



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Media Release

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To: All Media
From: Peoria City/County Health Department
Diana Scott 309-679-6603 Tazewell
County Health Department
Sara Sparkman 309-929-0264
Woodford County Health Department
Hillary Aggertt 309-467-3064

For Immediate Release



Centering and Celebrating Cultures in Public Health

Peoria, Tazewell and Woodford County Health Departments invite you to celebrate National Public Health Week April 3-9, 2023. Public Health is proud to work with members in our communities to lead initiatives that are making an impact on living a long and healthy life in a safe environment - and creating the healthiest nation for us to live, work, worship, and play.

During National Public Health Week, this year's theme - Centering and Celebrating Cultures in Health - will provide a daily focus on a public health topic along with ways each person can make a difference. These topics are crucial to our success in creating the healthiest nation. Do your part to help recognize the contributions of public health and raise awareness about health and prevention!

Monday, April 3: Community

Community is where we are. It's our connections with others who share similar interests, attitudes and goals. Over the past few years, those connections have been greatly impacted. People with greater feelings of support, connection and inclusion within their networks may live longer, respond better to stress and have stronger immune systems than those who are isolated from their communities.

You can make a difference. Join a community garden, donate healthy and culturally appropriate canned good options to food pantries, join a recreational sports league or fitness group to connect with others, and encourage your local government to support healthy community designs to include parks, sidewalks and bike lanes.

Tuesday, April 4: Violence Prevention

Using public health-based interventions can make a difference in the reduction of violence. Home-visiting models have been shown to significantly reduce the risk of child maltreatment. Community-led models can be effectively used to implement violence prevention activities.

You can make a difference. Here is where your vote is important. Advocate for policymakers to provide funding to match the impact that violence has on our communities. Support local colleges and universities to prevent sexual violence and train on trauma-informed services.

Wednesday, April 5: Reproductive and Sexual Health

When people receive quality reproductive and sexual health care, education and access, they can fulfill a happier and healthier life. The lack of inclusive and accessible reproductive and sexual health care and education **negatively affects everyone, but marginalized communities carry a greater burden of harm.**

You can make a difference. Urge your elected officials to protect access to the full spectrum of reproductive health care. Advocate for sex education policymakers to create and execute culturally competent curricula. **Vote in federal, state and local elections for candidates and policies that center inclusive and accessible sexual and reproductive care.**

Thursday, April 6: Mental Health

Mental health is important at every stage of life. It continuously affects how we think, feel and act. It also plays an important role in our physical and social well-being. In the U.S. alone, millions of Americans are affected by a mental illness. Anxiety disorders, bipolar disorders and depression are some of the most common.

You can make a difference. Practicing mindfulness, eating a well-balanced diet, engaging in physical exercise and getting a good night's rest **have been proven to help improve mental health.** Attend events, such as walks and fundraisers, that support the mental health movement.

Friday, April 7: Rural Health

Rural Americans have higher rates of cigarette smoking, high blood pressure and diabetes. Compared to urban residents, they are at higher risk for poor health outcomes because of the range of health disparities they face.

You can make a difference. Support mentoring, counseling, vocational training and college prep for underrepresented students. Advocate for easier access to and training and authorization of first responders to **use naloxone.** Push to expand medical school training to include skills to successfully practice in rural areas.

Saturday, April 8: Accessibility

About 26% of U.S. adults have a disability, though Native Americans and senior citizens **are disproportionately affected by disabilities.** Adults with disabilities are also more likely to have heart disease, be smokers and have diabetes than the general population.

You can make a difference. Provide health information and resources in multiple languages for people whose **primary language is not English.** Urge your representatives in government to strengthen public health infrastructure to protect access to health care.

Sunday, April 9: Food and Nutrition

Food and nutrition are at the core of many public health concerns, from chronic disease to climate change. **Children need a balanced diet to grow into healthy adults and long-term food insecurity can lead to serious illness,** such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease and mental health issues. Food-insecure families also face difficult decisions like choosing between buying groceries or paying for health care.

You can make a difference. Encourage your representatives in Congress to support expanding eligibility for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and free school meal programs. Contribute to your own community by volunteering **with a food bank in your area.**

Please join us to celebrate National Public Health Week April 3-9, 2023, and become part of a growing movement to create the healthiest nation in one generation.

For more information on important public health issues,
visit your local health department website:

Peoria City/County Health Department www.pcchd.org Tazewell
County Health department www.tazewellhealth.org Woodford
County Health Department www.woodfordhealth.org

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