

## Information about Public Health

### Why is National Public Health Week important?

Good personal health is connected to good public health. Each individual has an impact on the health of their community. National Public Health Week 2014 provides the perfect opportunity to show communities how to take the first steps toward achieving good personal health and learning how public health affects their lives. Most people don't realize the connection between personal and public health, and through NPHW 2014 activities, public health professionals are given the chance to engage with the community to explain how personal and public health are connected.

### How does public health differ from clinical health?

Public health is a proactive approach to keeping a community healthy. Public health prevents problems from happening or re-occurring through implementing educational programs, developing policies, regulations, conducting research and administering services. Whereas clinical health focuses on treatment after an individual becomes ill. Public health provides interventions through promoting healthy behaviors.

### Why Public Health works?

Whether it's through research, data collection, health education, policy change or direct services, public health lays the foundation and creates the conditions that put healthy choices within reach. Public health ensures good health and a better quality of life for the citizens of Missouri. Individuals and communities have benefited by public health from family nutrition and maternal health to safety precautions and disaster preparedness.

### Examples of how Public Health Works.

Addressing communicable diseases within the community. For example, when we receive a notice from a local physician, hospital or school that someone has tested positive for a communicable disease like *E. coli*, chickenpox, or whooping cough (pertussis), the local public health agency works to ensure it isn't spread to you or your family.

Offering blood pressure checks to senior adults.

Offering flu vaccination clinics.

Educating, assisting and empowering people to manage their chronic diseases.

Addressing complaints about sewage when it isn't surfacing where it shouldn't be.

Educating new mothers about breastfeeding.

Educating restaurant employees about how to safely handle food to ensure individuals don't get sick with Hepatitis A or a foodborne illness that would cause vomiting and diarrhea.

Teaching families how to shop differently, cook differently and eat differently to improve their health.

Saving our community, our state and our nation money by providing preventive services at a fraction of the cost of acute care.

Responding to emergencies and natural disasters to help ensure our community receives the services and information needed.

Spraying to reduce mosquitoes to reduce the chances of West Nile virus.

Vaccinating first responders, National Guard troops and volunteers so they don't get tetanus or other illness during cleanup and rescue.

Ensuring child care providers are looking after your children in a safe, sanitary and healthy environment.

### **What are the key points of this year's National Public Health Week?**

We focus on five themes this year including:

**Be healthy from the start.** From maternal health and school nutrition to emergency preparedness, public health starts at home. Let us show you around.

**Don't panic.** Disaster preparedness starts with community-wide commitment and action. We're here to help you weather the unexpected.

**Get out ahead.** Prevention is now a nationwide priority. Let us show you where you fit in.

**Eat well.** The system that keeps our nation's food safe and healthy is complex. We can guide you through the choices.

**Be the healthiest nation in one generation.** Best practices for community health come from around the globe. We have a world of public health to show you.

### **More information can be found at:**

[Health.mo.gov](http://Health.mo.gov)

[www.nphw.org](http://www.nphw.org)