



# *Quick Reads*

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## **Public health successes**

I'd like to dedicate the majority of this month's newsletter to the progress reports being submitted from the [Healthy Iowans: Iowa's Health Improvement Plan 2012-2016](#).

It's exciting to see what local public health agencies have accomplished in the last five years of their [CHNA & HIP](#) efforts. A great deal of the [success stories](#) submitted is the result of collaboration, an important key to public health advances.

What follows is a brief summary of some of the accomplishments local public health agencies have achieved over the last five years:

**[Chickasaw County](#)**: Instituted a multi-pronged obesity reduction effort that included the school board adoption of a revised Wellness Policy, an AmeriCorps member working in the schools, expansion of a bike trail around the entire city of New Hampton, formation of a Healthy Lifestyle Committee, and a Road to Weight Loss Program.

**[Cerro Gordo County](#)**: Achieved full immunization for 86 percent of children by 24 months of age; in 2012, the percentage was 72 percent.

**[Boone County](#)**: Addressed mental health needs through Management of Aggressive Behavior training, mental health triage via telehealth, and assistance with location beds for placement.

**[Fremont County](#)**: Increased social skills of teens in grades 7-12 through a new curriculum to educate them on safe dating relationships, preventing violence, and growing boys into mentors.

**[Clinton County](#)**: After pilot testing in all county elementary schools, offered a program for 350 children about healthy behaviors and was able to document changes in perceptions.

**Taylor County:** Connected all providers with a child development screening tool, monthly visits by a 1<sup>st</sup> Five coordinator, and referral status reports that increased referrals from three to 42 families.

**Louisa County:** Piloted an HPV program with 13 students completing all three of the vaccine series, to be followed with a clinic in other schools in the county.

**Union County:** A successful campaign was launched to recruit a psychiatrist.

**Clarke County:** Garnered support for a bike rental service to be in place by 2017.

**Harrison County:** Created a Healthy Harrison Coalition with 33 groups working together on obesity and child abuse prevention.

**Buchanan County:** To increase vaccine rates among the Amish community, paid home visits and distributed culturally-sensitive immunization brochures.

**Kossuth County:** Involved the chair of the Kossuth County Board of Health, which coordinated the Walking School Bus event with high school groups leading four participating schools.

**Delaware County:** Through town hall meetings in each school district, youth groups, establishing policies for holding festivals and events, and a social host ordinance, decreased binge drinking among 11<sup>th</sup> graders from 35 percent to 16 percent, and among 8<sup>th</sup> graders from 4 percent to 3 percent.

**Jackson County:** Obtained the land, financing, and construction bids for a completed public-owned sewer treatment system at Leisure Lake.

**Winneshiek County:** Besides holding an annual county-wide hazardous waste clean-up day, increased recycling from 1200 tons in 1996 to 2800 tons of materials in FY2016.

**Marshall County:** Reduced the obesity rate from 28 percent to 25 percent through several initiatives including a YMCA program focused on preventing Type II diabetes, outreach to local media, strengthening the local food system, and connecting local producers to institutional buyers.

**Page County:** Used the library's summer reading program to reach children and their parents with wellness programs.

**Sioux County:** Used the height and weight data school nurses are collecting to track childhood overweight and obesity.

**Humboldt County:** Working with the pregnancy prevention coordinator, reduced STD cases by 50 percent with educational sessions in middle school and high school health education classes.

**Scott County:** Implemented school-based social/emotional screenings for 4<sup>th</sup> graders in one non-public school and 17 elementary schools in four public school districts, and trained teachers, principals, and counselors in all 18 screening schools.

**Hancock County:** Reduced alcohol use among 11<sup>th</sup> graders from 35 percent to 22 percent, which is 3 percent lower than the goal of 25 percent.

**Cedar County:** Built natural and productive connections among providers through a joint project, producing a pamphlet with hundreds of available resources.

**Greene County:** Partnered with the Webster County Health Department to provide maternal and child health services five days a week, resulting in substantially higher rates of services, reduction in service gaps, and care coordination.

**Story County**: Worked with Primary Health Care Inc. to open a Federally Qualified Health Center that has increased healthcare services to the targeted population.

**Shelby County**: Through collaboration with the schools, behavioral health services, public health, and mental health counselors, decreased the percentage of 11<sup>th</sup> graders who made a plan to attempt suicide from 14 percent in 2008 to 7 percent in 2014.

**Davis County**: Working with a local licensed social worker and a marriage and family therapist, developed an emergency prescreening program to assist with assessment and placement needs during times of mental health crisis.

**Benton County**: Increased high school participation in reducing substance use by organizing advocacy/peer groups, promoted reduction of underage drinking and substance abuse by displaying billboards and advertising in newspapers, and passed a social host ordinance.

**Calhoun County**: Created family mental health support groups with public health staff trained by the National Alliance for Mental Illness, co-funded with Rolling Hills Mental Health and Behavioral Region.

**Dickinson County**: Spirit Lake earned designation as a Blue Zone community with 25 percent of its citizens pledging action to improve the health of the community, \$1.2 million invested in a park, complete street policy adopted, and grocery store fruit and vegetable consumption promoted.

**Ringgold County**: A coalition of youth worked for and achieved tobacco-free parks policies for all parks in the county.

**Howard County**: Recruitment of a behavioral health provider has expanded patient volume, school counseling services have expanded, and Northeast Iowa Behavioral Health has opened a downtown office.

**Poweshiek County**: Establishment of a community mental health center and sustainable mental health services.

**Grundy County**: An increase in percent of residents who are at a healthy weight through such strategies as classes, easier and safe access to sidewalks, healthy snacks in vending machines, and access to healthy food.

**Warren County**: Drop in obesity rates from 32 percent in 2011 to 29 percent in 2015, a possible outcome of stakeholder partnerships as well as raised awareness and business support.

**Johnson County**: Increased access to health care through new HIV testing locations, a new syphilis screening/testing service, partnerships with WIC/MCH offering HIV/syphilis services, and asset mapping of most vulnerable populations.

**Fayette County**: A walking school bus route in ALL school districts is being sustained by community volunteers.

**Pocahontas County**: Increased hospital mental health services include recruitment of mental health providers, mental health telehealth five days a week and a counselor one day a week, and a grief support group.

**Audubon County**: From 2010 to 2014 an 18 percent drop in 11<sup>th</sup> graders reporting alcohol use and binge drinking in the past 39 days.

**Dallas County:** Increased nearly 800 clients' access to care through health navigation of a network that addressed transportation, financial, food, elderly issues, housing, parenting/childcare, legal, substance abuse, mental health, and utilities.

## Monthly data snapshot

Data are essential to the practice of public health. Each month, Quick Reads highlights selected tidbits to help create awareness of IDPH data and epidemiology. To discover more of the important and useful data available from IDPH, please visit the [Public Health Data Tracking Portal](#).

**West Nile virus activity by species and outcome - Iowa 2005-2014**

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Human cases	37	37	30	5	5	9	9	31	44	15
Human deaths	2	0	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	0
Sentinel chickens	19	18	18	3	6	14	14	17	15	*
Mosquito (pools)	7	15	5	5	9	7	5	14	66	15
Horses	15	12	10	4	3	2	1	35	11	5

\*Sentinel chicken testing was not performed

There were 15 human cases of West Nile virus reported to IDPH in 2014, a decrease from the 44 cases reported in 2013 and 31 cases reported in 2012. Eight of the 15 cases reported in 2014 were hospitalized (53 percent), and no deaths were reported. Cases ranged from age 2 to 76, with a median age of 45. Eight cases were male and seven were female.

## Congrats and kudos

IDPH Brain Injury and Disability Program Manager Maggie Ferguson has been appointed to a two-year term as an at-large member on the board of the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators ([NASHIA](#)).

The IDPH [Bureau of Health Statistics](#) has launched the statewide marriage registration system, allowing county recorders to electronically issue and file marriage documents. County recorders will have statewide access to all Iowa marriages from 1954 forward for purposes of certifying the vital record event.

## Stay informed, share your story

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*To everyone in public health and all our partners, keep up the great work!*

— Gerd

