

**Clinton County Health Department
Community Report
2009**

LPHA NAME: CLINTON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT (CCHD)

POPULATION: 20,671

KEY HEALTH ISSUE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

The key health issue for Clinton County as identified by the health department and local community partners is obesity and the lack of physical exercise. To address this problem the local health department took inventory of what programs and resources were available in the communities that residents could utilize. Many of the programs had a cost or membership fee. Other resources, such as parks and walking trails/tracks, require self-motivation. Food intake is whatever is available and quick and most of the time the food consumed is full of calories and low on nutrition. School, after-school activities and work hours make it difficult for people to take time to eat right and to get the recommended amount of daily exercise.

National Data indicates individuals 40 years and older have a higher prevalence rate for risk of and at risk for obesity. Individuals in the age group of 18 to 39 are not eating fruits and vegetables nor exercising. Through the health department's community resource inventory process it was discovered pre-schools, licensed day cares, schools and youth groups incorporate nutrition education and the importance of physical activity in their curriculum. But children are not the ones neither shopping for the meals nor preparing the meals. Children follow the lead of their parent(s) on implementing physical activity into their daily routine and continue the practices as adults.

To reinforce and encourage nutrition education and physical activity with Clinton County young adults CCHD appointed a task force; task force members were from local businesses and civic organizations. The mission of the group was to review best practices that would reduce the risk of obesity and a program that would/could be implemented at a worksite. The task force identified the following as barriers to program implementation: (1) Employers and managers concerns regarding the financial and productivity cost their companies may experience. (2) Employers perception this issue is a personal responsibility, not an employer and/or Government Issue. (3) Individuals with the attitude it is my body and I will do as I please. (4) Individuals thinking only about the present moment. "I don't care what happens to me when I am 40, that years away". The task force also determined for a practice to reduce the risk of obesity the action must incorporate more than one activity. The task force developed a pilot project that would encourage good nutrition and physical activity at a worksite.

The health challenge included the following interventions: (1) Eat 5 fruits and/or vegetables daily; (2) Drink 8 glasses of water daily; (3) 30 minutes physical activity daily. The task force wanted to learn how a business would accept and support the idea of educating and promoting a worksite health challenge. Three private and three government businesses agreed to participate in the health challenge. Employees from

each business comprised a team; team members selected a team leader. (Employees were not required to participate in the challenge.) A pre-challenge survey was conducted to assess each participant's current nutrition, physical activity and motivation levels. The challenge was not a weight loss program but an intervention to encourage healthy choices. Team members tracked their daily consumption of fruits/vegetables, water and the amount of time they did physical exercise. Each component of the challenge was assigned a point value. Team Leaders collected team members' stats and reported the stats to CCHD weekly. The health challenge was for 6 weeks. The challenge recognized and provided a cash prize to the Winning Team and a Winning Individual. Team members completed a post-challenge survey to assess participant's life style changes.

Although many team members did not meet the daily-recommended amount of water intake, fruit/vegetable consumption or physical exercise, all participants improved somewhat by the end of the challenge. Team members were more mindful of their choices and wanted to continue the healthy activities. Teams that included management employees were more successful with meeting the daily-recommended challenges, reporting stats and completing the six-week health challenge. It was evident business management must be supportive at the worksite for participants to keep up the motivation needed to stick with the challenge. Most team members wanted the Health Challenge to be continued and expanded. CCHD will schedule a task force meeting to discuss health challenge options and expanded membership.

KEY ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTNERS

- Clinton County MCH Program
- Clinton County WIC Program
- Clinton County MO Family Support and Children's Division
- Clinton County Soil & Water
- BankLiberty Plattsburg
- Tiny Tiger Day Care
- Pamida Store
- Clinton County University Outreach Extension Office

The above partners played a key part in the development and/or participation in the health challenge. Clinton County does not have an established health advisory board. CCHD utilizes the Clinton County LEPC to gather and disseminate county health issues. The LEPC membership includes residents from all communities in the county. Clinton County LEPC has monthly meeting in Plattsburg, the county seat. The health challenge project advisory task force includes persons from the LEPC membership. The health challenge was a pilot project; the number of participating businesses was limited. By limiting the number of businesses participating in the challenge it enabled the health department to manage and evaluate the project with the health challenge task force. The task force and health department future plans include expanding the task force membership to include more disciplines.

EVIDENCE OF A PLAN TO MEASURE OUTCOMES

The health challenge included a pre and post health challenge survey. The survey was used to assess the benefits of the challenge. The task force compared the effects the

challenge had on a participant regarding their pre and post challenge beverage, food and daily physical exercise choices. The survey also indicated the motivation a participant believed would or would not cause them to implement a change in their choices regarding nutrition and the amount of daily physical activity they would do. (Pre and post surveys attached)

This group was so small it will have little effect on the overall county statistics.

Clinton County WIC in addition to general WIC nutrition education/counseling the WIC nutritionist incorporated *Obesity in Bottle* educational tools during visits with WIC clients. County WIC statistics will be reviewed fall 2009 to compare WIC obesity rates to 2008 to determine if the rate of obesity is declining in Clinton County WIC participates.

Clinton County Health will conduct a June 2009 follow-up health challenge survey to determine if health challenge participates have continued with healthy life-choices (8 glasses of water, 5 servings fruits/vegetables and 30 minutes of daily exercise.) Why they have continued, why they have not and what will help them make that change.

INFORMING THE PUBLIC

- Clinton County Community Report will be available on Clinton County Health Department website www.clintoncountyhealthdepartment.com
- Report filed with CCHD Board minutes.
- A copy is available in the lobby of the Clinton County Health Department.
- Copies can be mailed or emailed upon request.
- Clinton County Commission provided a copy.
- Report given to Clinton County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC).

CONCLUSION

Reducing obesity rates in Clinton County will continue to be addressed by the County Health Department. Reducing Obesity risk can greatly improve the health of a person and family. The recent economic situation the nation has experience has created a window of opportunity regarding the choices families need to make to reduce their spending (such as: eating out, beverage choices and family activities). Educating businesses/worksites about the advantages of incorporating wellness programs in the workplace may reduce the number of sick days their employees or employee family members may experience. An additional benefit to a business may be the reduction of the cost the business pays for employees health care insurance.

Reducing the risk of obesity will improve the overall health of our county.

***MKDowney, Administrator
2009 Community Health Report***