

GNHC BICYCLE SAFETY HELMET DAY UNDAUNTED BY STORM

Although the day broke gray and rainy over Houston, Good Neighbor Healthcare Center held its annual **Bicycle Safety Helmet Day** on Saturday, April 18, 2009. A total of 50 children attended the event and received helmets. Due to the wet weather, we unfortunately had to move all activities indoors so the kids didn't have a chance to ride their bicycles in the parking lot sporting their new helmets, as they have done in past years.

Despite the springtime showers, the day was a big success. As we did last year, GNHC participated in the **Hard Hats for Little Heads Program** which is dedicated to the prevention of head injuries due to bicycle accidents. The **Texas Medical Association Foundation** is able to fund **Hard Hats for Little Heads**, thanks to a generous donation from **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas** as well as gifts from physicians and their families. Because our wonderful Medical Director, **Neeta Gautam, MD** is a member of the **Texas Academy of Family Physicians** we were able to receive 100 helmets free of cost for this program. Moreover, we had coloring books and book markers for our children, provided by the **Texas Office for Prevention of Disabilities**, a State agency interested in minimizing the human and economic losses in Texas caused by preventable disabilities.

Rounding out the day's activities, nursing students from **Texas Women's University** performed a series of skits to demonstrate the importance of fire prevention and safety, and our own **Heidi Gilroy, RN**, GNHC's Nurse Educator, spoke to the kids about bicycle safety and the importance of wearing a helmet correctly. Nine students from **Yes Preparatory High School** graciously pitched in and volunteered to help with the activities, as did **Valerie Jimenez**.

Of course, the highlight of the event was the bicycle helmet giveaway itself. The remaining helmets will be distributed throughout the year to other pediatric patients. These patients will be identified by our providers during well child and other visits.

As you can see, all of us at Good Neighbor owe a huge debt of gratitude to many fine organizations, staff, and community volunteers! Indeed, **Bicycle Safety Helmet Day** would not have been possible without their assistance. To each and every one who helped, a big thank you!!!

"Sure we were disappointed it rained today," said **Michelle Davila, RD, LD, CDE**, the clinic's nutritionist and the Project Coordinator for the event. "But rain or shine, I love this event! I love watching the children receive their helmets - they all seem so proud and happy when they first put them on! Plus, this event is one of the most important we offer because we are educating children and their parents about safety and the prevention of brain injuries. Unfortunately, a lot of times we learn about safety after an accident or injury has occurred, but this event increases the awareness of being safe to prevent serious brain injuries. The earlier in life we can educate our patients about taking safety precautions, the more they will continue leading a healthy life."