

# HEALTHY CITY THRIVING FAMILIES



A Quarterly Update from the City of Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support

Summer 2009

## Homegrown Minneapolis: Growing a Local Food System

Homegrown Minneapolis, the City's initiative to help residents grow, buy and eat healthier, local foods is continuing to gain momentum thanks to the support of City government, community members and other partners. Between January and May, over 100 partners developed recommendations for ways the City can improve the local food system. Partners examined issues such as increasing access to healthy foods; supporting local food-related jobs and business opportunities; strengthening the connection between rural growers and urban markets; and promoting existing resources such as farmers markets and community gardens.

Recommendations were submitted along with a final report to the Minneapolis City Council on June 26, 2009, which unanimously passed a resolution supporting local foods and established a Homegrown Minneapolis Task Force. The Task Force consists of City and community representatives and will meet regularly over the next two years to guide the implementation of key recommendations, including:

- Formation of a Food Policy Advisory group
- Creation of a city-wide topical plan on urban agriculture
- Inventory of community kitchens and processing, and distribution opportunities for sustainable and locally grown foods
- Development of a city-wide Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system at farmers' markets

Under the leadership of the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support (MDHFS) and Mayor R.T. Rybak, Homegrown Minneapolis will support a strong local food system that will positively impact the City's health, food security, environment and economy. For more information and involvement opportunities with Homegrown Minneapolis, visit <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/homegrown-home.asp> or contact Kristen Klingler at (612) 673-2910 or [Kristen.Klingler@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:Kristen.Klingler@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).



*In celebration of the City Council's Homegrown Minneapolis resolution, Mayor R.T. Rybak and Emerge Youth Community Garden members address the media about the importance of access to fresh produce.*

## Statewide Health Improvement Program Grant to Target Obesity and Tobacco Use

MDHFS received a two-year, \$2.6 million grant from the Statewide Health Improvement (SHIP) Program to reduce the burden of chronic disease caused by obesity and tobacco use. SHIP interventions will focus on creating environments (e.g., schools, neighborhoods, worksites, clinics and housing facilities) where healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity are accessible and exposure to cigarette smoke is eliminated.

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# Statewide Health Improvement Program Grant to Target Obesity and Tobacco Use

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For the next two years, MDHFS will:

- Partner with residents and landlords of low income multi-housing units to pass voluntary smoke-free housing policies.
- Increase and improve the availability of healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity in areas surrounding these housing units.
- Increase biking and walking among residents by implementing recommendations in Minneapolis' Bike and Pedestrian Master Plans.
- Implement Homegrown Minneapolis recommendations including an inventory of land available for food production and integrating acceptance of Electronic Benefits Transfer coupons (i.e., food stamps) at Minneapolis farmers markets.
- Improve the nutrition and physical activity practices in 220 child care programs.
- Pilot worksite accreditation and incentive programs to increase employee commuting via biking and walking.
- Implement Healthy Foods and Active Worksite policies for City of Minneapolis employees.
- Partner with health care clinics to develop a referral system to community-based smoking cessation programs and obesity prevention services.
- Increase biking and walking to school among Minneapolis Public School students.
- Improve nutrition and physical activity practices at Minneapolis Public Schools and charter and alternative schools in Minneapolis.

MDFHS also received a separate SHIP grant for \$513,000 to partner with the health departments of Hennepin County, Bloomington, Richfield and Edina to improve clinical care for chronic disease prevention, and management of overweight and obese patients. SHIP funding is part of the Minnesota's Health Reform initiative, which was passed by the Minnesota Legislature and signed by Governor Pawlenty in 2008. For more information, contact Lara Tiede at (612) 673-3815 or [Lara.Tiede@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:Lara.Tiede@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).

## The Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support (MDHFS)

### VISION:

Healthy residents, communities and environments.



**MISSION:** to provide leadership in meeting the unique needs of our urban population by engaging partners in promoting individual, community and environmental health and eliminating disparities.

**Gretchen Musicant, Commissioner**

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If you need this document in an alternative format, please call 612/673-2301 or TTY 612/673-2157 (General City Information). Please allow a reasonable amount of time for special needs accommodation.

## School-Based Clinics Meet Students on Their Turf

As families gear up for the beginning of school, they should know that MDHFS' School-Based Clinics (SBC) are there to support their children's health and school success. The SBC program plays a critical role in minimizing barriers to health care access for Minneapolis teens who may not otherwise receive needed health care. Students (with or without health insurance) who attend Broadway, Henry, Edison, Roosevelt, South and Washburn High Schools are eligible for medical, nutrition, social work and mental health services.

The profound impact that SBCs can have on students is exemplified by the following success story. A student visited a clinic for a sports physical which is a comprehensive exam including a medical, nutrition and mental health screening. The student did not pass the health exam, but was instead diagnosed with an enlarged adenoid that caused breathing problems, extreme obesity, high blood pressure, and a benign cyst. Clinic staff went into action by helping the student apply for health insurance to pay for surgeries. Staff also developed healthy eating and exercise plans that enabled weight loss and improved blood pressure, while a mental health therapist worked with the student to combat depression and poor self esteem. After these life changing interventions, the student finally passed the sports exam, enabling participation in the school's soccer program. With additional help from the SBC social worker, the student then enrolled in a college preparation program, eventually got accepted into college, and will soon be graduating.

SBC outreach efforts include clinic tours and classroom presentations. Parents can learn more about SBCs at back-to-school open houses or through the City's website, which also includes parent consent forms that parents must sign in order for their child to receive SBC services: ([www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/school-home.asp](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/school-home.asp)). To speak with someone directly about SBC services, call (612) 673-5305.

## Healthy Start Funding Secured

The Department of Health and Family Support was recently awarded a five-year \$4.6 million grant to sustain the Twin Cities Healthy Start (TCHS) program, dedicated to reducing racial/ethnic and socioeconomic disparities in infant mortality and poor birth outcomes. In Minneapolis and St. Paul, the program targets African Americans and American Indians and other at-risk families living in neighborhoods with high infant mortality rates. Program sites, selected through a competitive process, screen pregnant women to determine whether they need enhanced education and case management services to address basic needs, such as food security and housing stability; social support and partner violence; depression; and cigarette, alcohol and other drug use.

TCHS is a collaboration between Minneapolis Health and Family Support, the Saint Paul - Ramsey County Department of Public Health, and community-based clinics and social service agencies. Approximately half of the award amount will be distributed to the following agencies to provide direct services to pregnant women and their infants for up to two years following delivery: American Indian Family Center; Indian Health Board of Minneapolis; North Point Health and Wellness Center (Hennepin County); Open Cities Health Center; Reuben Lindh Family Services; University of Minnesota (Broadway Family Medicine); and West Side Community Health Services. The remainder of the grant award supports the efforts of a community

consortium and DHFS program staff to:

- (1) enhance community awareness of risk factors associated with infant mortality, including unsafe infant sleep practices and environments, and the importance of prenatal care and adequate nutrition;
- (2) to provide portable cribs and other basic supplies to mothers in need; and
- (3) to engage fathers and other community members in providing support for new mothers and young children.

The funding, from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration, will sustain TCHS through 2014. For more information, contact Doriscile Everett-O'Neal at (612) 673-2622 or [Doris.O'neal@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:Doris.O'neal@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).

## Urban Health Agenda: Youth Violence Prevention Efforts Expanding

### StreetReach Focuses on Youth Gang Prevention

In the City's ongoing efforts to prevent youth gang involvement through its *Blueprint for Action: Preventing Youth Violence in Minneapolis*, a pilot project called StreetReach will connect and mentor youth who have been impacted by violence and negative behavior in the Farview, Folwell, and North Commons parks communities.

The program, which will focus on youth who are disengaged from supports and services, is a coordinated effort between the Minneapolis Police Department, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and MDHFS. The StreetReach team includes Minneapolis Police Department school resource officers, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) staff and the Minneapolis Gang Prevention Specialist. The MPRB's Youthline Outreach Mentorship Program will direct the City-funded project with assistance from the City's Gang Prevention Specialist. The Youthline staff person, with extensive knowledge of street gangs, will oversee eight youth service staff.

As a complementary activity, MDHFS is conducting a comprehensive gang assessment focused on the Folwell, Hawthorne, Jordan and McKinley neighborhoods, where there is a disproportionate homicide rate for young people compared to other areas of Minneapolis. Results of the study should be available this fall and will inform the design of targeted intervention strategies.

Grant funding for this project was awarded to MDHFS by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in October 2008. For more information, contact Jan Fondell at (612) 673-5527 or [Janice.Fondell@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:Janice.Fondell@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).

### Somali Youth Violence Prevention

According to the Minneapolis Police Department, there was a sharp increase in homicides of young Somali males in 2008, despite an overall, citywide decrease in juvenile homicide and violent crime.

In response, the City allocated \$75,000 to fund two prevention projects in the Somali community. The first is a three month pilot with Pillsbury United Communities to hire youth workers from the Somali Youth Network Council to connect high-risk Somali youth with an array of community and recreational programs. The second project is an initiative that draws on a restorative justice model to train and support Somali parents with teenagers, helping them identify early warning signs and appropriately intervene. This effort will engage Somali youth, their families and faith communities, as well as a broad range of stakeholders. For more information, contact Bass Zanjani at (612) 673-5438 or [Bass.Zanjani@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:Bass.Zanjani@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).

## Practicing Dispensing Medicine on a Mass Scale

In the event of an infectious disease emergency, the public health community could be charged with quickly dispensing medicines (antibiotics or vaccines) to the public. Establishing and operating a mass dispensing site requires extensive planning and coordination between City departments and other local public health entities. To test its plans and preparation, MDHFS recently planned and participated in Operation BILD (Building and Implementing Local Distribution) with the Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Department.

The exercise tested notification and activation of mass dispensing sites and set-up of dispensing sites at high schools. The Minneapolis Police Department observed the exercise so that continuous improvements in security, traffic control and parking can be made to their plans.

## Youth Violence Prevention Congressional Forum

On May 1, 2009, U.S. Representative Keith Ellison and Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak co-hosted a Congressional Forum in North Minneapolis to examine how the federal government can address youth violence as a public health issue. The hearing highlighted the efforts and outcomes of the *Blueprint for Action: Preventing Youth Violence in Minneapolis* as a national model for other communities. In addition, the hearing identified strategies that the federal government can implement that are consistent with the Surgeon General's 2001 report on addressing youth violence as a public health issue.

In addition, MDHFS used 800 MHz radios, telephones and a secure website to test communication and coordination among other metro health departments, which would be essential during an actual emergency.

The effectiveness and outcomes of the participant training component of the test were evaluated by the City's research department through funding from the University of Minnesota's *Simulations and Exercises for Educational Effectiveness* grant. The evaluation will assess participants' experiences and perceptions related to the training, and its impact on effective set-up of a mass dispensing site. A report on these findings is pending. For more information, contact Erin Arifin at (612) 673-3524 or [Erin.Arifin@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:Erin.Arifin@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).

The *Blueprint for Action* is predicated on a mix of law enforcement and public health strategies to address the root causes of violence to reduce and prevent youth violence. The Congressional Forum was organized along the *Blueprint's* four overarching strategic objectives:

1. Connect youth to trusted adults
2. Intervene at the first sign of risk for violence
3. Restore youth who have gone down the wrong path
4. Unlearn the culture of violence

For more information, contact Bass Zanjani at (612) 673-5438 or [Bass.Zanjani@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:Bass.Zanjani@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).

## Healthy City Updates

### Staff Updates

**Donna Amidon**, MDHFS School Health Services manager, is retiring this August after 19 years of service. Donna started her career with MDHFS as a nurse practitioner and in 1997 she was promoted to Assistant Coordinator of Health Services. In 1999 Donna was promoted to the position of Manager overseeing all MDHFS School Based Clinics (SBC). During her tenure with the department, Donna improved data collection and reporting systems, implemented processes to improve third party billing for services and has constantly worked to make the SBC service delivery model more efficient. Donna received numerous awards and recognitions for her work as a nurse practitioner and advocate for adolescent health. Donna has indicated that while she is leaving MDHFS she will continue to be an advocate for adolescent health through her work with the Minnesota Coalition for School Health Care.

**Barbara Kyle** has been hired as MDHFS' new manager for school health services. Barb is well known in the public health community for her advocacy work with pregnant and parenting teens, and most recently managed the Minneapolis Public Schools Teenage Pregnant and Parenting Program for 13 years.

**Tessa Anttila** joined the Twin Cities Healthy Start team as a site coordinator working on outreach, health education, and case management for pregnant women and new mothers. She has worked as a family empowerment coach with the Omnicity Program, a Little Earth/Hennepin County Partnership, and has a Master's degree in clinical social work.



Judy Williams, community member and Dr. BraVada Garrett-Akinsanya providing testimony on the effects of youth violence at the Congressional Forum

## Receive Healthy City Thriving Families Electronically

As MDHFS strives to institute greener practices, we invite our *Healthy City Thriving Families* readers to receive our newsletter electronically instead of by mail. Each quarter, you'll receive the same great newsletter and can choose to unsubscribe at any time. To sign up, please visit: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/newsletter.asp>.