

# Hospitals caring for their communities



## community CONNECTIONS

“Community Connections” stories are reprinted with the hospitals’ and IHA’s permission, and are offered as an example of how hospitals and hospital associations are telling their story to the public.

Through its “Community Connections” initiative, the AHA seeks to ensure that people see the full picture of services that hospitals provide to their communities.

AHA members can learn more by visiting [www.caringforcommunities.org](http://www.caringforcommunities.org).

## Partners for Healthy Families

When studies revealed that obesity was fast becoming one of the biggest health threats for area children, Provena Saint Joseph Medical Center in Joliet created the Joliet Partners for Healthy Families (JPHF), a coalition that includes Joliet School District 86, the Joliet Park District, Harvey Brooks Foundation, University of St. Francis, the University of Illinois Extension and the Joliet YMCA.



JPHF created the “Healthy Kids Club” initiative to target childhood obesity in the community.

Under the initiative, three after-school programs are geared towards teaching students about healthy eating and the importance of exercise. “Camp Fitness” targets third graders with 40 minutes of physical activity and 20 minutes of nutrition education along with English and Spanish educational materials.

The “Kids ‘n Nature” program for fourth graders allows participants the opportunity to experience nature, enjoy physical activity and learn about nutrition through organic gardening activities. The “SOAR” program, new this year, buses fifth graders to the YMCA to provide free swim lessons.

More than 500 students participated in the Camp Fitness and Kids ‘n Nature programs during the 2008-2009 school year, and more than 750 students are expected to be served by the three current programs during this school year.

Every year the Illinois Hospital Association (IHA), like many other state, metropolitan and regional hospital associations across the country, releases an annual report that describes the many ways in which its hospitals help build healthier communities

The IHA’s community benefits report, “Illinois Hospitals Caring for Their Communities: More Than You See,” is available at [www.iha.org](http://www.iha.org). These

## School Sports Physical Clinic

Perry County and surrounding counties have some of the highest unemployment rates in Illinois, and Du Quoin-based Marshall Browning Hospital’s school sports clinics save families the cost of a doctor visit. Sports physicals for children from junior high through college cost only \$10, with the proceeds returned to the student’s school.

Last year, students from about 25 schools attended, and more than \$2,000 was returned to the schools. “The students receive a very thorough exam and seem to enjoy the evening as well,” says



Pam Logan, the hospital’s marketing director. “The parents appreciate the savings and the schools appreciate the donation.”

The hospital also donates the services of its athletic trainer to the local high school. Among other services, the trainer administers “ImPACT Concussion Testing” – a computerized exam – to help determine the severity and extent of head injuries suffered by high school athletes.

## Mother/Baby Home Care

Effingham-based St Anthony’s Memorial Hospital’s “Mother/Baby Home Care” program offers free care and education from a registered nurse for new mothers who have recently given birth at the hospital.

At a home visit, the nurse examines the mother and baby and answers any questions the new mother may have. With the help of a bilirubin machine, the nurse can painlessly check the baby for jaundice, eliminating the need for a hospital test.

“Since many of our mothers are single mothers and often young first-time mothers with little support, these visits give them comfort and peace of mind,” says Home Care manager Kelly Sager. “They can ask questions that they may not want to ask their doctors and it helps alleviate their anxieties. They sometimes just need to hear that they are doing the right things for their baby.”

