

Dissolving the Disparities

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A newsletter compiled and published by the Disparity Gap Coordinators representing: Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Currituck, Chowan, Dare, Edgecombe, Gates, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Martin, Northampton, Pamlico, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrell, Warren, Washington

Pamlico County

Asthma in Child Care Centers

The Craven-Pamlico Asthma Coalition was fortunate to have an ECU Environmental Health senior, Brandi Reynolds, intern with us this past semester. Brandi designed an interactive sign to help children and childcare operators learn about asthma management with regards to outdoor air quality.



Children can be very sensitive to outdoor air pollution and physical activity should be limited when the air quality is unhealthy. The air quality forecast can be found at www.daq.state.nc.us/monitor/aqi or by calling (888)-AIR-WISE. Once the forecast is known, a wheel is spun to uncover the appropriate message.

If the forecast is green or yellow, no special precautions are needed. However, if the air quality forecast is orange, red or purple, then the time children participate in physical activity outdoors between noon and 8pm should be reduced. Reduce physical activity between noon and 8 pm to 1 hour on orange days, 15 minutes on red days, and eliminate outdoor activities on purple days.

Eighteen childcare centers attended one of two presentations given by Brandi in Pamlico and Craven Counties. These centers were the first to receive the interactive signs.

The Craven-Pamlico Asthma Coalition voted to print enough signs for the childcare centers, schools with childcare centers and pediatric doctor offices, and these were distributed this summer.

We were fortunate to work with such a good intern and plan to continue developing these mutually beneficial relationships in the future!

*Submitted by Tamara Jones,
Health Educator II*

Dare County



Prevention is a key component of the Dare County Substance Abuse Demonstration Project being implemented by the Dare County Department of Public Health. In collaboration with Dare County Schools, the Dare County Department of Public Health selected the evidence-based model program **Positive Action** as the new prevention curriculum for the schools. Positive Action is a character education program that is nationally recognized with proven positive outcomes in behavior modification, character development, and academic achievement. The curriculum is designed to teach students that positive thoughts lead to positive actions, and positive actions lead to positive feelings about yourself. The

educational program encourages students to accept themselves and others regardless of financial, racial, ethnic, gender and/or age differences. Students in Dare County Schools will receive Positive Action lessons on nutrition, physical activity, and emotional health. These concepts are then applied to every aspect of the students' lives. For more information on these initiatives, please contact, Sheila Davies, Dare County Substance Abuse Project Manager, at (252) 475-5813.

*Submitted by Laura Steadman,
Health Educator*

Halifax County

The Carolina Community Network funded a successful Breast Cancer Awareness Day in Halifax County on Saturday, October 6, 2007. The event was held at the Roanoke Valley Chamber of Commerce where over sixty women came out to support breast cancer awareness month. This event kicked off with balloons, breast cancer incentives, education, healthy snacks, and a whole lot of fun! The event was marketed to health department clients and women of all ages. The day was full of fun and excitement as survivors told their stories and newly diagnosed patients gained strength. Each woman had the chance to get their blood pressure checked and an opportunity to talk to our Dietician and Breast Cancer coordinator. The women also visited our nutritional display, health department services, breast cancer education display, and received a healthy snack while they filled out an evaluation. After completion of the evaluation, each participant received a cup full of educational incentives to market the importance of raising awareness about breast cancer. The day was a huge success to bring survivors, newly diagnosed patients, friends and family together while raising awareness about breast cancer. Halifax County Health Department hopes to make this an annual event.



*Submitted by Laura Ellis,
Health Education Supervisor*

Beaufort County



November 15 marked the 31st annual Great American Smokeout. The Great American Smokeout is a annual nationwide event where millions say “No” to tobacco products for at least 24 hours and focus on the benefits of not using tobacco. To celebrate this event, the Beaufort County Health Department held a smoke free restaurants program that awarded every smoke free restaurant in Beaufort County. Awards were given along with light refreshments for owners and managers of these establishments. The health department also partnered with the Health in Motion Mobile Clinic to provide free health screenings in the parking lot of Wal-Mart located in Washington. Free blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose, and HIV testing were provided. Tobacco prevention materials were also available at the event to celebrate the Great American Smokeout.

*Submitted by Clifton Langley,
Health Educator*



Warren County

Mary Marrow, health education supervisor at the Warren County Health Department, has received the prestigious Jeanne Palmer Health Educator Excel Award for 2007. The award, which is given annually to a health educator for implementing meritorious community service health education activities that contribute to the well being of residents, was presented during the N.C. Public Health Association's annual conference held last month.



Marrow joined the local health department in 1994 as a health educator. Later after being named supervisor, she led the Health Education Department in becoming more community-based and assisted with establishing the current Wellness Center, which provides exercise programs for local citizens.

A few years later, Marrow spearheaded efforts to establish Healthy Carolinians of Warren County, a program that has received the coveted Thad B. Western Community of Excellence Award. She has served as a peer reviewer for the Governor's Task Force certification/recertification meetings for Healthy Carolinians and has been a presenter at Healthy Carolinians' conferences.

The letter nominating Marrow for her recent award credits her with being involved in her work on a local, regional and state level; leading co-workers in promoting public health; having a vision for community health improvement and quality skills of engaging community members; and being the "inspiration and driving force who has worked behind the scenes to insure the success" of Healthy Carolinians. The letter also praised her interpersonal skills and stated, "I can't count the times I heard 'everyone knows Mary,' 'Mary gets things done,' and 'the people here trust Mary.' Instead of highlighting a specific program or strategy she has developed, I chose to highlight the genuine respect and trust this individual has inspired in her community."

The Henderson resident received her bachelor's degree in Community Health from N.C. Central University. She is a mentor with the One-on-One program; an American Red Cross volunteer and instructor, and coordinates emergency assistance to local families. Mary is also a member of the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council, Warren County Grant Writing Committee, the Five County Mental Health Authority, and serves as a Vance County elections judge.

Submitted by Mary Marrow,

Health Educator II

Hertford County

The “Shears for Wellness” program is a diabetes-focused program implemented in African-American beauty and barbershops in Hertford County. This program educates and train barbers and beauticians about diabetes so they can talk to their clients about issues regarding diabetes. They are not making a diagnosis, but they are familiar with the signs/symptoms and risk factors associated with this chronic disease. The barbers and beauticians talk with their clients about the importance of healthy eating and exercise. They also talk with clients about seeing their doctor on a regular bases and keeping their appointments. In addition, each shop has a diabetes educational section where clients can get brochures and other literature regarding diabetes to read while they are waiting to be served. There are a total of ten shops in Hertford County that are involved in the “Shears for Wellness” program. This program will be implemented in Northampton, Halifax, Martin, Tyrell, and Washington counties in the future.

*Submitted by Crystal Dempsey,
Health Promotion Supervisor*



Northampton County

Northampton County Health Department conducted health screenings at four African-American churches, one business, and the farmer's market during the months of September and October, 2007. Roanoke Salem Baptist Church, Willow Oak AME, Bethlehem Baptist Church, and Severn Baptist Church had blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol screenings; sixty people received services. Resinall Corporation had 52 employees screened. In collaboration with the Health in Motion van, 27 people were screened at the Northampton Farmer's Market; HIV and syphilis testing was also available. Educational materials were offered to participants and follow-up care when necessary.



Northampton also held its 2nd Annual Drive-Thru Flu Clinic on October 21, 2007; one hundred fifty-nine residents were vaccinated.

*Submitted by Sharon Long,
Health Educator II*

Disparity Gap Coordinators Working Together...



Picture Above: Quarterly Disparity Gap Coordinator Meeting held in September 2007 in Williamston, NC. This was the first meeting held with the newly hired Regional Disparity Gap Coordinator, Keisha Cutler (not pictured).

Picture Below: Quarterly Disparity Gap Coordinator Meeting held in December 2007 in Williamston, NC. NENCPPH Program Managers and Executive Director joined us to introduce regional programs and discuss opportunities for collaboration. John Graham from The NC Institute for Public Health co-facilitated this meeting with Keisha Cutler.



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