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**May is National  
Physical Fitness and  
Sports Month**

Getting active increases your chances of living longer and can help you:

- Control your blood pressure, blood sugar and weight
- Raise your "good" cholesterol
- Prevent heart disease, colorectal cancer and type 2 diabetes.

Did you know that walking for 10 minutes burns about 50 calories? Start by doing what you can and then look for ways to add more!

## “How Does Your Pizza Grow?”

Dallas County Alliance Supporting Health (DASH) recently received a Youth Service America, United Health Hero grant. The award allowed the Hometown Health coalition the opportunity to provide an educational program focused on volunteer training for youth to encourage them to become active community participants.

Donna Ferguson, Dallas County Health Unit Administrator, planned the program and wrote the grant. Students from the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades were bused separately to the site of the DASH community and demonstration garden located on property provided by St. John's Nursing Home in For-dyce. Each grade was split into three groups and rotated between stations during the hour they each spent on-site.

The grant provided healthy snacks of pea salsa and multi-grain chips pre-

pared by an Extension Agent and vegetable pizza, which several students proclaimed they had never had.



“How Does Your Pizza Grow?” is an educational activity that the students were asked to provide answers for. They learned that the crust, sauce, toppings, box, and even ink on the pizza box came from things grown in the ground. An overview was also provided on how certain fruits and vegetables are beneficial for the body.

Extension agents were on hand to

demonstrate how a tiller and other gardening tools and supplies are used in the garden and how to prepare the soil. It was hoped that students would be able to help plant the garden but it was too wet from recent rains. There were additional presentations on sun safety from the Extension Office and plant identification from a Master Gardener.

A Conservation District representative brought a model to discuss envirocscape and show how easy it is for lawn and garden chemicals and fertilizers to get into the water system.

Before leaving, students were asked to reflect on community service and how they might volunteer in their neighborhood or community. All were invited to come back the next week after school to help plant.

## Local youth discourage drinking

Youth leaders from area high schools came together on April 30th for a train-the-trainer event at the Arkadelphia Recreation Center. Quinten Marks from Prescott High School met with other student leaders to train them on the Too Smart To Start curricula to prevent underage drinking.

The group has set up dates with all three school districts in Clark County to discourage 5th grade students from drinking alcohol. Each student will receive a t-shirt to wear the day of the training and a sports bag with the logo 2SMART2START



on it. Students get to keep the curricula and also take a brochure home to their parents. The brochure is designed to help parents with talking points on this issue.

## Drug Take Back events successful

Several cities and counties participated in the nationwide Drug Take Back Initiative on Saturday, April 30th to safely dispose of unused or expired medications and keep them out of the hands of youth.

According to recent studies, by the time Arkansas high school students reach their senior year, 21 percent have abused prescription drugs.

The Howard County Sheriff's Office collected a total of 40 pounds of prescription drugs last weekend during the event. Bins were located in Dierks and Nashville and residents were encouraged to bring old and unwanted medications to be disposed of.

In DeQueen, law enforcement officials reported that 65 pounds of old and outdated medicines

were turned in during the Take Back Initiative. The day was a collaborative effort between the De Queen Police Department, Sevier County Sheriff's office and the South Central Drug Task Force.

A second opportunity to clean out medicine cabinets is scheduled for May 27th. There will be a booth set up in downtown De Queen during Senior Citizen's Day.



Shown left: Sevier Co. Sheriff Monte Stringfellow, DeQueen Police Chief Richard McKinley, Lt. Mike Wilson, and Robert Gentry, DTF.



Sherriff Cary Dunn collects unwanted and unused medications in Dallas County.

In Dallas County, Sherriff Cary Dunn and Officer Jim Johnson successfully collected another trash can full of prescription drugs that will not be abused. Several DASH members helped with the event. Volunteers included Jessie Dean Brandon, Jan Shelton, Deborah Mathews and her daughter.

## Sevier County group plans for better access to health care

On April 26<sup>th</sup>, the Sevier County Coalition (SCC) sponsored a meeting with local political and medical stakeholders to learn about different opportunities for improved access to health care in the DeQueen area. This Health Center Planning Committee is in the developmental stages and the current members participated in a 4-hour training at the Cultural Awareness Center in DeQueen.

Gabrielle Thrailkill, SCC Chair, offered opening remarks and provided local data which depicted the need for more points of medical care for the under or uninsured. Steve Cole, Cossatot

Community College, University of AR, (CCCUA) Chancellor, discussed how the college has been working toward this effort and how supportive they will be to the group with the development and sustainment of a health center.

Lisa Weaver, Community Health Centers of Arkansas, offered a program on Federally Qualified Community Health Centers. Bill Rodgers, ADH Office of Rural Health and Primary Care, gave a talk on Rural Health Centers and the qualification differences between them and a Community Health Center. Tony Calandro, Healthy Connections CEO, discussed their facility

in Mena, including the WATCH Center. He discussed how to become a Federally Qualified Community Health Center and offered their support to DeQueen.

The local members of the Health Center Planning Committee spent the afternoon discussing other members to invite, which direction they would like to go, and how to promote the initiative in the community. Lunch was provided by CCCUA and snacks and drinks were provided by Sevier County Coalition and UAMS-Texarkana.

## Calhoun County UCRC holds annual celebration

Calhoun County UCRC invited several area stakeholders and business owners to their annual hometown health celebration in an effort to recruit new members. The event was held in the new boardroom at CABUN Clinic in Hampton on April 20th.

A looped slideshow apprised atten-



dees of past and present coalition activities. Members served as speakers to give brief overviews of projects including the food pantry, Single Parent Scholarship, substance abuse prevention, and an economic update.



Guests were invited to support the coalition and its activities. A healthy light lunch was provided. Each attendee received a notepad and pen to promote UCRC and first-time attendees were given a recruitment/orientation packet.

## TOUCH Coalition honors prevention work

The TOUCH Coalition honored local citizens and organizations for their substance abuse prevention work at a recognition banquet held April 5<sup>th</sup> at the new El Dorado Conference Center. Six awards were presented during the ceremony: The Bancorp South Distinguished Youth, the TOUCH SPFSIG Prevention Partner, Southern Bancorp Family Leadership, TOUCH Friend of Prevention, PRIDE Youth Programs/Simmons First Prevention Professional, and El Dorado Chemical Distinguished Citizen.

Fran Flener, Arkansas Drug Director, and Jennifer Bryan, a local prescription drug spokesperson, were the speakers for the event. El Dorado Mayor Frank Hash served as the emcee.

Flener showed "We Have a Problem", a video sponsored by Arkansas Rotarians that focuses on prescription drug abuse by youth and teens. She commended El Dorado's municipal leadership and business leaders who were present at the

banquet and credited them as part of the solution. Figures for El Dorado and the state are down as a result of prevention efforts she said. The Prescription Drug Take Back program, and grants like the \$12 million one the state received five years ago are two of the reasons she said we can make that claim. She then made a reference to the six young people from this community who lost their lives to drug use and abuse within a few months time and explained what is being done to alleviate the problem.

Jennifer Bryan knows all too well about that problem. Her 20 year old son was one of those

casualties. She shared her family's personal experience of heartbreak after her son's accidental death from mixed drug ingestion. She said that she hoped sharing her story would make the situation as real as possible for those in attendance in order to prevent them from having to go through the same thing.

The 125 people in attendance were indeed touched by the stories and entertainment, which was provided by high school PRIDE students. Funding for the

banquet was underwritten by the local businesses who in-turn, had awards named after them and also by selling tickets for \$5 each.



## Children celebrated in Nevada County

Arkansas Children's Week was celebrated in Nevada County April 11-15th with a week of fun activities. On Tuesday a Magic Man presented Agri-Cadabra, a magic show for all preschoolers plus K-2 in both Prescott and Nevada schools.

Science Camp was on Wednesday. Several stations were set up for the kids to rotate through. They included the fire department, rescue unit, squirrels, pony, and exercise activities.

Thursday was Library Day with a puppet presentation, fish aquarium, and



someone on-hand to read to all the kids.

On Friday, Center Day, Prescott City Police woman Jami Yarbrough visited each preschool to talk about gun safety. Each student received a bag with information on immunizations and WIC and a coloring book, colors, and an activity book.

The Prescott/Nevada County Health Alliance and Prescott School District provided juice and cereal for the parade and rally at the high school. Over 200 Nevada County preschoolers participated in the week's activities.

## Fishing Derby fun

The annual Lion's Club Fishing Derby was held at Diamondhead April 29<sup>th</sup>. There were 75 children who participated in the event.

Suellen Simpson, Hot Spring County Health Unit Administrator, and Bonnie Carr, Rural Health Specialist, set up a promotional booth with SOS handouts and quiltline



information, as well as brochures on WIC, immunizations, emergency preparedness, and oral health. They visited with participating parents and gave information on programs offered at the health unit. They also assisted other community members in helping children during the fishing derby. Children fished in the morning and visited

each booth later with teachers and parents.



Along with the health department, other community partners included the Lake Hamilton Fire Department, Smokey Bear, Air Evacuation Helicopter, and Life Net Ambulance.

## “Operation Prom” conducted in Union Co.

A team of volunteers from across Union County came together again this year to conduct “Operation Prom”, an alcohol-related car crash reenactment, at five of the six school districts in Union County. El Dorado, Junction City, Strong, Norphlet, and Parkers Chapel School campuses were the sites for the events held in April, Alcohol Awareness Month. TOUCH coalition members helped set up the dates with the schools, put up banners, and get the word out about the events.

Spearheaded by El Dorado’s chaplain/firefighter, Sterling Claypoole, emergency response and law enforcement agencies in each city worked together to simulate a fatal car crash. Two vehicles were donated by local wrecker service companies and set up at each school. Volunteer “victims” from among staff and students were adorned with makeup by ProMed Ambulance

staff. The victims were encouraged to act to make the scenario more realistic.

When the students were assembled at a safe distance, they viewed firsthand what happens when a car crash occurs – from the first-on-the-scene law enforcement assessing injuries and directing traffic to watching fire and rescue personnel extricate victims and showing what happens in the event of a fatality. Other scenarios included watching law enforcement deal with an intoxicated driver who is taken off to jail and a distraught mother who happened upon the scene to find her child covered with a sheet.

These emergency workers have dedicated them-

selves to this activity each year and are always finding new components to add. The cars

remain at each school until time for prom and in some cases were taken to the prom site.

Prevention workers hope this event will make a lasting impression on students and, along with other prevention activities in the classroom and community, will influence students not to drink and/or ride in the car with someone who is under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.



## Public Health Week observed

During the week of April 4-8, health units across the state observed Public Health Week in unique ways.

The Sevier County Health Unit celebrated by hosting a safety education booth at the health unit and at the Sevier County Court House. The public was

able to pick up information on safety and register for prizes that were given away promot-



ing the national theme: “Safety is No Accident: Live Injury-Free.” Prizes included a fire extinguisher, smoke detectors, and a car seat. The education booths were available to the public during the month of April at both the court house and the health unit.

According to Teresa Morris, Health Unit Administrator, “People may not realize how big the

problem of injury is here in Arkansas. We’re hoping to call some attention to that fact.”

In Lafayette County, the LIFE coalition partnered with Bodcaw Bank to sponsor the annual LIFE Investment Health Fair with an emphasis on injury prevention in observance of Public Health Week. Ten vendors participated and 60 community members attended. Four of the vendors, including Lafayette County Health Unit, provided information on injury prevention. Various free health screenings and door prizes were provided to attendees.

## Students see and feel damage that tobacco has on lungs

Community Health Nurse Specialist Rhonda McDonald and Ouachita County Health Unit Administrator Rebecca Wright gave a tobacco prevention demonstration to third through 6th grade students at Victory Christian School in Camden on April 21st.

A PowerPoint presentation was shown to demonstrate the effects of tobacco on the lungs. Real pigs’ lungs were used to compare a healthy one to a (simulated) diseased one. Children watched as the lungs were pumped up and the healthy

one expanded while the brittle, diseased one leaked air. Students were able to feel the difference and had open discussion about the effects of tobacco use.

Rhonda and Rebecca also utilized the Jar of Tar and Mr. Gross Mouth models. Each student was given ACT 13 /ACT 811 information on smoking with youth in the car to take home to their parents.

Rhonda returned to the same school April 26th

to give a presentation to the 5th and 6th grade students who then did a tobacco prevention scavenger hunt.



## Fitness programs winding down

Stepping Out to TOUCH Union County, an 8-week fitness program, wrapped up with an awards ceremony at HealthWorks Fitness Center in El Dorado on April 28th. A total of 591,765 minutes were spent exercising by 185 people who participated on 26 teams. Dividing those minutes by 12, the average time it takes to walk a mile, those minutes can be converted into 39,451 miles that participants covered during the program.

Awards were given to the top three teams and individuals, as well as a health club membership for the most weight loss and waist loss. A grand prize drawing was held for prizes like a heart monitor, iPod shuffle, and gift certificates to local businesses. Participants earned entries into the grand prize drawing by turning in their minutes by each weekly deadline and attending

lunch and learn sessions. Door prizes were also presented to those in attendance at the wrap up event. All prizes were made possible by the support of local businesses.

The Dallas County program DASH Across Dallas County (DADC) is into its 6<sup>th</sup> week and so far participants have logged over 12,200 miles.

The DASH Your Weight Off component has ended and Dorothy Jacobs, who lost 10 ½ pounds, was rewarded with \$50 in Chamber Bucks for her success. Mrs. Jacobs has been walking and doing aerobics, as well as cutting her portion sizes. According to Donna Ferguson,

Health Unit Administrator, Mrs. Jacobs has changed her lifestyle as a result of the program and will continue to lose weight until she reaches her goal.



Dorothy Jacobs is presented award by aerobics instructor Leslie Ford.

Incentives and prizes for the program were made possible with funds from a Blue and You grant the DASH coalition received. Patrick O'Sullivan, Executive Director at Blue and You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas, attended the April DASH meeting to see how the programs were going and was asked to draw a name for the winner of the weekly Chamber Bucks incentive.

## Community Health Nurse Specialist educates on tobacco

LPN students with UACCH in Hope attended Tobacco 101 April 19th. There were 35 students in attendance for the class conducted by Edie Greenwood, RN, Community Health Nurse Specialist. Using a PowerPoint presentation, Edie explained the chemical make-up of tobacco and the health risks of second and third hand smoke, including both national and state statistics.

Edie also discussed the new ACT 811 legislation that prohibits smoking in a car with a child under 14 years old. She explained the primary

law and the consequences of non-compliance. Only three of the future nurses knew about laws prohibiting smoking in the car with a child.

A display of tobacco products and "look-a-likes" were shown to the group to show the nurses how "big tobacco" markets to youth. She discussed marketing practices and had the group brainstorm tactics they have seen used. She ended the talk by educating and encouraging the students to call and use the Quitline to help with cessation efforts.

On April 29th, Edie gave a presentation to 30

SWR nurses on the harmful effects of smoking. She taught the nurses the importance of speaking to each patient who smokes about cessation. Participants learned the effective way to counsel using the 5 A's.

Ask— If the patient smokes and assess for SHS

Advise— Every smoker to quit

Assess— Readiness to quit

Assist— In quitting and finding resources

Arrange— For cessation and follow up

## Art of Recycling Festival held in conjunction with Earth Day

The Culture and Recreation Committee of TOUCH, the Union County Hometown Health Coalition, sponsored the Art of Recycling Festival on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The event was held the day after Earth Day at the Old City Park in El Dorado.

Participants learned how to set up a worm bed for worm farming. They learned that red worms are some of the best natural fertilizer producers, decomposing yard and household waste to create organic fertilizer that results in healthy

soil for the garden. Several activity stations were set up for youth. One featured demonstrations on making flowers and caterpillars out of egg cartons. Other areas were set up for coloring, painting rocks, making toys with bird seed, decorating flower pots, and planting seeds. Prior to the event, coloring sheets were distrib-



uted to all El Dorado schools for 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> grade students. Returned entries were judged and 4 winners and 12 honorable mentions were picked. The four winners received a \$25 gift certificate.

Recycling bins were brought to the site to accept newspapers, plastic bottles, and aluminum. The Salvation Army provided refreshments.



Janet McAdams— SWR HHI Manager  
Bonnie Carr, RHS, Montgomery Co.

Joni McGaha— SWR HHI Coordinator  
Sarah Powell, RHS, Hempstead Co.

## SOUTHWEST REGION HOMETOWN HEALTH

*Keeping Your Hometown Healthy*

[www.healthyarkansas.com](http://www.healthyarkansas.com)

## Team Impact challenges local youth

Team Impact, a national group with a unique style of ministry, held assemblies in several Southwest Region schools the last week of April. The group motivates young people to make the right choices for a successful future by using the talents of elite athletes to demand the attention of their audience.

The organization holds over 700 assemblies each year speaking with over 700,000 students. According to their website, Team Impact has built an encouragement arsenal that equips students with hope and purpose to face the challenges of life. By investing in this generation, they believe they will see positive change and promise for the future of all children.



Nashville, Mineral Springs, Saratoga, Murfreesboro, Delight, Lockesburg, Horatio, and Blevins School students were given the opportunity to hear the message and enjoy performances by the group. At Lockesburg Elementary School, Impact Team member Trey Talley smashed an unopened drink can, broke a wooden bat in half, tore phone books apart, and bent a bar into a design after picking two girls up on each end of the bar. He also talked to students about Dream Maker and Dream Taker choices and explained how the choices students make can impact the rest of their lives.

Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws (EUDL) grants in the Southwest Region helped support the programs.

## Around the Region..

**Columbia County-** The Arkansas Prostate Cancer Foundation held a screening event at the Columbia County Health Unit on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup>. A total of 35 men were screened. Health unit staff who helped with the screenings include Melinda Harrell, Administrator, Alesha Brady, PHN, and Dorothy Keith, Health Services Specialist.



**Clark County-** Approximately 250 students in the Arkadelphia School District were on hand at the Clark County Health Unit (CCHU) Tuesday, May 3, 2011 to get their athletic physicals for the 2011-2012 academic year. While at the CCHU, an outreach was done with materials on family planning, smoking and tobacco use, and an STD presentation. In addition, two health unit nurses, Terry Sims and Janet Thornton, assisted the doctors with physicals by rechecking students who initially presented with high

blood pressure. The physicals began at 5 p.m. and ended at 8 p.m. The coaches were appreciative of the use of the local health unit.

**Miller County-** Arnell Washington, Rural Health Specialist, set up a booth for youth at Edward D. Trice Elementary School in Texarkana on April 24th. Information was available for both children and their parents. Brochures on second-hand smoke and the Smoking Cessation Quitline, as well as oral health and safety, were available. There were around 100 children who



visited the booth. Each child received a fire safety coloring book, tooth paste, and a tooth brush. **Lafayette County-** Tonya Clark, RN, health unit administrator, presented information on children with diabetes to 10 food service workers from Lafayette

County Schools. She instructed the group on the signs & symptoms of hypo vs. hyperglycemia and also covered food allergies, signs & symptoms of mild allergic reaction, and anaphylaxis.

**Pike County** Health Unit helped with a health fair in Glenwood on May 1st at the Nazarene Church Family Life Center. Over fifty people participated in what is hoped to be the first annual health fair.

Free blood sugar, cholesterol and blood pressure screenings were offered. Irene Chambers, health unit administrator, and Laura Cox, Hospice Volunteer Coordinator, set up and staffed the health department information booth. They handed out brochures, and promotional materials.

