



# Arkansas Department of Health Northeast Regional E-News



MARCH 2015

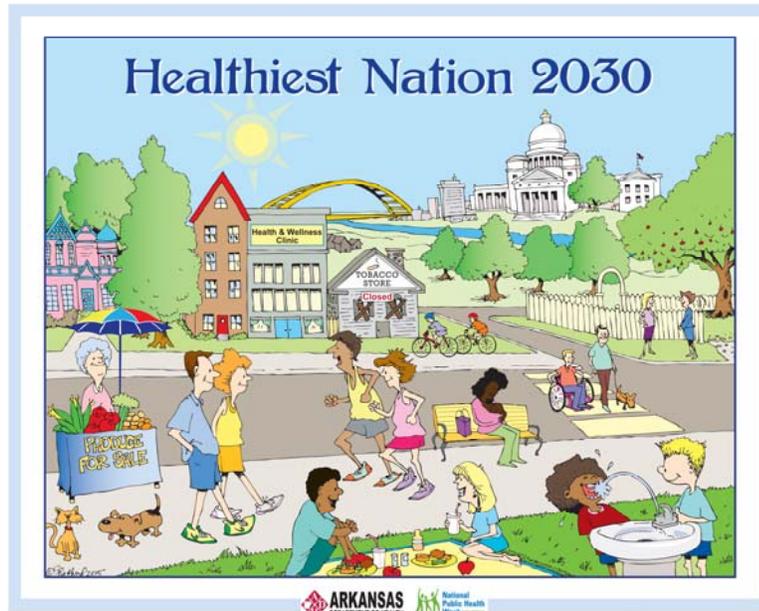
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## Public Health Week: April 6 -10

Public Health Week is observed during the first full week of April each year. During the week, health professionals connect with individuals and communities to show them how public health helps Arkansans improve their own health, protects them from epidemics and provides preventive health services in their communities. This year's theme, "Healthiest Nation in One Generation – by 2030," focuses on the steps it will take to ensure that our youngest generation will be the healthiest American generation yet.



## Quit Tobacco Today



**For information on quitting tobacco call the Arkansas Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW**

## Fast Fact!

*An estimated 1 in 4 crashes involve cell phones.*

**April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month**

By now, all health units should have received these darling posters for use in your counties. **How many healthy practices or aides to Public Health can you name? Person with the most gets a prize from me! Send me an email with your answers!**

Every day in our local health units, through our HHI coalitions and through thousands of interactions with our community, we promote healthy ideas and practices to make sure the ADH works with the people in our state to be the best we can be. Although, we have a long journey ahead, we continue to take daily steps to be the "Healthiest Nation in One Generation."

## What's your healthy habit that you can pass on to others?

## Wear Red – Heart Health Month

### Osecola Health Unit



Front row: Elizabeth Crawford, Ricky Kopp, Tammy Johnson

Back Row: Bonnie Jones, Shearin Lewis; Joyce Jacobs, Debbie Shelton, Peggy Morgan, Vicki Mobley, Laura Thaxton, and Johnnie Williams

### Cross County Seniors

On February 27<sup>th</sup>, CrossRidge Community Hospital and Cross County Health Unit held a Heart Health Celebration at the Wynne Senior Center. The seniors received healthy snacks, heart health material and blood pressure screenings.



## Red Dress Sunday – Heart Health Month

Bridging the Gap Ministries in Mississippi county participates in Red Dress Sunday.



## Mayors Mentoring Mayors

The Arkansas Coalition for Obesity Prevention (ArCop) recently held a regional Mayors Mentoring Mayors meeting in Batesville. Mayor Rick Elumbaugh, of Batesville, hosted the first of a series of five meetings across the state.

Since the beginning of ArCOP's Growing Healthy Communities program, cities with the most significant changes towards better health are cities where the mayor is involved. Nine mayors from across the state will be sharing their successes, lessons learned and best practices with their colleagues at these free "lunch and learn" events.



Photo Left: Participants at the Batesville Mayors Mentoring Mayors meeting held at UACCB.

Photo Right: Batesville Mayor Rick Elumbaugh and Andi Ridgeway, Hometown Health Improvement Branch Chief and ArCOP Chair.

## Hand washing and Hygiene



Kitty Bingham, LHU administrator in Cross County, teaches ABC Preschool students in Wynne about the importance of hand washing to prevent the spread of germs and diseases like the flu.

## Tobacco Education Program looking to go Statewide

Amy Whitener, a sub-grantee with St. Bernard's Hospital, is currently piloting a program for TPCP titled Addictions, Inc. The movie by that name is the foundation for the program. The movie Addictions, Inc. features Dr. Victor De Noble who was recruited in 1980 by the Phillip Morris Research Center to build a secret research lab and to develop a cigarette with reduced heart risk. After successfully identifying a nicotine substitute that did not elevate the heart rate in animal models, his attempts to publish his work were suppressed by Philip Morris. He was eventually fired and his laboratory and data were seized. In 1994, after a decade of being silenced by a secrecy agreement, Dr. De Noble became the first whistle-blower to testify before Congress about his research conducted within the tobacco industry. His research shows that nicotine contains addictive properties similar to other drugs of addiction. His congressional testimony was the cornerstone for sweeping changes in public policy regarding tobacco use, including the master settlement commission.

Whitener educated her youth leadership board on the dangers of tobacco products. Then, the youth met with Dr. De Noble last fall and interviewed him for a film that was recorded. Amy uses the YLB students, Addictions Inc. film and the De Noble interview to educate middle school-high school kids on tobacco addiction. The students are given a pre-test and after the presentation there is a post test. The teachers are given a notebook with the curriculum that is used. There is also a list of community service projects that the class room can select and participate in to educate the community. For example, one school chose to pick up tobacco litter at a local park. The students presented their liter to city council and the city passed a comprehensive tobacco free park policy.

Once the program completes an evaluation stage, plans for it to be used statewide are being developed.

## Breastfeeding Pilot program



Glancing at the billboards in Independence, one can't help but notice the eye-catching colors and invitation to moms to breastfeed. These billboards, 6 in all, are part of a pilot program based on the CDC's recommendations. The pilot program supported by a grant through the state office has the goal of boosting the breastfeeding rates in Arkansas. Sonia Nix, Local Health Unit Administrator for Independence County, said Independence County competed with several other counties in Arkansas and won the opportunity to pilot the program. The billboards are spurring interest and the unit has received inquiries from the public regarding their message. The billboards will be around until September 2015. Another component of the program is the placement of a Breastfeeding Peer Counselor at White River Medical Center in Batesville.

## Message from the Regional Director

Since 1995, communities across the country have celebrated National Public Health Week during the first full week of April to highlight issues that are important to improving the public's health. National Public Health Week 2015 is April 6<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>. This year's theme is "Healthiest Nation 2030." Our Local Health Units in the NE Region are encouraging Healthy Behaviors to promote National Public Health Week. With nearly 1 million Americans dying every year from diseases that could be prevented, even small preventive changes and community initiatives can make a big difference in living healthier lives. Our residents can make a real difference in their local community by committing to healthier behaviors for themselves, their children and families, Real change in the rising cost of health care can come when citizens realize what they can do to improve their lives. I encourage our NE Units to use Best Practice Prevention Strategies to create a healthier Northeast Arkansas by promoting healthy behaviors in the following areas:

- Active Living and Healthy Eating
- Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs
- Communicable Diseases
- Reproductive and Sexual Health
- Mental and Emotional Well-Being

I am amazed by how most of the things we already do at our NE units & local community coalitions are perfectly aligned with this year's theme, "Healthiest Nation 2030." I look forward to hearing more about the highlights from your efforts in the weeks to come.

Bill



## HHI Spotlight!

Below Left: NE Community Health Nurse Specialist, Laura Cook, provided blood pressure checks during a community health fair held in Trumann. ADH HHI staff partner with organizations across the region and state to provide support to healthy lifestyles.



Below right: Jodie Hightower, Public Information Specialist, assists a student during the Get Real, Here's the Deal budgeting program at Mountain View Middle School. The "Basic Nutrients" portion of the program allows students to estimate how much of their monthly income will be spent on groceries.

To submit articles, questions or comments contact [Jodie.hightower@arkansas.gov](mailto:Jodie.hightower@arkansas.gov) or call 870-251-2848