

The Family Van is launching a series of Public Education Campaigns with the support of Partners Healthcare and Blue Cross Blue Shield. Here are some areas we are focusing on:

- **March:** National Nutrition Month
- **April:** Physical Activity Month
- **May:** American Stroke Month
- **June:** HIV/AIDS Awareness Month

If you would like to partner with us on a campaign, please contact us at :
(617) 442-3200

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The Van Goes Red

The Family Van recently established a partnership with the American Heart Association (AHA) that showcased on Monday, February 26th, in Dudley Square, Roxbury, MA for the nationwide Go RED for Women campaign. This highly visual event featured women dressed in red coats either wearing or carrying signs that said “Stop Heart Disease/ Go Red for Women” in high-traffic locations throughout Boston.

“We are so excited about our partnership with the AHA,” said Jennifer Benet, Executive Director of The Family Van. “We look for every opportunity to work with organizations who share our mission to

educate the community about the significance of health prevention, more specifically, heart disease,



AHA staff, Van’s staff and volunteers in their Go Red gear

70% of the people we screen on the Van each year are at risk.”

“Heart disease claims the lives of 27 women per day in Massachusetts, and we applaud the Family Van for their commitment to bringing the life-saving message of Go Red to the people of Boston,” added Jenelle

Holder, Director of Cultural Health Initiatives for the American Heart Association’s Greater Boston Division. “We hope that our combined efforts will contribute to a reduction in heart disease, which kills more women than men every year.”

The two organizations also plan to collaborate on many future cause campaigns this year. With the AHA’s expertise and reputation and the Van’s history in the community, this collaboration will increase the impact of our health care and education. The Van hopes to utilize this partnership as a vehicle to spread the value of prevention to the communities that need it the most.

Van Staff Provide Life Saving Services

One Tuesday morning at Fields Corner, a 29 year-old man came on the van as a first time visitor. He was recruited by one of our staff who was doing outreach in the surrounding neighborhood. When he arrived at the van he was greeted by Rainelle our Manager of Direct Services. After familiar-

izing him with the available services aboard The Family Van, they discussed the reason for his visit. **“I came from Africa over 10 years ago and have not been seen by a doctor since then.”** Due to his status as an illegal immigrant he had not received a complete physical or any

dental care in many years. Fortunately, the Van’s healthcare services are free and anonymous which enabled him to get a series of screenings that day.

Rainelle began by checking his blood pressure, his cholesterol levels and his blood sugar level- a critical indication of diabetes. After seeing

The Family Van would welcome donations of any of the following items:

- Computer Monitors
- Designer for exterior of van
- Website designer
- Adult toothbrushes
- Travel-size toothpaste
- Hand sanitizer
- Alcohol wipes
- Antiseptic wipes
- Diapers (large)
- Baby wipes
- DVD player
- DVDs: Cardio health, fitness and nutrition, hypertension, diabetes, HIV, STDs and cholesterol
- Lancets
- Bottled water

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 his glucose level of 457, well over the normal levels of 110 or less, she became alarmed. She continued by asking him if he had experienced any of the following symptoms: excessive urination, thirst, exhaustion or weight loss. He answered yes to all of these symptoms identifying himself as a candidate for diabetes. In addition, his cholesterol levels were alarming; the

results showed them being greater than 200. She immediately contacted one of our collaborating Health Centers and spoke to the urgent care unit where he was referred for urgent care and further health assessment.

Two days later he returned to The Family Van to **thank Rainelle for saving his life and also to discuss other medication options.** Given his symptoms and

the subsequent diagnosis, he was at risk for a number of chronic and preventable illnesses such as stroke, heart disease, kidney disease and Glaucoma. He now visits the Van on a regular basis, and is currently in the process of exploring his options for insurance.



St. Ignatius Church of Loyola at Boston College

THANK YOU

The Family Van would like to thank the following people for their recent donations:

Dr. Michael Morely of Ophthalmic Consultants of Boston for donating the Humphrey FDT machine

Sister Dianne Vallerio, Saint Ignatius of Loyola Church for diapers and formula

Janie & Jack from the Atrium Mall for donation of baby clothes

To make a donation please contact us at
 (617) 442-3200 or family_van@hms.harvard.edu



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