domino room, and TV lounge.
- Bingo twice per week.
- A community café that serves breakfast and lunch.
- Special events such as a Special Day for Special People picnic, a volunteer recognition day, guest speakers, Friday movie days and health fairs.



From July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015....

- Membership—we gained 218 new members this past year, a 17% increase from last year.
- Attendance—we have an average of 1,700 visits per month—that's over 20,000 visits for the year!
- Elderly Nutrition—A total of 11,400 meals were served last year, an average of 950 per month.
- Transportation—we provided an average of 1,500 one-way trips per month, traveling an average of 3,000 miles per month.
- The LaPlanche Clinic, run by MidState Medical Center, had 616 visits.
- Starting in January of 2015 new registration forms, including transportation and senior center membership forms, and our new Senior Center membership handbook were rolled out. These revised forms provided us an opportunity to reconnect with members of the Senior Center by having them update their emergency contact information and membership cards.



Senior Affairs: A Year of Programs!



This year the Senior Center received the *Community Support Award* from the Meriden Board of Education. This award is for collaborating on new creative programs during this past school year. One of the events that we organized was “One Book, One School and One Senior Center”. Both middle school children and seniors read the same book over a 2 month period, and had an opportunity to discuss the book during trips to the schools. Seniors and students also got to meet the author.

Preventing unintentional injury in the home is a priority for the CT Department of Public Health, as listed in their Healthy CT 2020 State Health Improvement Plan. We received funding through the CT Department of Public Health Preventative Health Block Grant to provide an injury/fall prevention program for Meriden seniors living at home. Seniors completed healthy home assessments and received free home safety items, such as smoke detectors, rug grips, and LED nightlights, depending on their response to the assessment. Here, Senior Center Administrator Rick Liegl presents Casa Boricua de Meriden stuffed safety bags for those that completed the assessment. We also held multiple educational events on fall prevention for both professionals and seniors.



Our second annual Gadget Demo was held on April 24, 2015. Presented by Youth Services, Best Buy of Meriden, and H.C. Wilcox Technical High School, students partnered with seniors to show them how to use their smart phones, iPads, and digital cameras. Students from H.C. Wilcox Technical High School's Information Systems Technology program also presented, bringing along their Nao Robot, who was quite the hit among the seniors!

The annual Senior Health Fair was held on May 13, 2015. This annual fair is held every May during Older Americans Month. Over 30 vendors showcased informational displays, provided free health screenings, and were available to answer questions. Over 300 seniors attended the event. Thank you to Meriden Center Genesis Healthcare for sponsoring this year's event.



Social Services



Social Services increases quality of life for Meriden residents by ensuring that basic needs are met, improving their environment, and accessing healthcare.

Services offered to clients include:

- Referrals to social services agencies for food assistance, energy/fuel assistance, protective services for the elderly, legal aid along with many other agencies and programs
- Health insurance assistance
- Medicare enrollment and counseling
- Medicare Savings Program applications
- SAGA/TFA applications
- SNAP applications
- Assurance/Safelink Applications
- Assistance finding providers
- Assistance with housing applications
- Assistance with eye glasses for uninsured clients
- Renter's Rebate assistance during the eligibility period (April—October)

From January to June 2015, the Social Services Worker saw 381 clients. Clients' needs are individually assessed and long term solutions are sought. The Social Services Worker works with the client until the solution has been successfully met or all venues are exhausted.



We welcome Natalie Gill, who started as our Social Services Worker in January 2015. Her office is at the Meriden Senior Center, 22 West Main Street. Although she works out of the Senior Center, Natalie is able to provide her service to any Meriden resident. She is a CHOICES certified counselor and is able to provide information to persons age 60 or older and clients with disabilities regarding health insurance assistance, counseling, and eligibility screening.

Natalie speaks English and Spanish. If you have any questions, or would like to make an appointment, please call 203-630-4273.

Tobacco Cessation

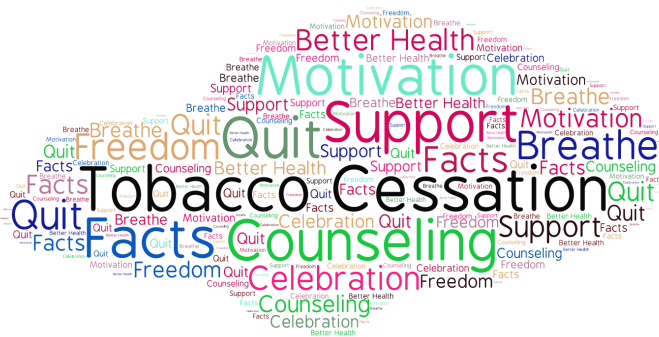
Our Department received a grant from the CT Department of Public Health in November 2013 to continue to provide a comprehensive tobacco cessation program. According to the CT Department of Public Health there are approximately 470,000 adult tobacco users in Connecticut and it is estimated that 4,700 individuals will die each year from smoking related causes. Regretfully we also know that tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of disease, disability, and death. The single most important thing you can do for your health is to *be tobacco-free*.

Through this funding we were able to provide:

- Individual and group counseling.
- Up to 12 weeks of free nicotine replacement therapy (patches, gum and lozenges).
- Telephone and e-mail support and referrals to additional resources when needed.
- Outreach and training for health professionals on the recommended guidelines for treating tobacco dependence and the use of FDA approved tobacco cessation medications.
- Outreach, education and cessation programming to area businesses and community organizations to support tobacco free policies.

During our past funding cycle, our Cessation Counselor:

- Saw 125 people who were looking to quit smoking.
- Held 193 one-on-one counseling sessions, and 82 group sessions.
- Distributed 394 boxes of nicotine replacement patches and 31 nicotine replacement lozenges to help people quit.
- Addressed questions and misconceptions regarding electronic delivery devices, including e-cigarettes and vaping pens.
- Recruited those who have successfully quit smoking through our program to be “ambassadors” in our community, helping refer people to our program and providing motivation and support to encourage others to quit.



Despite our grant ending in April 2015, we continue to provide Tobacco Free Tuesdays, a weekly meet-up group for both those looking to quit and those who have quit smoking once a month. This group is open to anyone looking to quit. We have applied for a new tobacco cessation grant through CT DPH, with an anticipated start date of December 2015. If awarded funding both one-on-one and group cessation counseling will be provided, as well as free nicotine replacement therapy. In addition, we will work closely

with healthcare providers and local businesses to promote provider education and smoke-free environments.

The Connecticut Quitline provides 24/7 support to “wanna-be-ex smokers”. The Quitline number is 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669). For more information about our tobacco cessation program, please call (203) 630-4003.



**CONNECTICUT
QUITLINE**
1-800-QUIT-NOW

School Health

We are one of the few local health departments in the state that houses School Health Services. We are very fortunate and committed to having a nurse in every school.

A student's health status is directly related to his or her ability to learn. Children with unmet health needs have a difficult time engaging in the educational process. Nursing services are provided to approximately 10,000 prekindergarten through 12th graders at 12 public and 3 non-public school sites in Meriden, ensuring health-related barriers to learning are addressed. A Public Health Nurse Administrator oversees staff which includes 15 public health nurses assigned to school sites throughout the city, 5 health aides, and 5 per diem nurses to cover schools when needed.

Our nurses provide a variety of school health services, including, but not limited to:

- State mandated screenings, including vision, hearing, and scoliosis
- Medication dispensing
- Special medical procedures, such as G-tube feeding, asthma management, diabetes care
- Emergency care and first aid
- Health education
- Immunizations



2014/15 highlights for school nursing included:

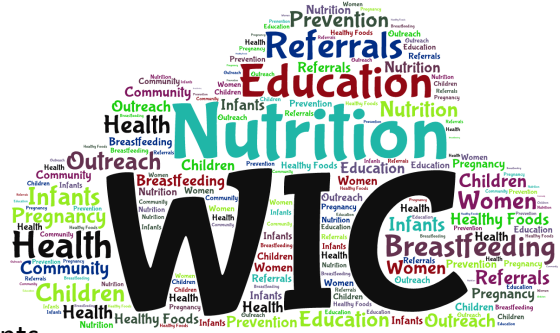
- The development of new policies and procedures to enhance nursing practice while promoting the health and wellness of children and staff.
- Offering 2 staff development days through the State Department of Education.
- Working with nurse consultants to create a “new school nurse” orientation and reference manual.
- Training all health aides in CPR and First Aid prior to the start of the school year.
- Working with Environmental Health staff to develop a dog bite reporting policy that ensures proper steps are taken to minimize risk of rabies.

Over the 2014/15 school year our school nurses:

- Had 59,878 sick care visits from students and 1,049 sick care visits from staff.
- Administered 22,828 medications, a 72% increase from last year.
- Performed 10,072 specialized procedures, such as tube feedings, tracheotomy care, and colostomy care.
- Did 17,865 screenings, including vision, hearing, and scoliosis.
- Gave 658 flu vaccines at schools to staff and students (almost *triple* the amount from last year!).



Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)



WIC provides supplemental foods, nutrition education and referrals for health and support services to eligible participants.

Our office receives a contract from the CT Department of Public Health to provide program services to Region 8 – Meriden, Wallingford and Middlesex County area. We also have a subcontract with Middlesex Hospital to provide program services in Middlesex County.

Those eligible for WIC include:

- Pregnant women (through pregnancy and up to 6 weeks after birth or after pregnancy ends).
- Breastfeeding women (up to infant’s 1st birthday).
- Non-breastfeeding postpartum women (up to 6 months after the birth of an infant or after pregnancy ends).
- Infants (up to 1st birthday) and children up to their 5th birthday.
- Fathers, grandparents, foster parents or other guardians may apply for WIC for their children. All applicants must meet set income guidelines for assistance.

Town/City	Number Served 2014-15
Meriden & Wallingford	Meriden (1,853), Wallingford (300)
Middletown, Clinton, Deep River and East Hampton	1,356



The WIC Farmer’s Market Nutrition Program provides fresh, nutritious, unprepared, locally grown fruits and vegetables through certified farmer’s markets to WIC participants, and expands awareness and use of, and sales at, certified farmers’ markets. During the 2014 farm market season our office distributed 1,923 farm market coupon booklets to program participants valued at over \$28,000!

New electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards are coming! We continue to plan for the new WIC technology system and EBT that will be available to Connecticut WIC in January 2016. Meriden WIC is scheduled to “go live” in February 2016. Our office is considered one of the 3 pilot sites and will be the 3rd program in the State to kick off the new system.



WIC supports a woman’s decision to choose how to feed her infant. Our staff promotes breastfeeding as the best choice for babies. We are proud to report that 81% of infants enrolled in the Meriden WIC program over the past year had mothers who initiated breastfeeding. To celebrate this success we held our annual celebration in August 2014 in honor of National Breastfeeding Month. WIC also opened a new breastfeeding room to help women successfully breastfeed their babies when they are at their WIC appointments.

Youth Services

Youth Services is charged with caring for the well-being of the City’s youth. Our staff advocates for resources and provides services to strengthen the healthy functioning of families by providing opportunities for all youth to function as responsible members of the community.

Staff strives to enhance the networking and support between family, school, peer and community environments. Programs assist youth in the development of their desires, skills, talents, and goals, and view children as valued and contributing members of the community. Center-based and outreach activities to schools and neighborhoods cultivate young people’s sense of responsibility, self-worth and encourage community service.

During the 2014/15 year Youth Services staff:

- Facilitated curriculum-based programming to 47 at-risk youth, including Play By the Rules and Girls Circle. Two educational field trips —a tour of the Meriden Police Academy and a day in Hubbard Park to learn about fishing safety—were provided to 23 youth.
- Hired 130 youth through our summer youth employment program. This program was funded through the Workforce Alliance, Inc. and 4 local foundations—Napier, Liberty Bank , Cuno, and the Meriden Foundation.
- Partnered with the Board of Education to provide a work experience to 12 students attending the Venture Academy.
- Through our Support Services to High School youth program, 26 high school youth were provided with the support they needed to increase attendance at school, improve grades, and obtain any necessary referrals for services.
- Diverted 132 youth from the juvenile court system through the Juvenile Assistance and Diversion program.
- Provided the Teen Outreach Program (TOP) afterschool program to 55 students in 7th and 8th grade at both Washington and Lincoln Middle Schools.



- Provided administrative support to the Meriden Campership program, which helped to fund a camp experience for 460 Meriden youth over the summer of 2014.
- Distributed the first quarterly Youth Services newsletter in May to youth serving agencies, highlighting past and current programming.
- Held a business after hours event with the MidState Chamber of Commerce to promote Youth Services.



The students involved in the photo documentation program at the Venture Academy decided to take a picture of something very meaningful to them which they were very thankful for in Meriden. The first photo was taken by a student who was very proud of producing the Tshirts for the Youth Services Employment Program. This student spent many hours in the tshirt production room at Venture Academy. Work skills were gained and the student was praised for the quality work.



The second photo was taken by a student who is very grateful for the opportunities that Venture Academy has given him. He has improved attendance, excellent grades, and was offered an opportunity to be employed in the community with special funding.



Meriden Action Researchers (MARs) —Our youth research team continued their work this year by partnering with the Choice Neighborhood initiative to research potential barriers/benefits to providing a teen-only center in Meriden.

Guided by staff from the Institute for Community Research, 15 youth developed and distributed a survey to over 200 Meriden youth, held focus groups, and visited a successful youth-only center in Hartford. After analyzing the data, the research team determined that a teen-only center is wanted and needed in Meriden. In order to make the center successful, youth input should guide program development and offerings, and the center should be a free space for teens to hang out. Youth Services staff provided supports to our researchers to help them graduate high school and find future employment or higher education opportunities. Supports included providing visits to employment centers and a local community college, and resume and interview skill building sessions. This program was funded by the Workforce Alliance, Inc.

FREE YOUTH CENTER SURVEY



- ◉ We asked about:
 - ❖ Demographics
 - ❖ Transportation
 - ❖ Activities, resources and job training/employment opportunities
 - ❖ Reasons why participants would and wouldn't come
- ◉ Gathered 232 surveys

The Teen Outreach Program (TOP) is an afterschool program serving 7th and 8th grade students at both Washington and Lincoln Middle Schools. TOP is a curriculum-based program and is funded by the Department of Social Services.

TOP teens engaged in a variety of community service learning projects to foster important life skills and engage with their fellow community members in positive ways. Each teen was encouraged to reach a goal of 20 hours of volunteer work; some reached closer to 50! Projects included planning and hosting a family health and wellness fair, serving as “Reading Buddies” for elementary school youth, organizing a Box Top and warm clothing drive, helping at community events such as Breakfast with Santa and Holiday Toy Drive, South Meriden Christmas in the Village, the Martin Luther King Breakfast and the Daffodil Festival.



School Readiness



Meriden School Readiness is a 100% grant funded program that provides affordable, high quality preschool opportunities to 3 and 4 year old children in Meriden. The Meriden School Readiness program:

- Ensures that each program adheres to quality standards as outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
- Ensures that the program staff meet State of CT Office of Early Childhood Education requirements and standards.
- Works to improve the transition from preschool to Kindergarten.

This year School Readiness funded 7 programs and 12 sites throughout the city. A new site at Hanover School was added in January 2015. All totaled, over 500 children in the community benefit from School Readiness programming and funding. Parents have the options of full day, school day, or part day programming. The experiences for children follow the guidelines of the CT Early Learning Development Standards. Most of the teachers in School Readiness Programs have either an Associate's or Bachelor's degree.

To be eligible for a School Readiness program, the child must be a Meriden resident and be 3 or 4 years old. Fees are based on upon gross annual income of the household where the child lives.



This year all School Readiness programs celebrated the **Week of the Young Child** in April. This is a special week designated by NAEYC to bring awareness of the importance of the early years of a child's life. We celebrated with an art display at the Meriden Public Library on Miller Street.

Intergenerational Programming: Partnering with the Senior Center

During the month of May children from the 3 School Readiness programs took a trip to the Senior Center to do activities with Meriden Seniors to celebrate Older American's Month.

First Congregational Church planted flowers, St. Andrew's Nursery School made art murals, and the Little Hounds at Hanover School made healthy snacks. It was a fun time for all!



Special Services to Non-Public Schools

Special Services to Non-Public Schools provides part-time health and welfare services to students attending 5 non-public schools in Meriden – Our Lady of Mount Carmel, St. Joseph, Carver Academy, MidState Christian Academy, and Connecticut Christian Academy.

Students are referred by principals, school staff, and/or parents because of academic, emotional or social concerns which are impeding the student's educational progress. Services are provided by a multi-disciplinary team under Public Act 10-217a:

1. The **School Social Worker** facilitates the assessment of students experiencing behavioral and/or emotional difficulties that impact their academic performance in the school setting.
2. The **Speech/Language Pathologist** provides speech and language therapy for children with language, articulation, fluency, voice disorders, auditory processing and social language difficulties.
3. The **School Psychologist** provides pre-referral interventions and psycho-educational evaluations when students are referred for academic, behavioral, and/or emotional difficulties.

Between September 2014 and June 2015 staff:

- Serviced 33% of the students in non-public schools in Meriden, providing them with needed support allowing them to reach their academic potential.
- Eighth grade students were instructed and guided to perform anti-bullying skits for younger students.
- Attended 32 Planning and Placement Team meetings (PPT's) and made determinations with regard to eligibility for Special Education services.
- Gave presentations to parents on how to assist their children in transitioning to a new school.
- Gave in-service training to staff at 3 schools regarding special education referral process, and resources were made available on line.
- Screened all kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2 students in 6 non public schools for speech issues.
- Attended a CPR class to enhance safety during oral-motor therapy activities.
- Provided strategies for struggling students which resulted in academic improvements.
- Provided summer therapy packets for 54 students receiving speech language services.

(please note— St. Stanislaus closed in June 2015; the data above includes students served at this school).



Emergency Preparedness

Our Department receives annual funding from the CT Department of Public Health to support public health emergency preparedness activities in Meriden. Funding supports public health emergency planning and action in the event of man-made disasters, including radiological, chemical and biological incidents, and natural disasters such as hurricanes, blizzards, and extended power outages.

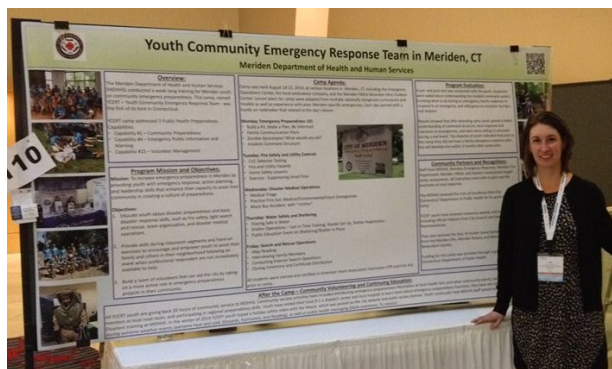
This past year we hosted our first Youth Community Emergency Response Team (YCERT) camp, presented at the National Preparedness Summit in Atlanta, GA, prepared to respond to potential Ebola virus in Connecticut, and opened an emergency shelter in response to a severe weather event in January 2015.



In August 2014 we conducted a week-long training for Meriden youth on community emergency preparedness. This camp, named YCERT, was the first of its kind in Connecticut. During the week youth learned:

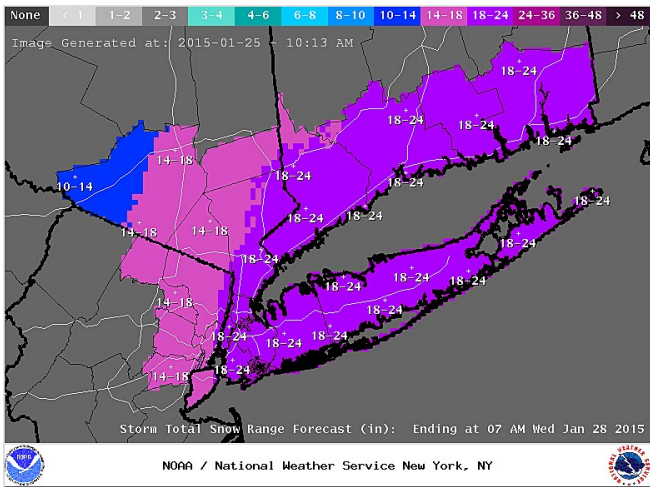
- Emergency Preparedness 101—build a kit, make a plan, be informed.
 - Incident Command Structure (ICS).
 - Fire safety, including how to use a fire extinguisher, and how to turn off home utilities in case of an emergency.
 - Disaster medical operations, including live practice during a “mock” bus accident”.
- Sheltering, including how to “shelter in place” and how to set up an emergency shelter. Our YCERT team set up a shelter drill and over 80 local families attended!
 - Water safety at the Meriden YMCA.
 - How to ask questions and conduct a “lost and found” search.
 - American Heart Association CPR and First Aid.

Staff from MDHHS, Meriden Emergency Response, Meriden Fire Department, Meriden YMCA, and Hunter’s Ambulance taught camp components. All instructors were able to give real-life examples to local response. The MDHHS received the Coin of Excellence from the CT Department of Public Health for its work on the camp, and the YCERT youth have received numerous awards and recognitions, including official citations from City Council and State Representatives. They also received the Dan. M Hunter Good Samaritan award.



After camp ended youth volunteered at health fairs, community events, and attended community emergency preparedness drills. Funding for this camp was provided through a grant from the CT Department of Public Health.

Our YCERT program received national attention at the Preparedness Summit held in Atlanta, GA. The Associate Director of Health (now Director) did a poster presentation during the conference, which was downloaded over 300 times by conference attendees!



Severe winter weather struck in January 2015 when a winter storm dumped over 20 inches of snow in Meriden. Within 3 hours of our emergency operations center opening our staff was able to staff and open an emergency shelter at the Meriden Senior Center. The shelter was open for a little over 24 hours as a place of refuge for people during the weather event. Due to state travel bans our shelter did not have a lot of visitors—but, in emergencies it is better to be proactive! Luckily, Meriden did not lose power during this storm.

We encourage all residents to create an emergency plan for their family and loved ones, in the event you need to leave your home and go to an emergency shelter or have to stay at home for several days. The plan should include:

- Talking about what emergencies can happen in our area and how you would get emergency messages.
- Making a plan for you and your family on what you would do during an emergency.
- Building an emergency supply kit with items such as batteries, canned food, emergency contact information and personal medications.

The Connecticut Emergency Preparedness Guide can help you make your plan; it can be viewed online at www.ct.gov/dph, or call (860) 509-7270 to order one. Copies are also available at our office in both English and Spanish.

Facts about Ebola in the U.S.

You can't get Ebola through air

You can't get Ebola through water

You can't get Ebola through food

The 2014 Ebola epidemic is the largest in history, affecting multiple countries in West Africa. In the United States, we saw two imported cases, including one death, and 2 locally acquired cases in healthcare workers. Governor Malloy signed an order in early October 2014 declaring a public health emergency for the duration of the epidemic, which gave the Commissioner of the CT Department of Public Health the authority to quarantine and isolate individuals whom the commissioner reasonably believes has been exposed to the Ebola virus. As of September 2015, this order still stands.

Local health departments, including Meriden, are responsible for actively monitoring travelers coming to their town/city from Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia (*note: Liberia was taken off the active monitoring list in May 2015*). We are also responsible for participating in drills and exercises, coordinating response plans with police, fire, and EMS, and educating the public on the virus.

You can only get Ebola from:

- Touching the blood or body fluids of a person who is sick with or has died from Ebola.
- Touching contaminated objects, like needles.
- Touching infected animals, their blood or other body fluids, or their meat.

Ebola poses no significant risk to the United States.



Although there have been no cases of Ebola in Connecticut, we continue to be on the ready in case someone should become sick. Our office is updated regularly by the CT Department of Public Health regarding screening protocols, monitoring guidelines, risk reduction messages, and local health department response. For the most up-to-date information on the Ebola epidemic, please visit www.cdc.gov/ebola.

Department Contact Information

(current as of September 1, 2015)

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 165 Miller Street
 Meriden, CT 06450
 Main Number: 203-630-4226
 Fax: 203-639-0039
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