



## St. Christopher's Hospital for Children: Back to School Carnival

Student Interns: Sydney Churchill, Drexel University College of Medicine  
Danielle Ireland, Drexel University College of Medicine  
Academic Preceptor: Emily Spengler, MD, St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, Drexel University College of Medicine  
Community Preceptor: Renee Turchi, MD, MPH, FAAP, St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, Drexel University College of Medicine

### COMMUNITY PARTNER



The Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CCYSCN) is part of St. Christopher's Hospital for Children located in North Philadelphia. The CCYSCN mission is to provide comprehensive care to children with complex healthcare needs as a means to bring peace of mind to families.



### BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

School supplies pose a significant expense to families on a yearly basis, particularly for families who may be low-income or struggling to meet other financial needs. However, they are vastly important in the ability of children to participate in and succeed within the educational system. The back-to-school carnival hosted by the CCYSCN seeks to address this need and distribute backpacks and school supplies to families every year.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS/CHALLENGES/JOYS

#### TEAM'S EXPERIENCE

Each year, CCYSCN holds a back-to-school carnival to help the children of the North Philadelphia community get ready for the new school year with backpacks filled with school supplies as well as providing families with health resources. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 12<sup>th</sup> annual carnival was primarily a backpack drive and school lunch meal distribution along with some entertainment set up in tents in the parking lot. To prepare for the backpack drive and carnival this year, we aided in fundraising, planning and ordering the supplies for the backpacks. The main project we undertook was coordinating the stuffing and distribution of over 5,000 backpacks as well as organization and distribution of health educational and resource packets for the families.



Distributed 10,000 backpacks filled with school supplies



Also gave out thousands of Philly soft pretzels and school lunches!



Everyone received these fliers with information about local resources



All ready to start the distribution!

### REFLECTION

Throughout our experience this summer, we learned valuable lessons to improve our cultural competency as well as gained knowledge that will serve us as future physicians. We learned the importance of understanding the whole picture of a patient in order to provide optimal care for them. By providing children with much-needed school supplies, the Back-to-School Carnival promotes success in school, which often leads to positive healthcare outcomes, and vice versa. By working with a variety of hospital personnel, such as administration, maintenance, volunteers, physicians, etc.; we learned about how essential a collaborative effort is when it comes to organizing an event or providing healthcare. The lessons we learned this summer are pieces of knowledge that we will carry with us for the rest of our lives and will absolutely shape the kind of healthcare providers we will be in the future.

-Sydney Churchill and Danielle Ireland