



PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTIONS

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Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary

Mark Parkinson, Governor

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LEGISLATIVE RECAP – A MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

*submitted by Roderick Bremby, Secretary
Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE)*

On May 11, the Kansas Legislature completed its work on the 89th of the 90-day session. This session was heavily dominated by the very difficult work of balancing the needs of Kansans with the results of a poor economy. Less well known is the fact that public and environmental health experienced a successful legislative season with numerous measures passed by the Legislature.

Some of those measures include:

- **CLEAN INDOOR AIR** – Kansas will become smoke-free on July 1st.
- **TB PREVENTION** - all Kansas colleges will be required to have a plan for controlling tuberculosis on their campuses.
- **HIV SCREENING** – Requires HIV infection screening for pregnant women.
- **LICENSURE OF AUDIOLOGISTS** - all persons seeking licensure as an audiologist will be required to possess at least a doctorate degree or equivalent.
- **CHILD CARE REFORM – LEXIE'S LAW** – many provisions to strengthen the safety of day care in Kansas including the elimination of the registered home category, streamlining the renewal process and increasing access to public information concerning quality care. An initial necessary step forward in the transformation of the Kansas child care system for the 21st Century.
- **PRAMS** (pregnancy risk assessment monitoring system) – increases the state's ability to monitor and assess maternal and child health and to plan programs to target specific health needs and challenges such as Infant Mortality.



- **RADON BILL** - requires certification of radon measurement technicians, radon mitigation technicians, and radon measurement laboratories.
- **PRIMARY SEAT BELT LAW** – permits law enforcement officials to stop and ticket adults in the front seat of vehicles for not wearing seat belts.
- **TEXTING LAW** - Texting while driving will be prohibited. Sending or reading a text message while driving will become a crime.

While other key measures such as school vending and menu labeling were not approved by the Kansas Legislature, the Kansas State Board of Education recently addressed school vending. Additionally, the menu labeling initiative that received only an informational hearing in the Senate became law as a part of the Federal Health Reform Legislation.

The Kansas public health system celebrates its 125th year of existence this year. KDHE turns 35 July 1. This session, despite economical challenges, was one to celebrate for public health.

LIFE IS HARD WHEN YOU'RE BORN TOO YOUNG

*An Op-Ed Column by Jason Eberhart-Phillips, MD
Kansas State Health Officer, KDHE*

Babies born before they've had a full nine months to mature in their mother's womb face a staggering array of medical complications and life-threatening risks. For many, life is a struggle for survival from the moment they are born.

Because their lungs are not fully developed, premature newborns often have serious breathing problems. They also have a higher risk of jaundice, troubles with temperature stability and feeding difficulties.

Even those born just a little too early – between 34 and 36 weeks of gestation as compared to the full term of pregnancy of 37 weeks or more – are vulnerable to serious complications. These so-called "late preterm" babies are much more likely to require intensive medical care in their first days of life, and they are six times as likely to die in their first week as babies who are born full-term.

Sadly, the troubles these children face don't end when they grow out of infancy.

By the time they reach school age, late preterm children are 36 percent more likely to have developmental delays or disabilities, according to one large study. They also have an increased risk of bad behavior and learning problems in school.

For these reasons alone, the problem of prematurity should be a concern to everyone who cares about giving the next generation a fair start in life. But prematurity is also a huge burden on our economy, and is a significant cause of our spiraling health care costs.

The immediate medical care of premature infants is costing parents, taxpayers and everyone else who buys health insurance about \$26 billion per year, or \$50,000 per child. That's more than 10 times the cost of bringing a full-term baby into the world.

The burden of prematurity is higher in the United States than in any other developed country, and until recently it was only getting worse. Since 1990, the late preterm birth rate has increased more than 20 percent in this country, to approximately one in 12 births. That rate has dropped very slightly in the last two years, but it remains the number-one obstetrical challenge in America.

In Kansas, approximately 3,900 babies are born premature each year, two-thirds of whom are born late preterm, between 34 and 36 weeks. Of the 300 babies in the state who die each year before their first birthday, more than 60 percent are premature.

The reasons for the growing problem of prematurity are many and complex. Some factors may not be controllable, such as the advancing average age of mothers and the risk of multiple births that comes with the growing use of artificial reproductive technology.

But there are many potentially modifiable factors that are thought to increase risk, factors related to a mother's overall health, education, social status and access to appropriate prenatal health care. These factors are calling out for a concerted effort in each Kansas community to lessen the burden of prematurity.

Recently two big changes in the Kansas landscape offer hope that we can begin to reduce our state's premature birth rates significantly in the next few years.

One change is the passage of a new statute in the Kansas Legislature this year that enables researchers to conduct intensive interviews of a random sample of new mothers across the state. Analysis of the data generat-



ed from these interviews will help public health agencies at the state and local levels target the factors that contribute most to the preterm birth problem in Kansas.

The other exciting new development is a free service for pregnant women and mothers of infants under 1 year of age called Text4Baby. Women who simply text the word "BABY" to 511411 (or "BEBE" in Spanish) will receive three text messages per week with helpful, medically sound information timed to their delivery dates or the birth dates of their children.

Text4Baby, which is a national collaboration between public health agencies and private companies, aims to reach mothers at high risk for preterm birth with information on how to stay healthy in the one place they nearly all have access: their cell phones. Because virtually all wireless providers are participating in Text4Baby, it costs mothers nothing to receive the texts, even if they don't have a texting plan on their cell phone accounts.

Since Text4Baby began in Feb., about 40,000 women have signed up, including more than 600 in Kansas.

The new state law and the texting program are important first steps, but much work remains in reducing prematurity and its attendant costs. It will take more than the health care sector to solve this problem. It will take a groundswell of public support, a commitment of caring people in every walk of life to work together to make life a little easier for the tiniest of Kansans.

Every week that we can keep a developing infant safe in its mother's womb, until the right time for birth arrives, improves another child's chances for a healthy and rewarding life. Every added week in the womb ensures a brighter future for Kansas.

WILSON RECEIVES GRANTS TO FEED THEIR YOUTH

*submitted by Debbie Whitmer, Public Health Nurse Specialist
Bureau of Local and Rural Health (BLRH), KDHE*



Just as learning does not end when school lets out, neither does the need for good nutrition. Children who aren't hungry learn better, behave better and feel better. *The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)* through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) offers grants to help children receive the nutrition they need to learn, play, and grow throughout the summer months when school is out. School districts, local government agencies, parks, churches and non-profit organizations around the country sponsor the SFSP to provide meals to hungry children in the summer. The City of Wilson, Kansas is taking steps to utilize the federal programs to feed its children.

Wilson is a city of about 800 people with numerous family centered resources for a small community in Kansas. It has a new spray park for children, organized recreation activities throughout the entire year for youth to participate in soccer, basketball, tag football, summer t-ball, coach pitch and kid pitch baseball. Through a private donation all the youth in Wilson are offered swimming lessons free of charge. The children are transported by school bus to Ellsworth to the community pool. Every year the community sponsors a free Easter egg hunt, Halloween parade and Christmas celebration for all the children with prizes, snacks and a meal provided. Wilson also has a thrift shop, food bank, bed and breakfast, nursing home and an annual Czech Festival. And now the city has a program to help feed its youth.

In Wilson there is a real need for children to have access to healthy meals during the summer. Over 60 percent of the children in the Wilson school (K-12) qualify for the reduce lunch program and more than 25 percent of the children are chronically hungry. A concerned resident took the lead along with the help of a handful of other concerned residents, and applied for the SFSP grant to feed the children in their community. Through the SFSP grant the community will be serving free meals to children between the ages of one year to 18 years of age. The program will be serving the meals five days a week from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. beginning Jun. 7 through Jul. 29. Adults wanting to eat with the youth may do so for a nominal fee.

Another concern in Wilson was being able to feed the 60 percent of hungry children during the school year, on the weekends, when they have no access to reduced hot meals at school. A second caring community member applied for the *Back Pack Program* that will help provide food on weekends for hungry children, when school is back in session for the 2010 –2011, school year. On Fridays, at the end of the school day, volunteers will be handing out to identified children a sack filled with non-perishable foods to take home for



the weekend. If there are siblings in the family, that are also going hungry on the weekend, sacks will be sent home for them also.

With the help of many volunteers and the Wilson food bank, the community will be doing its part to make sure that children in Wilson do not go hungry. My family and I feel very lucky to live in a small but mighty caring community.

WIGGLE

*submitted by Kendra Baldrige, Farmworker Case Manager
Bureau of Local and Rural Health, Kansas Department*



Recently, I read the "Wiggle" book in English to fourteen children in Baxter Springs after a client Focus Group meeting for the Kansas Statewide Farmworker Health Program. The focus group meeting solicited input to improve the Farmworker program through attendees' suggestions. We were outside at a park and all the children gathered around to listen. As we went through the story, I asked them questions about what they saw on the page and they all answered in unison. It was great! I also had them wiggle different parts of their body as I read

through the story. They seemed to have fun with the story and it was fun to offer something to the kids after our 'adult' meeting. The group also discussed ways to improve health, so ending the meeting with some 'wiggling' was great!

NEW FARMWORKER REGIONAL CASE MANAGER

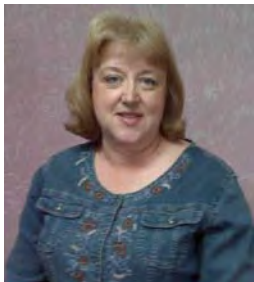
*submitted by Kendra Baldrige, Regional Case Manager
BLRH, KDHE*



Mary Marquez is the new Spanish speaking Regional Case Worker in Western Kansas for the Kansas Statewide Farmworker Health Program. Marquez will be based in Dodge City and can be reached at (620) 428-1762 or mmarquez@ummam.org.

SHERMAN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT HAS NEW LEADER

*submitted by Debbie Whitmer, Public Health Nurse Specialist
BLRH, KDHE*



Jean Kosmatka joined the Sherman County Health Department as the Administrator on Apr. 19, 2010. She obtained her nursing degree from the University of North Dakota, and has a masters degree in Public Health with a Maternal and Child Health emphasis from the University of Minnesota.

Kosmatka's public health experience includes working with a local health department in their Family Case Management program in Minnesota, the Children with Special Health Care Needs program for the state of North Dakota, and as a MCH Consultant with the state of Illinois. She has attended a Public Health Leadership Institute.

Jean grew up in North Dakota, and spent time in Texas, Maryland, Colorado and Hawaii while her husband was on active duty with the army. Her husband, Kent, is a nurse anesthetist, and they currently live in Goodland. Their daughter, Jenny and her husband, who is an officer in the U.S. Air Force live in Colorado Springs at Shriever Air Force Base. Her son, David, is a band/music teacher in Illinois where he lives with his wife and one year old daughter.

WHAT'S THE BUZZ IN PUBLIC HEALTH?

*submitted by Eldonna Chesnut, President
Kansas Public Health Association (KPHA)*



Media "buzz words" are keeping the public health workforce hopping, such as, Health Reform, accreditation, creating new partnerships, doing more with less, state and federal advocacy, and the list goes on. At a recent meeting of the Public Health Systems group there was much optimistic discussion about the positive outlook for public health in the health reform legislation. To paraphrase Secretary Bremby, the fed-

eral government is finally paying attention to the public health needs of our country. Bremby relayed to us that there are significant dollars set aside for public health in the health reform bill. With advocacy groups such as the American Public Health Association (APHA) and others, members of Congress heard the importance of public health.

"Accreditation" is a second very popular phrase in public health these days. Last year at the APHA convention many sessions were dedicated to this issue. More recently, the 5th Annual Governor's Public Health Conference also addressed this topic. Many of KPHA members at the state level are working hard to make sure Kansas health departments are ready to begin applying for accreditation on or after 2012.

"New partnerships" are becoming more critical as the dollars continue to be difficult to obtain. More non-traditional partnerships are being forged and organizations are banding together to make scarce resources go further.

"Advocacy" is a never ending necessary function that should be shared by every member of the public health workforce. There have been many health related issues in the Kansas legislative session. Public health advocates have spent long hours at the Capitol talking to their legislators. Overall, it was a pretty good legislative year in Kansas for public health.

So where does KPHA fit in all this you ask? KPHA has attended meetings regarding Health Reform to see how its organization can best work for its membership and looking at new funding streams to help support projects that will benefit its membership and looking at ways to forge new partnerships to most effectively utilize current and future resources. The organization is there to assist members and/or sister organizations however can be most useful in regards to accreditation.

KPHA President and President Elect have joint conference calls with KALHD (Kansas Association of Local Health Departments) and KEHA (Kansas Environmental Health Association) President and President Elect on an every other month basis. The three organizations are discussing joint projects that can be worked on together.

One of KPHA's first projects is a statewide public health message. Each month a public health message will be issued jointly by the three organizations. Additionally, KPHA is advocating for the public health legislative issues as identified by our membership and leadership at both the state and federal level. Many KPHA members testified before legislative committees and spent time communicating with their state legislators this session. We had a very successful Public Health Day at the Capitol providing healthy snacks and education to all 165 legislators. The organization's leadership is learning a new advocacy software called Convio – watch for more information to come.

Don't be left out of KPHA's membership activities including planning activities for the Fall Conference which will be held at the Capital Plaza in Topeka. Registration will begin Jun. 1 at www.kpha.us. Watch for more information on speakers and breakouts coming soon. Another project KPHA is in the process of developing are webinars to help educate the public health community on ever changing and important issues. Join or renew your membership with KPHA to not miss out on any of these or other activities the organization has planned for this year. Click the KPHA logo to join now!

FULL MOON IN JUNE RUN

*submitted by Lisa Wineinger, Administrator
Greeley County Health Department*



It's not that kind of moon, as clothing is required. Join the citizens of Greeley County on Saturday, Jun. 5, for the second annual Almost Full Moon in June Run, a night event to be run in the country. This race promises the best of cross country running, all by the light of the (almost) full Jun. moon.

- Family 2-mile Run/Walk at 8 p.m. MT
- 5K/10K at 9 p.m. MT

Registration forms can be downloaded at <http://www.greeleycounty.org> or call Greeley County Recreation at (620) 376-2040 for more information. This is a project of Greeley County Schools and the Coordinated School Health Program, Greeley County Health Department, Greeley County EMS and Fire, Greeley County Recreation, Greeley County Sheriff's Department, Greeley County Community Development, Jule's Burger Bar, and the Tribune Star Theater.

PEDIATRIC INFECTIOUS DISEASE CONFERENCE

submitted by the Children's Hospital, Denver, CO



The 28th Annual Conference on Pediatric Infectious Diseases to be held at Vail Plaza Hotel from Sun., Aug. 1 – Fri., Aug. 6, in Vail, CO. This conference presents topics of interest to pediatricians, family practice and infectious diseases physicians, and other health professionals. Speakers cover the most recent information on diagnosis, management and prevention of infections in pediatrics. Discussion of controversial issues and questions follow each presentation. This conference is designed

to promote information interchange, therefore, registration is limited.

For more information about the conference and registration click the image above.

News and Updates

Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals



The Public Health Foundation (PHF) has presented a set of skills desirable for the broad practice of public health that reflect the characteristics that staff of public health organizations (collectively) may want to possess as they work to protect and promote health in the community. The Core Competencies are designed to serve as a starting point for academic and practice organizations to understand, assess, and meet training and workforce needs. To view more on the Core Competencies click the PHF logo above.

Grants and Funding



The National Library of Medicine (NLM) solicits resource grant applications for projects that will bring useful, usable health information to health disparity populations and the health care providers who care for those populations. The application deadline is Jul. 14. Click the NLM logo to view more information.

Taking Care of Myself: A Guide for When I Leave the Hospital



The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has provided a guide for patients to help them care for themselves when they leave the hospital. This easy-to-read guide can be used by both hospital staff and patients during the discharge process. The guide also provides a way for patients to track their medication schedules, upcoming medical appointments, and important phone numbers.

Database of Promoting Health Effectiveness Reviews



The Evidence for Policy and Practice Information (EPPI) is part of the Social Science Research Unit at the Institute of Education, University of London. They have been at the forefront of carrying out systematic reviews and developing review methods in social science and public policy. The database of promoting health effectiveness reviews (DoPHER) is unique in its focuses on coverage of systematic and non-systematic reviews of effectiveness in health promotion and public health worldwide. This register currently contains details of over 2,500 reviews of health promotion and public health effectiveness. To view this register, click the EPPI logo above.

Food Companies' Marketing Strategies Don't Protect Kids



The Nation's Health, an on-line newsletter by the American Public Health Association reveals that most food and entertainment companies have no protections in place for marketing unhealthy products to children. The study, released by the Center for Science in the Public Interest, graded 128 food and entertainment companies' policies for peddling sugary

treats, cereals, snacks and other unhealthy foods to children. About 75 percent of the companies brought home failing grades for having weak policies or no policies whatsoever. To review the article, click on the Nation's Health logo above.

Better Care for Newborns Crucial For Millennium Development Goal on Child Deaths



A news release from the World Health Organization (WHO) reports that the "World Health Statistics 2010" shows that globally about 40 percent of deaths in children less than five years of age occur in the first month of life. This report on improving newborn care in the first month of life is essential for reducing child deaths in developing countries, according to a global update on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). To review this report, click the WHO logo above.

JOB OPENINGS

Sedgwick County Health Department

The Sedgwick County Health Department is taking applications for the following position:

- Part-time Medical Reserve Corp Coordinator [20006375051910](http://www.sedgwickcounty.org/jobs/20006375051910)

Click on the job number to view details. For more information click the Sedgwick Seal on the right, or contact Jeff Goetzinger, Human Resource Assistant, Sedgwick County Health Department at (316) 660-7333.



Johnson County Health Department

The Johnson County Health Department is taking applications for the following positions:

- Case Manager - Family Focus
- Employment Coach

Click on the Johnson County Logo to view position details.



KDHE

KDHE is accepting applications for a Public Health Nurse II position in the Bureau of Family Health, Nutrition and WIC Services. Position will manage the breastfeeding peer counselor program. Responsible for managing and planning long-range expansion of the program to all WIC agencies; conducting onsite visits to all programs annually assessing compliance and providing technical support to counselors and supervisors. Minimum Requirements: RN, IBCLC (International Board of Certified Lactation Consultants) or eligible for certification at time of hire. Search for more information at <http://jobs.ks.gov> position #K0210398



JUNE 2010 PUBLIC HEALTH RESOURCE TOOL KIT

Data:

Primary Care Underserved Areas: <http://www.kdheks.gov/olrh/download/PCUARpt.pdf>

New Americans in the Sunflower State –

http://www.dhe.state.ks.us:8080/trainlive/Brochures/New_Americans_in_the_Sunflower_State_2010.pdf

Demographic Trends for State Policymakers -

<http://www.dhe.state.ks.us:8080/trainlive/Brochures/DemographicTrendsforStatePolicymakersBookoftheStates-EditedVersion.pdf>

The New Future of the World –

<http://www.dhe.state.ks.us:8080/trainlive/Brochures/TheNewFutureoftheWorld3-ConvergeMagazine-Spring2007.pdf>

Programs:

Kansas Farmworker Program - <http://www.kdheks.gov/olrh/FWOverview.htm>

The purpose of the Kansas Statewide Farmworker Health Program is to assure access to primary health care services for low-income and medically underserved migratory and seasonal farmworkers (MSFW) and for persons eligible for services essential to the diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis.

The **Kansas Rural Health Information Service (KRHIS)** provides up-to-the-minute updates on news in the Bureau of Local and Rural Health and on rural health issues affecting Kansas and the nation. Registration is free and open to anyone. <http://www.kdheks.gov/olrh/KRHIS.htm>

The **Kansas Primary Care Office** is to assure that vulnerable, low-income, uninsured or otherwise underserved Kansas residents receive adequate access to affordable primary health care services. http://www.kdheks.gov/olrh/pc_overview.htm

Educational Offerings:

KS-TRAIN Courses can be found at <http://ks.train.org>

[Packaging & Shipping of Category A & Category B Infectious Substances: Inclusive of Evidence Control Measures, Web-based \(1022102\)](#) This 3 hour online course will be for individuals responsible for packaging and shipping Category A and Category B Infectious substances to the Kansas Department of Health an Environment Division of Laboratories.

[Child Care Professional Development Campaign- Hays \(1021803\)](#)

Scheduled this summer across the state are 12 professional development campaigns for child care providers. On KS-TRAIN go to Course Search, Browse Kansas, alpha order by "C" to view conference locations that are now open for registration (Hays, Colby, Hutchinson, Concordia, Kansas City, KS).

[Bright Smiles for Kansas Kids \(Rev. 8-08\) \(1013066\)](#)

The Kansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics is the sponsor of this online course. At the conclusion of this educational offering learners will be able to define early childhood caries (ECC), discuss the etiology and consequences and risks for developing ECC, recognize EDD in its various stages, implement prevention of ECC, perform a knee-to knee oral screening examination, discuss the use of fluoride varnish in pediatric patients and discuss common developmental issues and oral pathology in children. Free 1.2 hours of nursing continuing education credit is available.

[Basic Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication for Public Health Workers \(1022361\)](#) This course is intended to give public health agency staff at the local level essential knowledge and tools to communicate effectively with the public, media, and other stakeholders during a public health emergency. Topics include: Impact of health risk communication on a community, understanding your audience, selecting channels of communication, dealing with elected officials and the media, and preparing a press briefing.

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