



CONSORTIUM EXCHANGE

National Public Health Week 1996

Donna E. Shalala, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, kicked off National Public Health Week on April 1 at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) 50th anniversary ceremony in Atlanta, Georgia. The theme of this second annual event was "Celebrating Success." President Clinton established National Public Health Week in 1995 as a way of recognizing the contributions of public health and prevention services to America's well-being.

Secretary Shalala commended CDC for its first 50 years of promoting public health and for continued vigilance in preventing disease and disability throughout the world. The Secretary offered five challenges to help write the next chapter in public health history. These challenges include staying hot on the trail of infectious diseases; teaching Americans healthy behaviors and the value of preventive services, such as immunizations and breast cancer screening; creating healthy communities by guaranteeing healthy environments; and preventing injuries by making America's homes and neighborhoods safe. The final challenge is tapping into the power of communication to give people the information they need to be the guardians of their own health. This means

finding new communication strategies to reach all Americans—especially young Americans in their homes, schools, and offices.

In addition to the kick-off in Atlanta, this year's events included a rally at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles, California, attended by several thousand public health workers and a celebration in Arlington, Virginia, where the acting Surgeon General, Dr. Audrey Manley, issued a proclamation. Other States and localities also honored the occasion. North Carolina's events were month-long, with the State health department providing 100 counties with information packets and posters to help them celebrate public health in their communities. For more information about Public Health Week 1997, call Katherine McCarter at (202) 789-5651.

A Challenge for Rhode Island Employers

The Rhode Island Department of Health has initiated the Healthy Rhode Islanders Challenge, a program to provide employers in the public and private sectors with specific strategies they can use to improve the health and well-being of employees in the workplace. The Worksite Challenge Book translates the State's year 2000 health objectives into concrete suggestions to promote improved health. It offers a

wide range of activities for organizations to use with their customers and the community. Information about Rhode Island companies that have initiated similar programs and are willing to serve as mentors or share their experiences also is available. The Department of Health offers technical assistance in identifying appropriate activities based on a company's interests and resources. All participating companies will receive public acknowledgment. The Challenge program is sponsored in part by CDC. For more information, call Mary Lou DeCiantis at (401) 277-2588.

ABOUT CONSORTIUM EXCHANGE

Healthy People 2000 CONSORTIUM EXCHANGE is a new information resource for Healthy People 2000 Consortium members to share news about prevention activities related to achieving one or more of the Nation's health promotion and disease prevention objectives. Please send news about your programs and activities to Ellis Davis, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 200 Independence Avenue S.W., Room 738G, Washington, D.C. 20201; (202) 260-2873. Fax (202) 205-9478. Healthy People 2000 Homepage — <http://odphp.osophs.dhhs.gov/pubs/hp2000>.

Healthy People 2000 is a national initiative to improve the health of all Americans through prevention. It is driven by 300 specific national health promotion and disease prevention objectives targeted for achievement by the year 2000. Healthy People 2000's overall goals are to: increase the span of healthy life for Americans, reduce health disparities among Americans, and achieve access to preventive services for all Americans.

Immunize for Healthy Lives

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is teaming up for the third consecutive year with McDonald's and the American Academy of Pediatrics on "Immunize for Healthy Lives," a national immunization education campaign for parents. The program helps local health departments reinforce the need for timely immunizations and encourages parents to have their children vaccinated. "Immunize for Healthy Lives" reached over 65 million people in 1995 as more than 300 local health departments collaborated with over 5,800 McDonald's restaurants. Educational materials, including trayliners and leaflets, are used in participating McDonald's restaurants. Also, major publicity campaigns are conducted. Last year, extensive news coverage highlighted hundreds of local "Immunize for Healthy Lives" programs around the country. Local health officials are building on the successes of last year through continued partnerships with McDonald's restaurants and pediatricians. The month of August, before school begins, is a key time to start this program. To get involved, call Sarah Schenck at (202)783-5550.

Examining Attitudes Toward Depression

As part of its ongoing efforts to educate Americans about clinical depression, the National Mental Health Association (NMHA) released findings from an in-depth survey of 1,166 adults on attitudes toward, and barriers to, seeking treatment for clinical depression. Oversampling was conducted among women, African-Americans, and older adults to gauge their attitudes and awareness of this illness, which affects an estimated 17 million people each year. Among the key findings were that less than one-third of respondents are aware of

the symptoms associated with depression, such as anxiety, agitation, and reductions in sleep and eating. Almost half of the respondents believe that clinical depression is a normal part of aging, rather than a treatable illness, and one third of survey respondents cite lack of insurance or money as a barrier to treatment. If suffering from depression, 54 percent said they would seek help from someone other than a health professional and one in four would handle it themselves. "Knowing what people believe are the obstacles to treatment—whether perceived or real—can assist us in reaching out to them and helping them break out of the box of clinical depression," said Mike Faenza, President of the National Mental Health Association. For more information, call Karen Waller at (202) 530-4607, or Colleen Reilly at (703) 838-7516.

Healthy Families America

Healthy Families America (HFA), is an initiative of the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse (NCPCA), in partnership with Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC). It promotes voluntary home visiting for new parents to ensure that all new parents, particularly those facing the greatest challenges, receive the education and support they need at the time their baby is born and in the subsequent months. The provision of home visiting services has been shown to improve birth outcomes and prevent child abuse and neglect. NCPCA is collaborating with many other national partners to facilitate part-

nerships among State and local affiliates to support, implement, and institutionalize home visitation services for new parents. The goal is to ensure that all States have a multi-disciplinary task force composed of public and private agency representatives working to institutionalize Healthy Families at the State level.

Currently, 192 sites are operating in 31 States and the District of Columbia. The program adheres to a set of critical elements: family support plans are developed between the parents and home visitor; services focus on supporting the parent as well as supporting parent-child interaction and child development; families are assessed prenatally or at the time of birth to identify those in need of services; enrollment is voluntary; visits begin weekly and gradually progress to bimonthly, monthly, and quarterly, with families remaining in the program for up to five years; parents learn parenting and life skills; families are linked to other community services; and an evaluation component measures outcomes such as immunization rates, age appropriate development, and reports of child abuse and neglect. The program allows home visitors to tailor services by building upon parents' strengths to identify and address their areas of concern. For more information about the initiative, call Anna Loftus at (312) 663-3520.

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