Healthy Habits All Stars
IDPH has released a multi-faceted public health campaign, available free of charge to all Iowa educators, health care providers and parents. The “Healthy Habits All-Stars” are animated cartoon characters that help teach elementary-age children about public health topics in an age-appropriate manner.

The campaign includes a course outline, posters, temporary tattoos, coloring books and an activity guide. Contact Eric Enderton for more details.

Local public health success story

Marion County Public Health has a “no wrong door” policy, which means the department comes in contact with a variety of residential needs. A significant issue identified through the agency’s use of TAVHealth was food security.

Historical data showed very low usage of WIC program farmers market vouchers and a similar usage pattern was seen in senior citizen farmers market vouchers.

Several in-person trips to the local farmers market found there was very little produce at the market – it was more of a “flea market.”

Marion County SIM coordinator Larissa Van Donselaar had already linked the need for healthy choices to the SIM focus area of diabetes. Working with Straw Hat Farms more fresh produce was made available at the market and WIC staff offered on-site group nutrition education, allowing families to not only see some unfamiliar produce, but also taste and learn how to prepare it. The Parents as Teachers group taught families how to make baby food from fresh produce.

Marion County’s success is linked to the use of data to provide insight, and bringing public and private partners together to be fluid in meeting the community’s needs.
Green thumb
Studies have repeatedly shown a correlation between worker wellness, productivity and satisfaction. The culture of wellness at the Capitol Complex now includes the Healthy Choices program at the Lucas Bistro. Menu items identified as “healthy” by a green thumbs up symbol provide details regarding calories, saturated fat, sugar, and protein content to help diners make informed selections.

Congrats and kudos
The IDPH WIC Program received a $13,189 Breastfeeding Performance Bonus grant award recognizing the state’s outstanding achievement in improving breastfeeding rates among WIC participants.

IDPH Program Gambling Treatment program manager Eric Preuss has been elected Treasurer of the Assn. of Problem Gambling Service Administrators.

Healthiest State Walk
The seventh Healthiest State Annual Walk will be held across the state October 4 and we need your help to reach our goal of having at least one walk in all 99 counties. Please register your school, worksite or community walk. There is no cost to register and there is no need for individual walkers to register. This year’s theme is Walk More. Connect More.

WalletHub.com has named Iowa 2017’s second best state for health care. High marks include Iowa ranked second lowest for infant mortality rate, first in hospital beds per capita and sixth in percentage of insured adults.
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. Explore more data with the IDPH Public Health Tracking Portal.

2016 County Immunization Assessment Map:
Percent of 2 Year-Olds Receiving 4 DTaP, 3 Polio, 1 MMR, 3 Hib, 3 Hep B, 1 Varicella, 4 Pneumococcal Vaccines

Assessment of immunization coverage levels at 2 years of age is used to evaluate the routine administration of vaccines given at 2, 4, 6, and 12-15 months of age. This assessment includes the prevention of 11 vaccine preventable diseases which protects children, families and communities. The diseases that childhood vaccines prevent can be very serious, even life-threatening. It is important for children to receive these vaccines early in life and on schedule to protect them before they are exposed to these diseases. Iowa’s assessment of 2-year-old immunization rates is consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Immunization Survey which is conducted in the same age group. More information is available at http://www.idph.iowa.gov/immtb/immunization.

Stay informed, share your story

To contribute a news item or smart practice, please write to Polly Carver-Kimm at Polly.Carver-Kimm@idph.iowa.gov.