

# Southeast Region Hometown Health Improvement Newsletter

Arkansas Department of Health

May 2012

## Public Health Week 2012



Pictured: Breastfeeding board in the Lincoln County Health Unit

Every year chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes are responsible for millions of premature deaths. Americans miss 2.5 billion days of work because of these illnesses and all of that lost productivity adds up to more than one trillion dollars. Injuries, unexpected accidents and violence affect people daily in all aspects of life.

Unintentional injuries, such as motor vehicle crashes, poisonings, and burns rank among the top ten causes of death for people aged 44 and younger. Catching and preventing these illnesses and incidents before they develop is key to improving our nation's health. Many small steps can be taken to begin living healthier lives. These steps were emphasized in this year's public health week. Many counties throughout the Southeast Region sponsored activities and opportunities to raise awareness throughout their communities. Bulletin boards and other displays were placed in health units throughout the region with information regarding:

breastfeeding, injury prevention, nutrition, physical activity, mental

health and educational opportunities. Jefferson County held a Public Health Week kickoff at Lake Saracen in Pine Bluff. Participants were drafted into very competitive foot races for door prizes based on age groups; as well as a stimulating exercise routine that would help anyone break a sweat. Lakendricks Creative Dancing Students, a local dance studio, performed several dance routines to get the crowd to exercise. A proclamation was read by Local Health Unit Administrator, "Q" Cotledge stating that April 2nd– 8th was National Public Health Week. This proclamation was signed by Pine Bluff Mayor Carl Redus and Jefferson County Judge Mike Holcomb.



Pictured: John Brown Watson Library table in Jefferson County Health Unit

### Inside this issue:

Walk @ Lunch Day	2
Bragg Street Fair	2
Y.E.S. Team	2
New Cigarette Packaging	3
Stroke Awareness	3
Senior Challenge	4
Youth Committee Kickball	4
Worksite Wellness	4
Spring into Health	5
Lee County Lunch & Learn	5
Southeast Tidbits	6

**Hometown Health Improvement**



## National Walk @ Lunch Day



The National Walk @ Lunch Day was held on April 25th. This day is celebrated every year to help individuals incorporate physical activity into your work day. This is also an opportunity to encourage physical activity in peoples daily lives. The Southeast Region showed support by hosting several events. In Arkansas County, the Meekins Middle School wellness and safety committee organized a marathon for the last eight weeks of school. Students are walking laps on the track during their lunch recess which incorporates walk at lunch. Volunteers are monitoring and recording each student's progress. The goal is for students to walk a 26 mile marathon by the end of the eight

weeks. Staff members are also participating in this. James Matthews Elementary School located in Jefferson County also participated in the walk. St. Francis County Hometown Health Network hosted two Walk @ Lunch events. One was held at Eastern Arkansas Community College and the other at the track south of town. A total of 48 people participated. Ashley County also held two walks one of which was held in Crossett at the Crossett Credit Union with 46 people present. The other walk was at the local health unit. At each walk nutrition and exercise tips along with a walkability assessment were used. Drew H.E.A.L.T.H also partnered with University of Arkansas at Monticello in the National Walk at Lunch and held a walk at the Weevil Pond.

## Bragg Street Fair

The annual Bragg Street Health and Wellness Fair was held on April 14th. There were over 350 participants and over 50 vendors for a fun filled day. Local health facilities set up on Bragg Street to provide the community with educational information, health screening and family fun. Children had multiple activities such as jump houses, face painting and immunizations. Others had an opportunity for free health screenings which included: blood sugar, blood pressure, cholesterol, PSA, HIV and vision. This year for the first time a doctor was on hand providing free diabetic food exams. A variety of health resources, vendors and information were on the square including a youth group which provided the public with a quit pledge. This is a pledge to get people to stop smoking.



## MISRGO Y.E.S. Team



Pictured: Yes Team actors

The Y.E.S. Team is a Minority Initiative Sub-Recipient Grant Office at University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. This is a Arkansas Youth Leadership Initiative. On Friday, April 13th, over 80 McGehee Middle School students and staff in Desha County enjoyed tobacco prevention and education performances and messages provided by the MISRGO Y.E.S. Team. On Friday, April 20th, over 300 Drew Central School District students and staff in Drew County attended the MISRGO Y.E.S. Team presentation. The team's aggressive presentation is an in-your face, fact filled, entertaining, and educational experience. While the program targets African American and Hispanic youth, everyone in attendance was engaged by the performance.

## FDA Pushes for New Cigarette Packaging



In a long overdue step, the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) has passed a new regulation that requires cigarette packages and advertisements to carry large graphic images depicting the dangers associated with smoking.

The warning labels must feature either drawings or photos depicting death and disease and must be accompanied by text stating that smoking is addictive or that it kills. The labels must cover half a package's front, rear and the top 20% of all cigarette ads.



**STAMP OUT SMOKING**  
ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
1-800-QUIT-NOW

FDA's current regulations only require a written warning on the edge of the cigarette pack and a similar small warning at the bottom of cigarette advertisements. The FDA hopes that the strong graphic warning labels will prove to be a powerful deterrent to smoking. The aim is to effectively scare young people planning to take it up, influence current smokers to quit and strengthen the will of those who are attempting to quit. The FDA is currently reviewing 36 different warning label designs, out of which nine will be selected by June 22, 2012. Cigarette manufacturers must begin putting the selected labels on their packages and advertisements by September 22nd. After October 22nd, distribution of cigarettes without the required warnings will not be allowed. Proposed pictures include images of diseased lungs, corpses, a mother blowing smoke in her child's face and a man breathing through a hole in his neck.

## Stroke is an Emergency. Act FAST and Call 9-1-1

### Stroke Prevention Guidelines



- 1. Know blood pressure (hypertension):** High blood pressure is a major stroke risk factor if left untreated. Have blood pressure checked yearly by a doctor or at health fairs, a local pharmacy or supermarket or with an automatic blood pressure machine.
- 2. Stop smoking:** Smoking doubles the risk of stroke. It damages blood vessel walls, speeds up artery clogging, raises blood pressure and makes the heart work harder. Stopping smoking today will immediately begin to decrease risk.
- 3. Know cholesterol levels:** Cholesterol is a fatty substance in blood that is made by the body. It also comes in food. High cholesterol levels can clog arteries and cause a stroke. See a doctor if your total cholesterol level is more than 200.
- 4. Control diabetes:** Many people with diabetes have health problems that are also stroke risk factors. Your doctor can prescribe a nutrition program, lifestyle changes and medicine to help control your diabetes.
- 5. Manage exercise and diet:** Excess weight strains the circulatory system. Exercise five times a week. Maintain a diet low in calories, salt, saturated and trans fats and cholesterol. Eat five servings of fruits and vegetables daily.

## Phillips County Senior Challenge



Pictured: Seniors being presented with bags

The Senior Challenge started February 1st and ran until April 30th. East Arkansas Area Agency on Aging sponsors the Senior Challenge every year and the Phillips County Hometown Health Improvement Coalition supports the efforts of the Challenge teams. This year there was one team of eight in West Helena and another team of eight in Lakeview for a total of 16 participants in Phillips County. The Phillips County Hometown Health Improvement Coalition made congratulation bags for all the participants who completed the challenge. Each bag included educational and promotional items from the agencies represented in the Hometown Health Improvement Coalition.

## Youth Committee Kickball



Pictured: Coleman school students playing kickball game

The Jefferson County HHI Youth Committee and the St. Marion Consolidated District sponsored a kickball game on Saturday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at Regional Park. Some of the participants needed to be taught how to play kickball, so some of the adults played on the field to help them. However, with a little coaching and encouragement, the kids gained confidence. In addition to the kickball game Juanita Buckmaster, Community Health Nurse Specialist, presented on bicycle safety rules and Rosemary Withers, Community Health Promotion Specialist, presented on healthy eating habits. The kids who participated were from Coleman Middle School and James Matthew Elementary School.

## Worksite Wellness in Lincoln County

School Apparel, Inc. manufactures clothing in Star City. This company currently has approximately 250 to 500 employees. School Apparel employees had the opportunity to have their cholesterol, blood pressure, and blood glucose checked at the worksite wellness event held on April 16th. Over 91 employees attended the event. Students from SEARK along with Debbie Riley, Lincoln County Local Health Unit Administrator, conducted the screenings.



Pictured: SEARK nursing students

## 4th Annual Health Conference

The Southeast Region Hometown Health Improvement Support Staff hosted the 4th annual Health Conference on April 19th at the Grand Prairie Center in Stuttgart. This year's theme was "Spring into Health". Over 150 community and agency representatives attended the conference. This year Joy Rockenbach gave a very informational presentation update on the state of obesity in Arkansas. She provided helpful insight to community members to get involved and take action in the community in which they live. Terri Williams, with Delta Center on Aging gave a talk on Aging in Place. Terri highlighted the importance of taking care of yourself and gave tips on how to plan for the future when one becomes elderly in order to stay at home longer. Debbie Rushing from the Arkansas Department of Health, Tobacco Prevention Cessation Program gave an update on the latest product, the E-Cigarette. The afternoon speaker was Keith Cleek with the Cooperative Extension out of Phillips County. He presented on "How to Wear Many Hats and Still Have Good Hair." This presentation highlighted the importance of time management and how to be better at multitasking. There was also a short segment for the participants to engage in physical activity, which was a short line dance. Vendors were also present with educational booths on: tobacco, breast care, services for the blind, hospice, and many more. Participants also had the opportunity to have their blood pressure, cholesterol and blood glucose checked. A local clothing and jewelry store called Embellish was also on hand as a fun vendor for all to enjoy.



Pictured: Participants



Pictured: Participants physical activity break



## Lee County Lunch and Learn



Pictured: Lunch & Learn Participants

The Lee County Hometown Health Improvement coalition held a nutrition lunch and learn on April 11th. There were about 20 participants present. Participants enjoyed a healthy lunch of chicken salad and fruit cocktail which was all portioned controlled to teach them the importance of portion sizes and over eating. The "My Plate" presentation was given by Health Educator, Kandra Torrence. Each attendee received a portion control container, information on nutrition and serving sizes. Each attendee was also given handouts of the importance of exercise and drinking water.

## Southeast Tidbits

**Ashley-** Senior Health Expo was held at the Senior Center in Crossett with about 50 participants present. Information on injury prevention, stroke warning signs, slips/trips and falls, emergency preparedness, healthy cooking, fire escape plans, home hazards was available to those that attended.

**Bradley-** LHU Administrator, Diane Fowler, presented to 160 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders on personal and family safety. Topics included appropriate action when home alone or in public places when your safety is threatened. Internet safety, phone safety, fire safety, distracted and impaired driving was presented.

**Cleveland-** April 5th, LHU Administrator, Gwen Paul, took a blood pressure machine to the Cleveland County Courthouse. She demonstrated the new blood pressure machine by taking blood pressures. Gwen also visited the Town Hall meeting with Senator John Boozman, Rep. Sheilla Lampking and Rep. Toni Bradford.

**Monroe-** The Holly Grove Community Health Fair was held on April 28th with about 75 community members present. A tobacco display with educational materials as well as verbal discussion with community members were available. There were five fax back forms completed and faxed for participants convenience.

**St. Francis-** The 2012 Health and Wellness Competition concluded on April 30th. There were 34 teams with 4 people on each team. The winning team "Team Bring-It" won losing 19.3% of their total body weight, for a total of 197.8 pounds.

**Prairie-** The Prairie County HHI coalition held a Senior Injury Prevention Lunch and Learn. A presentation on injuries and the impact on diabetes was given.

### Southeast Region HHI Monthly Meeting Schedule

Arkansas County 2nd Tuesday  
 Ashley County 4th Tuesday  
 Bradley County 3rd Wednesday  
 Chicot County 2nd Wednesday  
 Cleveland County 2nd Wednesday  
 Desha County 2nd Tuesday  
 Drew County 1st Wednesday  
 Jefferson County 1st Wednesday  
 Lee County 2nd Wednesday  
 Lincoln County 2nd Wednesday  
 Monroe County 4th Tuesday  
 Phillips County 3rd Tuesday  
 Prairie County 2nd Thursday  
 St. Francis County 1st Tuesday

### Southeast Region HHI Support Staff

**Kaye Murry**-HHI Regional Manager  
**Kimber Knight**- Grants Administrator  
**Shealese Washington**- HHI Coordinator  
**Kandra Torrence**- Public Health Educator