



Quick Reads

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First lady announces “Let’s Move” initiative

Last week, the White House [announced](#) that First Lady Michelle Obama is focusing on our nation’s childhood obesity epidemic. This could not have come at a better time. A recent study by IDPH has shown that 16 percent of Iowa third graders are overweight while a staggering 14 percent are already obese. The good news is that public health partners in Iowa are trying hard to stem this trend—possibly even reversing it—now while these children are still young.

How are we doing that? The [Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness and Nutrition](#) has teamed up with the [Iowa Sports Foundation](#) to develop the [2010 Live Healthy Iowa Kids/Governor’s Challenge](#). This 100-day challenge is already under way with 10,370 children participating on 509 teams across the state. The Council is also supporting the criteria of the USDA’s [HealthierUS School Challenge](#). Applications for this school award are submitted through the Iowa Department of Education (DE). Finally, IDPH and DE are jointly working with schools to increase fruit/vegetable consumption and physical activity, reduce screen time, and establish healthy lifestyle habits that can last a lifetime through initiatives such as the [Pick a better snack & ACT](#) program.

The first lady’s initiative is a welcome development for our nation and I look forward to opportunities for Iowa to share smart practices with our federal partners and other states. To learn more, visit www.letsmove.gov. For more information on partnering with the IDPH Health Promotion Team, contact Kala Shipley at kshipley@idph.state.ia.us.

Public-private partnership aids health care worker loan repayments

I am excited to announce a unique partnership with [University of Iowa Health Care](#), [Iowa Health System](#), [Mercy Medical Center-Des Moines](#), and the [Des Moines University](#) to provide loan repayment assistance to health care professionals serving rural and underserved Iowans. Last year, IDPH applied for federal [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act](#) funding to expand our State Loan Repayment Program, known as [PRIMECARRE](#) (Primary Care Recruitment and Retention Endeavor). Thanks to the commitment of these organizations, we were able to secure the required dollar-for-dollar match for approximately \$75,000 in federal funds toward loan repayments. This means that IDPH will soon be announcing the availability of \$150,000, on a competitive basis, for eligible health care providers practicing in designated shortage areas in Iowa. Thank you to our partners on this project; their contributions will help us improve access to primary care services where they are needed most. For more information, contact Erin Drinnin at edrinnin@idph.state.ia.us.

Preparation of the CHNA & HIP Report begins

Every five years, local boards of health lead a community-wide discussion with stakeholders about their community's health needs and what can be done about them. This activity is so important to what we do in public health, it is outlined in both the [Iowa Public Health Standards](#) and the [Local Public Health Services](#) contract performance measures. Consistent reports for all of Iowa will allow for a solid profile of the health needs of the state and local communities and be used for the department's state assessment and health improvement plan. In addition, the reports submitted will provide guidance on resource needs to successfully address health priorities for local communities.

Approximately one year from today, local public health partners from each of Iowa's 99 counties will be submitting the results of these discussions in a report known as the [Community Health Needs Assessment and Health Improvement Plan](#) (CHNA & HIP). Last week, all counties should have received two CDs with materials to assist in preparing the CHNA & HIP report. These materials, along with additional county-specific data and resources, are posted on www.idph.state.ia.us/chnahip. To participate in conducting the needs assessment and creating a health plan for your community, please contact your local health department.

New book highlights lessons learned from 2008 floods

A soon-to-be-released book, *[A Watershed Year: Anatomy of the Iowa Floods of 2008](#)*, highlights lessons learned from the catastrophic floods of a year and a half ago. Edited by University of Iowa Ecologist Cornelia F. Mutel, the book brings together perspectives from physical and environmental scientists, hydrologists, economists, public policy experts, engineers and community managers. To mark its release in March, the [UI Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research](#) is holding a [program](#) to focus attention on the challenges that lie ahead as Iowa better prepares for the floods of the

future. IDPH is proud to sponsor this event, which will be held Tuesday, March 9, 2010 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the Iowa State Historical Building. For more information, visit www.cgrer.uiowa.edu.

Des Moines University unveils traveling health clinic

[Des Moines University](#) (DMU) recently announced an innovative tool for bringing health services and education to Iowans. Their new Mobile Health Clinic is a 38-foot Winnebago coach outfitted with two exam rooms, a reception area, and a restroom. The Clinic was jointly funded by DMU and a grant from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration.

The initial programmatic emphasis of the traveling clinic is threefold: clinical service delivery in partnership with the [Free Clinics of Iowa](#); educational outreach through DMU's [Area Health Education Centers](#); and community event participation through DMU's community medicine program. If interested in using the Mobile Health Clinic in your community for health services delivery or health education, please contact Shirley Roberts at shirley.roberts@dmu.edu or 515-991-3155.

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

— Tom