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After 22 Years of Success, Children’s Dental Health Project to Move Resources to Community Catalyst in December

Leading health advocacy organization, Community Catalyst, will acquire CDHP resources with pledge to continue improving oral health policy for children, families

(Washington, DC) The Children’s Dental Health Project (CDHP), a DC-based think tank established in 1997 to secure dental coverage for all children, announced today that it will transition its extensive online public health policy and advocacy research and analysis to Community Catalyst, a leading national consumer voice on health care. With this move to its longstanding organizational partner, CDHP will terminate its operations as an independent non-profit at year end while ensuring an ongoing commitment to transforming the oral health system to better serve all children and adults.

“After reviewing our founding mission, our achievements, and consulting with long-time supporters, the Children’s Dental Health Project board and I determined it was time to shift from being a niche policy shop to bolstering oral health efforts within a broader health policy agenda,” said Meg Booth, CDHP executive director. “We are thrilled our legacy will strengthen the next generation of oral health policy and advocacy at Community Catalyst. A trusted ally, they share our belief that no family should be held back from its dreams due to dental disease.”

“Community Catalyst and the Children’s Dental Health Project have long stood together to end barriers to dental care,” said Emily Stewart, executive director at Community Catalyst. “We are grateful for CDHP’s leadership improving the status of children’s oral health coverage and advancing access to care for parents and other adults,” Stewart continued. “We look forward to honoring the rich history of CDHP by continuing our fight for families’ oral health.”

Dr. Burton Edelstein, a pediatric dentist and Professor of Dental Medicine and Health Policy and Management at Columbia University, founded the Children’s Dental Health Project 22 years ago. CDHP aimed to secure a dental benefit in the then newly-passed Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Congress had failed to guarantee dental coverage for newly insured children, treating pediatric dental care as optional. After ten years of ongoing effort, CDHP and its partners secured guaranteed comprehensive dental benefits for children in both CHIP and the [Affordable Care Act](#). As a result, over ten million children [obtained dental coverage](#) and ever-increasing numbers of children obtained dental care. By 2016, for the first time since Medicaid began in 1965, [more than half](#) of children with publicly-financed insurance had obtained dental care.

Edelstein notes, “Securing coverage and care for underserved children will be the sustaining historic legacy of the Children’s Dental Health Project. This remarkable achievement belongs to CDHP’s tireless leadership and staff, its strategic smarts, its investigative prowess, and its extensive partnerships and collaborations. CDHP gave voice to children’s oral health and established pediatric oral health policy as an essential, collaborative endeavor that will only grow as health care reform continues to evolve.”

Throughout its two-decade history, the Children’s Dental Health Project successfully engaged myriad state and federal organizations and decision makers to expand children’s oral health coverage in both public and private insurance. In recent years, CDHP expanded its focus to meeting the dental needs of parents and caregivers, particularly for people who are [pregnant and eligible for Medicaid](#). It has made [significant in-roads](#) on the issue.

Looking toward the next phase of oral health advocacy, Meg Booth reiterates the importance of integrating oral health in other policy fights to help families reach their goals.

“Addressing the oral health of a whole family includes, but must go beyond, the dental care system,” commented Booth. “We look forward to shifting CDHP’s work to Community Catalyst so our partners can continue building on our success. At the same time, we encourage other groups to pick up where we left off, creating the systemic changes needed to help all families achieve good oral health and economic stability.”

For further information and updates, visit www.cdhp.org.

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About the Children’s Dental Health Project

The Children’s Dental Health Project is a Washington, DC-based policy organization advancing solutions so that, one day, no child will suffer from tooth decay. We believe no family should be held back from its dreams due to dental disease. Learn more at www.cdhp.org, on Twitter at [@Teeth_Matter](#) or Facebook at [@childrensdentalhealth](#).

About Community Catalyst

Community Catalyst is a national, non-profit consumer advocacy organization founded in 1998 with the belief that affordable quality health care should be accessible to everyone. We work in partnership with national, state and local organizations, policymakers, and philanthropic foundations to ensure consumer interests are represented wherever important decisions about health and the health system are made: in communities, statehouses and on Capitol Hill. Headquartered in Boston, Community Catalyst has offices in Washington, DC, Atlanta, Pittsburgh and St. Louis. For more information, visit www.communitycatalyst.org. Follow us on Twitter [@HealthPolicyHub](#).