



NEWS



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McLean County Health Department celebrates Public Health Week

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— The first full week of April is recognized as National Public Health Week to highlight the contributions of our nation's public health system and focus on issues that are important to improving our nation's health. The McLean County Health Department (MCHD) embraces the theme "Public Health: Start Here" by providing outreach and education that correlates with each day's theme. Visit <http://health.mcleancountyil.gov> for more information during Public Health Week, April 7-11.

Monday, April 7: "Healthy from the Start"

The recent County Rankings place McLean County's low birth rate at 8.3% of all live births, which has been slowly increasing. MCHD recognizes that early access to prenatal care is important for a healthy mom, healthy birth and healthy baby. The MCHD's Family Case Management staff helps connect prenatal moms with the medical resources they need, such as obstetricians and pediatricians. Once babies are born, it's important to provide them with the healthiest start by providing them with the best source of nutrients, breast milk. The Women, Infants & Children Nutrition, Education & Supplemental Food Program (WIC) provides access to breastfeeding counseling and support, including Breastfeeding Peer Counselor, Certified Lactation Counselors, and an IBCLC (International Board Certified Lactation Consultant) to support women on their breastfeeding journey. MCHD WIC also hosts a breastfeeding support group in conjunction with La Leche League of Bloomington-Normal on the first Tuesday each month.

Tuesday, April 8: "Don't Panic"

In 2011, the MCHD Emergency Preparedness Team conducted a survey that showed less than 50 percent of families in McLean County had an emergency plan. Either for your family or for your pets, emergency planning is an effective way to mitigate personal emergencies during a large scale emergency. A well-formulated emergency response plan that includes vaccination updates decreases the spread of illness in our community. The health department currently provides life-saving vaccines to all residents— both children and adults who are either insured or uninsured.

Activity 1: The AmeriCorps volunteer with the MCHD Emergency Preparedness Team is partnering with Eta Sigma Gamma, the Illinois State University Health Education honorary group, to "Chalk the Quad" for Emergency Hopscotch on the ISU Quad for students all day.

Activity 2: McLean County Veterinarian Dr. Gary Pearl, McLean County Animal Control Director Marshall Thomson, and

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Officer James Hall from the Bloomington Police Department present emergency planning information for local animal rescues, veterinarians, and the public called "I Won't Leave Without Them." The presentation focuses on the importance of individuals, rescue agencies, and veterinarians preparing for disasters in order to maintain the safety of the animals in their care. The presentation will begin at 2 p.m. in Room 324 at the McLean County Health Department.

Activity 3: MCHD will be at Women's Health Night from 3 to 7:30 p.m. at the ISU Bone Student Center to promote adult immunizations. The health department can now provide vaccine shots for both adults and children with private health insurance, with public health insurance, or without health insurance. In-Person Counselors will also be present to answer people's questions about Get Covered Illinois and health insurance options.

Wednesday, April 9: "Get Out Ahead"

Oral diseases, such as dental caries (tooth decay) and periodontal infections (gum disease) are preventable. Greater than 10 percent of McLean County adults in 2008 reported not seeing a dentist in more than two years, or never. Also in McLean County, 42.5% of third graders have experienced a cavity and 20.9% have untreated cavities. Of the 3-year-old children enrolled in the WIC Nutrition program, about 33% have signs and symptoms of early childhood cavities. The Dental Clinic at the health department serves children enrolled in the AllKids program from Monday through Thursday and provides services for uninsured and underinsured adults on Fridays.

In 2013, the dental clinic welcomed three new dentists—one new dentist to serve the adult clinic and two new pediatric dentists. These additions made it possible to have two dentists in the children's clinic every Wednesday, allowing more than 40 additional children to receive restorative dental services each month.

Thursday, April 10: "Eat Well"

In 2010, 50 percent of American meals were eaten away from home. In McLean County, there were 821 active Food Establishment Permits at the end of 2013, which resulted in 2,933 inspections to make sure that the food served to visitors and McLean County residents were safe for consumption. It's not just where the food is coming from that is of concern; it's the nutritional value of the food itself. In total, Americans are now consuming 31 percent more calories than we were 40 years ago — including 56 percent more fats and oils and 14 percent more sugars and sweeteners. The average American now eats 15 more pounds of sugar a year than in 1970. The majority of the added sugar comes from sweetened beverages, such as carbonated soda, sports drinks, and energy drinks.

Activity: Nancy Lamb will host a community stair climb in Room 324 and in the newly renovated stairwells of the health department from 4:40 to 5:20 p.m.

Lamb will provide information about how to incorporate physical activity throughout the day. Lamb is owner of FirstNFitness in Bloomington, Illinois. A certified personal trainer and fitness instructor, Lamb has taught in the central Illinois since 1998. She is also a national kickboxing certification workshop presenter. Since 2004, Lamb has competed

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nationally in stair climbing, winning several races throughout the country and is currently ranked 6th in the nation for women. Most recently, Lamb won the St. Louis Met climb on March 22, an "ultimate" climb that has racers trying to climb the tower as many times as he or she can in an hour. Visit <http://www.firstnfitness.com> to contact Lamb for information regarding fitness training and nutrition.

Friday, April 11: "Be the Healthiest Nation in One Generation"

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported in August 2013 that the obesity rates of low-income preschoolers, after decades of rising, began to level off from 2003 through 2008 and now are showing small declines in many states. The MCHD has used its We Choose Health Grant to work more closely with local schools to adopt portions of the Coordinated School Health (CSH) model. CSH focuses efforts in health education, physical education, health services, nutrition services, counseling/ social services, safe school environment, and health promotion for staff. MCHD brought specialized training to McLean County teachers in January focused on enhanced PE and to create opportunities throughout the entire school day for physical activity.

The future health of our community will likely be impacted by the recent health insurance enrollments by In-Person Counselors in McLean County, two of which are at MCHD. The In-Person Counselors from the health department enrolled more than 600 local residents in affordable health insurance, made available through the Affordable Care Act and Get Covered Illinois. As more residents gain access to affordable health insurance, more preventative medical services can be applied to improve the health of citizens.

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