

Connecting Point

A MID MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER



November 2013

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Visit www.mmdhd.org for more information on agency programs, services and health issues.

Building Bridges for Breastfeeding Duration

In June of 2013, MMDHD partnered with MidMichigan Health and Spectrum Health United Memorial to host “Building Bridges for Breastfeeding Duration.” The objective of the Bridges program is to promote collaboration between hospitals, the WIC program and community partners to provide evidence-based lactation support services to increase both breastfeeding initiation and duration rates. The program demonstrates that new mothers can be discharged from the hospital confident in their breastfeeding skills. It also establishes community partners who are prepared to continue to support and educate new mothers to achieve their breastfeeding goals.

The presenters of the Bridges program, Jan Barger, RN, MA, IBCLC and Carole Peterson, MS, IBCLC, helped author “Blueprints for Public Health Professionals.” Blueprints is a guide to help professionals follow practices that will help moms meet their breastfeeding goals and help the Nation meet Healthy People 2020 goals for breastfeeding.

Attendees at the program were those who work with new moms and newborn infants throughout pregnancy and the early postpartum period. The 120 participants included physicians, physician assistants, nurses, social workers, dieticians, lactation consultants, WIC staff and Head Start employees. By educating the community on breastfeeding best practice, USDA and Michigan WIC are hoping that all health professionals will provide sound breastfeeding advice and help moms meet their personal breastfeeding goals. In the long run, we are creating a healthier society one mom at a time.

Monthly Healthy Living Recommendations

Dr. Robert Graham, MMDHD Medical Director, and the Board of Health have provided these healthy living recommendations for November:

- The Board of Health recommends that patients talk to their doctor about the risks and benefits of the plan of care prescribed by their doctor.
- The Board of Health recommends that uninsured or underinsured people sign up for health insurance.

A huge barrier to good healthcare outcomes is the ability to pay for needed and effective services and medications. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is an attempt to reduce or eliminate the financial roadblock for patients to obtain early detection and appropriate care for life and health-threatening illnesses. For example, people that control their blood pressure, exercise, and reduce their salt intake have fewer heart attacks, strokes and kidney disease. Preventing these events will lower costs for the nation as a whole.

In order to take advantage of the ACA’s cost savings and health improvement features, people need to apply for coverage between now and March 31, 2014. MMDHD has certified application counselors available to assist individuals with applications and answer questions. For more information, call:

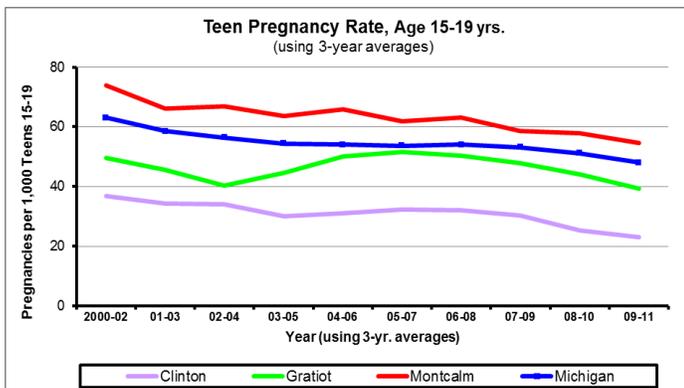
Clinton County	Montcalm County	Gratiot County
989-224-2195, Option 2	989-831-5237, Option 2	989-875-3681, Option 2

Assistance is also available through the Montcalm Area Health Center at 1-866-289-1339.



Teen Pregnancy

The teen pregnancy rate typically represents the number of young women ages 15 to 19, who have either given birth, experienced an abortion or miscarriage, per 1,000 female teens. The counties served by MMDHD have generally shown a decline in teen pregnancy rates since 2000. Gratiot and Clinton County rates have remained below that of the State of Michigan, while the Montcalm County rate has consistently remained above the Michigan Rate. In accordance with Healthy People 2020 goals, efforts to encourage responsible sexual decision-making and increased use of contraceptives are important contributors to the decrease in teen pregnancy. MMDHD offers Family Planning services in all three counties. Staff is also available to provide education at area schools.



For more information about Family Planning programming, contact Wendy Curry, RN, MSN at (989) 875-1028.

Tobacco Free Parks

On September 3, 2013, the Gratiot County Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution to create smoke-free zones at the county parks. Playgrounds, ball fields and beaches are now considered smoke-free and will be identified with signage. Gratiot County Parks and Recreation Director Pete Little, with support from MMDHD Health Officer Marcus Cheatham, addressed the Board and emphasized the importance of having a safe and healthy environment for families.

This initiative was made possible through the collaboration of the Gratiot County Substance Abuse Coalition, Gratiot County Parks and Recreation, Live Well Gratiot and MMDHD's Health Services Administrator, Andrea Tabor.

The percentage of Gratiot County adults who smoke, 27.1%, exceeds the number of Michigan adults who smoke, 19.8%. Creating smoke-free zones is a positive step in encouraging smoke-free living.

PBB Contamination Community Discussion

In 1973, large quantities of polybrominated biphenyls (PBB) produced by the Velsicol chemical plant in St. Louis, contaminated the state food chain. Following this event, many chemical workers, affected farmers, and their families participated in the Michigan Long-Term PBB Health Study, conducted by the Michigan Department of Community Health. However, in the early 1990s, chemical workers and their families were no longer followed as part of the study. Through a partnership with MMDHD and the Pine River Superfund Citizen Task Force, Emory University has obtained grant funding to resume and expand research on the effects of PBB on chemical workers and their families.

Emory University will be hosting a community meeting from 10:00 a.m. until noon on Saturday, December 14, and from 2:00 until 4:00 on Sunday, December 15, 2013 at the St. Louis City Hall, 108 W. Saginaw Street. People will be able to obtain access to their records from the original Michigan PBB registry and enroll in the current research project, if interested. Those interested in their current PBB level can have a blood test drawn between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on December 14th, and from noon to 5:00 p.m. on December 15, 2013. To learn more, visit the website at: www.pbbregistry.emory.edu. For direct contact with Emory University, send emails to: PBBregistry@emory.edu or call 1-800-892-0074.

Do 1 Thing



The **do1thing** program is designed to help make the job of emergency preparedness easier for individuals, families and organizations by devoting each month to a single preparedness activity. The month of November focuses on gathering emergency supplies and creating an emergency kit for home, the car and the workplace. For more information, visit www.do1thing.com.

For more information about these and other Health Department programs, contact:

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