



rural spotlight

A New Decade

A Time to Improve the Health of Your Community

Creating a healthy community is an investment in the future. A community can truly only thrive when its residents thrive.

Working together, community leaders and organizations can help create an environment that promotes good health.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services has developed an online resource to help build healthy communities. The Community Health Improvement Resources (CHIR) system is an interactive planning tool for public health practitioners, organizations and individuals working to improve the health of their communities.

CHIR provides an evidence-based planning process that includes information and tools to:

- identify and prioritize community health issues;
- develop partnerships to address priority health issues; and
- create and evaluate community plans utilizing evidence-based interventions.

CHIR can also help communities learn more about sustaining their efforts to improve health.

The CHIR system includes several Web-based resources:

- Community Profiles – state, regional and local data for selected health issues for use in assessment and evaluation;
- Data MICA (Missouri Information for Community Assessment) – a state and local data query system;
- Priorities MICA – an interactive tool to assist with prioritizing diseases and health risk factors; and

this issue includes:

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A New Decade continued

- Intervention MICA – information, tools and resources for planning evidence-based interventions to address health conditions or risk factors.

The Intervention MICA tool offers strategies to address numerous health conditions and related concerns that affect the health of communities, including:

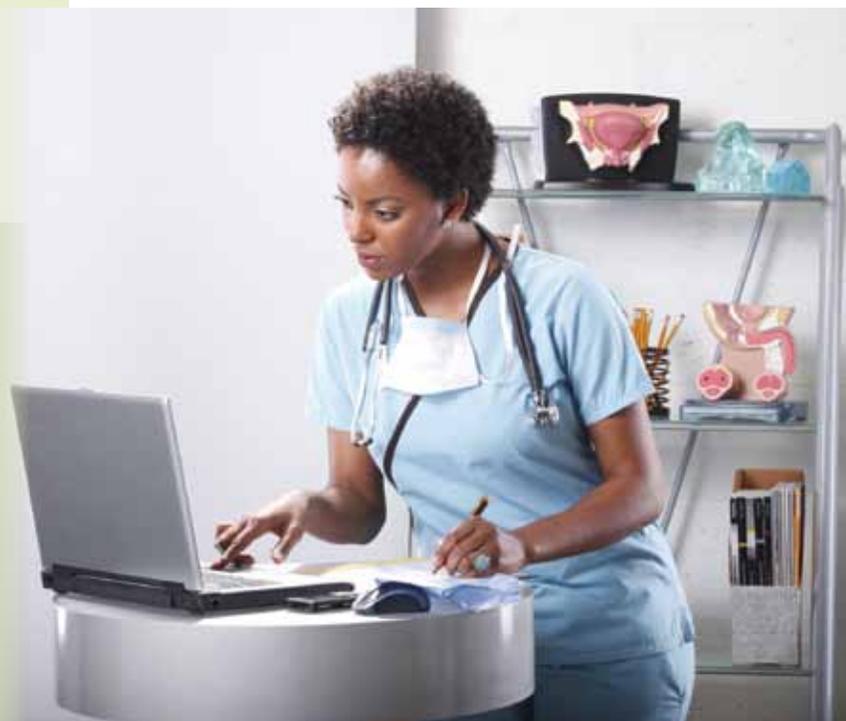
- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Injuries from falls
- Motor vehicle injuries
- Nutrition
- Oral Health
- Physical Activity
- Tobacco
- Heart disease and stroke
- Immunizations
- Sexual assault
- Colorectal cancer

To access the User's Guide and learn more about CHIR, please visit www.dhss.mo.gov/CHIR.

NHSC

The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) is a federally funded program that offers scholarship or loan repayment to primary medical, dental, and mental health care providers in exchange for a period of service in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA). HPSAs are areas of the state with shortages of primary medical, dental, or mental health care professionals necessary to treat the area's population. NHSC clinicians provide culturally appropriate services and treat patients regardless of their ability to pay. NHSC approved sites include private practice sites, rural health clinics, clinical networks, group practices, state or federal prisons and community health centers. These sites allow clinicians who are eligible for loan repayment funding or have received scholarships to fulfill their service obligation. Currently, there are 3,500 providers in the NHSC and with the current funding provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the NHSC is expanding that number to more than 8,500. To learn more about the NHSC, visit its Web site at <http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/> or contact Benjamin Harvey, NHSC representative, for the Missouri State Office of Primary Care and Rural Health.

Mr. Harvey can be reached via email, Ben.Harvey@dhss.mo.gov, or by telephone at (800) 891-7415.



Veteran Benefits



 Vet Centers  Community Based Outpatient Clinics  VA Med Centers

Service to one's country is an honorable endeavor. Federal, state and local government agencies work to ensure that those who served in the military are provided benefits. Veteran Service Officers in the Missouri Veterans Commission assist veterans and their families throughout the state with benefits information and claims assistance. Veteran's benefits can include compensation, education, home loan, burial and cemetery assistance benefits, and nursing home care. Registration is the most important step toward receiving benefits.

Finding work after military service can be a challenge. Services are available specifically for veterans who are in search of employment. Missouri veterans may be eligible for employment benefits by receiving priority status for qualified veterans' employment. Individuals can find resources such as notifications of career fairs and other links to job search sites online at www.missourivets.com.

Housing assistance programs are also available for veterans. Seven skilled nursing homes are located throughout Missouri, providing three levels of skilled nursing care at minimal cost. Under the management of the Missouri Veterans Commission, these homes are located in Cameron, Warrensburg, Mexico, St. Louis, St. James, Cape Girardeau, and Mt. Vernon. Find more information online from the Missouri Veterans Commission at www.mvc.dps.mo.gov.

Mental health services and resources are also available. The VA Heartland Network has established a Veterans' Crisis Intervention Hotline to assist veterans who may be dealing with a mental health crisis or other difficult issue. Common mental health issues include Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, substance abuse and depression. The Hotline is available at all times by calling 1-888-899-9377.

Missouri VA Clinics

Belton - 816-922-2161/816-318-0251
Camdenton - 573-317-1105
Cameron - 816-632-1369
Cape Girardeau - 573-339-0909
Farmington - 573-760-1365
Ft. Leonard Wood - 573-329-8305
Kirksville - 660-627-8387
Mexico - 573-581-9630
Mount Vernon - 800-253-8387
Nevada - 417-448-8905
Salem - 573-729-6626 ext 5230
St. Charles - 636-498-1113
St. James - 573-265-0448
St. Joseph - 800-952-8387 ext 6925
St. Louis 314-286-6988
Warrensburg - 816-922-2500
West Plains - 417-257-2454

For more information about your closest medical center, clinic or vet center call 1-800-827-1000



KIDS HEALTH TIP

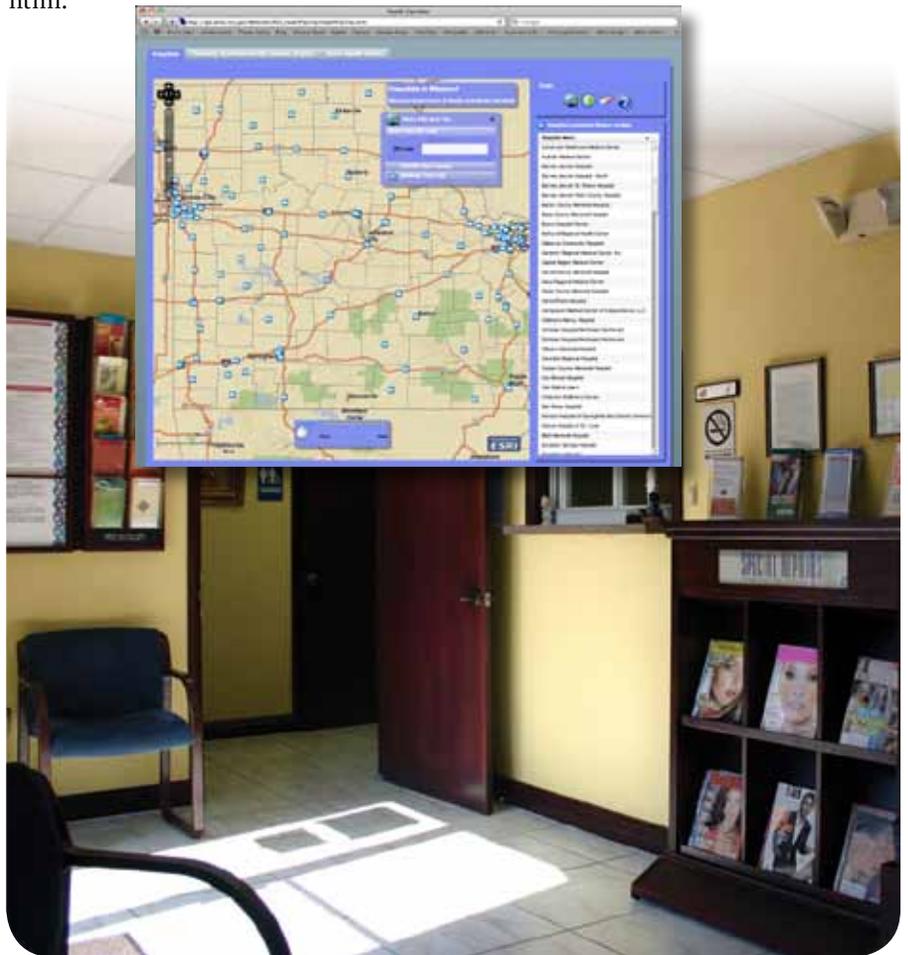
Don't Panic!

Becoming separated from your friends or family members can be scary. Be prepared for such a situation and you may keep yourself from panic. Follow these guidelines to avoid becoming lost and to get help from a trustworthy source if you do get lost:

- * Try to avoid going off by yourself. Use the buddy system if possible.
- * If you do leave the group, tell someone where you are going. They may be able to find you if you can't find your way back.
- * If you have a cell phone, make sure you have the cell phone numbers of all the people you are with.
- * Look for an information desk or approach a security officer for help.
- * If you can't find safe help, stay put and call 911.

Finding a Health Care Facility Near You

Finding health care in your area is now easier. The Missouri Office of Primary Care and Rural Health has released a resource map of Missouri health care facilities. The map has three categories: hospitals, federally qualified health centers and rural health clinics. Search by county, zip code, or city to find a facility in your area. The site provides location and contact information for each facility. Find the map online at http://gis.dhss.mo.gov/Website/AGS_healthFacility/healthFacility.html.



Correcting Health Myths

The five-second rule is not a good one when it comes to eating food off the floor. Multiple scientific studies have found that food that comes in contact with tile or wood floors does pick up large amounts of bacteria.



Playground Equipment Dangers

After a long winter, families are ready and excited to get outside to the playground.

Children will be eager to play and not pay attention to the condition of the playground equipment. The equipment may seem safe, but injuries often happen when equipment pieces are no longer up to standard or kids take risks that lead to falls. Every year in the U.S., more than 200,000 children are taken to the emergency room after being injured on the playground. Check out this list of areas where most injuries occur and be cautious when you and your family go to play.

* Swings cause more injuries than any other actual equipment piece. They should have soft seats and be at least two feet apart. A majority of playground-related fatalities occur from strangulation.

* Falls on hard surface areas cause many injuries. The best surfaces are made of wood chips, sand, pea gravel, and rubber.

* Snagging or catching a piece of clothing on rough metal or scraping skin against a worn area of a slide is a common cause of minor injuries.

* Falling off of a merry-go-round or seesaw that sits on a hard surface can lead to broken bones and concussions.

* Monkey Bars have been removed from many playgrounds because so many children have fallen and hurt themselves or others.



THE VALUE OF TEAM SPORTS

Now that the weather is starting to warm up, it's a lot easier to get your kids outside for some exercise.

And getting them involved in team sports can do more than keep them healthy. It can teach them valuable lessons about teamwork, and even help your entire family.

For children, participating in sports is a fun way to share an activity with their friends and to make new friends. It helps them become fit and gives them a chance to earn the attention and respect they crave from adults.

A recent study by the Women's Sports Foundation documented numerous benefits for families whose children are involved in organized sports. Researchers found that about two-thirds of girls and three quarters of boys participate in youth sports. And those children and their families were enriched by participation in youth activities. Families whose kids were involved in sports tended to be more satisfied with their lives overall. Ninety percent of parents attended their child's game at least once a week, becoming more involved in their child's life, and in the community.

Another study by Purdue University found parents with children in team sports had stronger friendships and improved social skills.

If you don't know how to get your child involved, try calling the Parks and Recreation Department in your area. Most communities organize youth leagues in several sports. Even if you don't know a coach, someone can probably point you in the right direction.



Balance Out Your Day

A great way to decrease back pain while also enhancing balance is to sit on a balance ball instead of a traditional chair. Some employees are allowed to make the switch at work. If not at work, try it at home while you're watching television or paying bills. Here are just a few of the benefits you may see:

1. The balance ball forces your body into proper spine alignment.
2. It forces frequent position changes relieving some body aches that may come with sitting for long periods.
3. You are mostly using core muscles which, over time, can strengthen the abs.
4. It keeps circulation flowing better than when in a regular chair.
5. You will burn more calories than just sitting.



Text 4 BABY

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services is working to help promote a new service called Text 4 Baby.

This free mobile information service is designed to promote maternal and child health. Text 4 Baby is an educational program of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition. Through the service, pregnant and new mothers are given information they need to take care of their health and give their babies the best possible start in life. Women who sign up will receive free SMS text messages on their cell phones each week, timed to their due date and their baby's date of birth.

**To participate, text the word BABY to 511411,
To learn more visit www.text4baby.org.**



Risk Assessment

Arthritis is something you may think only affects the elderly. While it is true that as you get older your likelihood of being diagnosed with arthritis increases, the disease can strike at any age. If it does, it can greatly decrease your mobility and cause severe joint pain. There are a number of risk factors besides age that increase the likelihood you'll suffer from arthritis. They include the following:

- Gender: women are statistically more likely to suffer from arthritis.
- Tobacco use: smokers are more likely to contract rheumatoid arthritis.
- Injury: arthritis is often a secondary problem from car and sports accidents.
- Repetitive motion: if your job requires that you repeat the same action over and over, you're more likely to get arthritis.
- Being overweight: by placing more pressure on your joints.

Early treatment for arthritis can enhance the treatment's effectiveness. Speak to your doctor if the above list puts you at an increased risk for developing the disease. And find more information about arthritis at www.dhss.mo.gov/Arthritis/.

For questions or comments about this publication, please contact
the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services,

Office of Primary Care and Rural Health at 800-891-7415



A HEALTHY RECIPE FOR

Spring

Parmesan Baked Fish

1/4 cup milk
2 teaspoons salt

2 pounds thawed fresh or frozen fish fillets

1/2 cup fine dry bread crumbs
1/2 teaspoon paprika

1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
melted butter

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Grease a baking dish. Blend together the milk and salt in a shallow bowl. Combine bread crumbs, paprika, and Parmesan cheese in a second bowl.

Dip fish fillets into milk mixture then into crumb mixture. Arrange (not touching) in the prepared baking dish. Drizzle melted butter over fillets. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes. Fish will flake easily with a fork when done.