



Healthier *together*

Announcing Healthy Polk 2010

Celebrating the Accomplishments of Healthy Polk 2000

www.healthypolk.org

Healthy Polk: Looking After the Health of the Individual *and* the Community



Public health is primarily focused on preventing disease, disability and premature death in the community. Clinical medicine is focused on the health of the individual. The Healthy Polk initiative has proved to be the perfect means of bringing these two forces together. In March of 1995, the Polk County Board of Supervisors created the Polk County Health Planning Committee to combine the expertise of our public health and individual health leaders to create a plan for improving health and quality of life. That plan, called Healthy Polk 2000, was a resounding success with nearly 80 percent of the 297 goals and action steps completed.

The success of Healthy Polk 2000 was a major factor in my decision to come to Polk County. As the Director of Public Health in our community I am aware of the need for collaboration and cooperation among professionals, health and human service agencies, and individuals. I firmly believe that public health cannot exist in isolation. We've always had to have the pulse of the community to be successful. And that's exactly what we've got with Healthy Polk.

As Healthy Polk 2000 evolves into Healthy Polk 2010, it is important to review the achievements of the past, and look to the future. The Healthy Polk 2010 Plan was carefully conceived by a group of caring individuals dedicated to improving lives. Please take a few moments to review the Plan and consider becoming involved with this very important initiative.

Carolyn L. Beverly, MD, MPH

Director, Polk County Department of Public Health

from the Chair



*“It's been hard work
to get to this point,
but we're a better
community for
having done this
—and this is just
the beginning!”*

— Susan B. Klein
Healthy Polk Chair



Toward a Healthier Polk County

This is an exciting time to live in Polk County, especially if you care, as I do, about your health and quality of life.

At this moment in time we are in the process of tallying up the outcomes of Healthy Polk 2000—an initiative begun in 1995 to measurably improve our community’s health status by utilizing community participation as a key leverage point. And, we are also launching the next step—Healthy Polk 2010—which we expect to take us to even greater levels of accomplishment.

In the following pages you will see an announcement of the priorities and goals of Healthy Polk 2010, a report on Healthy Polk 2000 and information on how you can get involved—either as an organization or an individual.

There is something special going on in Polk County. I know from my counterparts around the country, who are working to make their own communities healthier, that we have something wonderful here. The core values of our community—including neighborliness, a culture of dialogue, and support for education and learning—give us the fortunate opportunity to make a great place even better.

Best wishes for good health,

Becky Miles-Polka, MS, CNM
Past Chair, Healthy Polk
Executive Director of Healthy Communities
Methodist, Lutheran and Blank Children’s Hospitals

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A healthy community is “One that is safe with affordable housing and accessible transportation systems, work for all who want to work, a healthy and safe environment with a sustainable ecosystem, and offers access to health care services which focus on prevention and staying healthy.”

— The World Health Organization

Announcing Healthy Polk 2010



“I would like to see Healthy Polk lay out the broad health policy agenda that drives what we do in the health department.”

— Teree Caldwell-Johnson
Polk County Manager

*our*MISSION

Healthy Polk 2010 is a movement of individuals and community organizations with a mission to improve health status, longevity and quality of life for persons of all age groups, socioeconomic levels and ethnic backgrounds living in Polk County, Iowa. This mission will be accomplished by providing greater access to health promotion information, appropriate health protection and disease prevention services, and healthier physical and social environments.

Healthy Polk 2010

Healthy Polk 2010 is a hybrid of two important frameworks for improving health: the Healthy People approach, which is the national health agenda of the US Department of Health and Human Services; and the Healthy Community concept, which views individual health as an outcome of a healthy built and natural environment. By combining these two approaches, Healthy Polk is pioneering how community resources can be leveraged to make measurable progress towards improved health and quality of life.

The work of Healthy Polk 2010 is organized into six “Trend-Bender” areas, which are described on the next few pages. A Trend-Bender is an issue that, if addressed effectively, could significantly improve health and quality of life. Each Trend-Bender includes specific, measurable goals. For example, one of the goals of the Access to Care Trend-Bender area is to increase the number of eligible children signed up for the HAWK-I program to 85% by the year 2005. One of the goals in the Substance Abuse Trend-Bender area is to decrease the percentage of 11th grade students reporting first-time use of substances at age 14 or under.

“The identification of Trend-Benders,” says Healthy Polk Chair Susan B. Klein, “is meant to get us focused so that we can get outcomes and measure our progress. The capacity-building work we’ve done in the last few years has set us up to really get some things done.”

With Healthy Polk’s previous track record, the people and organizations that have been participating are getting to the point where they have a shared vision of where the community needs to move. “This allows our organizational participants to move beyond partnerships and into a compact with each other,” says Klein.



“There is a great potential for us to benefit our community if we meet the goals and objectives of Healthy Polk 2010.”

— Annette Bair
Vice President
Mission and Ethics
Mercy Medical Center

Healthy Polk is based on these values:

- We are a community committed to strengthening families.
- Our children are our future and we will nurture and prepare them for learning and living.
- We are a community of life-long learners. We place high value on education and will provide opportunities for learning throughout our lifespan.
- We are committed to a high quality, well-coordinated, holistic, comprehensive community health care system, which is accessible to all.
- Our neighborhoods will be safe and thriving.
- Our diversity is recognized as a source of strength.
- Our health, religion, education, business, government, law enforcement and human service systems are interconnected and will work together to improve the health and quality of life in our community.
- We are committed to strengthening social connections between individuals and communities.

What is a Healthy Community?

There are as many answers to this question as there are communities. The key is that the definition needs to make sense for the residents of a community, based on their resources, needs and values. “Health” in this context refers not just to the absence of disease, but to all the quality of life factors that contribute to healthy people in healthy communities. Here is the definition of the Polk County Health Department:

“A healthy community is continually creating and improving those physical and social environments and expanding those community resources which enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and in developing to their maximum potential.”

What is Healthy People 2010?

Healthy People 2010 is a set of health objectives for the nation to achieve over the first decade of the new century.

Healthy People 2010 builds on initiatives pursued over the past two decades — The 1979 Surgeon General’s Report, *Healthy People*, and *Healthy People 2000: National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives*. Like its predecessors, *Healthy People 2010* was developed through a broad consultation process, built on the best scientific knowledge and designed to measure programs over time.

our VISION

Healthy Polk 2010 is committed to creating a caring community dedicated to improving the health and well-being of Polk County’s diverse population.

Healthy Iowans 2010: A State Level Approach in Support of Local Initiatives

Healthy Iowans 2010 is the Iowa Department of Public Health’s state-level adaptation of the Healthy People concept. The Iowa plan closely tracks the national one, and includes a few additions, such as the identification of problem gambling as a health issue. The statewide effort is focused on supporting the development of plans at the local level, including Healthy Polk.
www.idph.state.ia.us

Announcing Healthy Polk 2010



“I think it is great when the community takes an active role in influencing policymakers. The way to do it is with data, demonstrating that large numbers of people are involved, and by having trustworthy leaders. This can be very effective.”

— Gene Phillips
Polk County Chairman
Board of Supervisors

Did you know...

- **That only 20% of eligible children are enrolled for HAWK-I, the state’s health insurance program for kids?**
Healthy Polk Action Item: Increase enrollment to 85% by 2005.
- **That African American infants die at a much higher rate than white children?**
Healthy Polk Action Item: Reduce African American Infant Mortality in Polk County by 5% by 2005.
- **That 38% of Polk County youth admitted to having five or more drinks in a 30 day period?**
Healthy Polk Action Item: Decrease the percentage of 11th grade students reporting first time use of substances at age 14 and under by 6% by 2008.

Where did the Trend-Benders come from?

Community Dialogues set the Agenda

A healthy community requires broad community involvement. To ensure that Polk County residents were fully involved in setting the agenda for 2010, in 1999 and 2000 over 650 people used the Healthy Community Agenda Dialogue Guide as a way to build consensus about how to improve health and quality of life.

Many different groups sponsored dialogues. Churches and other religious organizations, the existing work groups, college students and homeless groups all took part. People of all ages reflecting the racial and ethnic diversity of our community (including Caucasians, Hispanics, Asians and African Americans) were involved.

These dialogues provided a rare opportunity for members of the community to engage one another about their role in improving health and quality of life. “The notion of learning and listening to each other,” says Susan B. Klein, “really came out in these dialogues. They really gave everyone a chance to hear from everyone else. This was an important step to getting to a healthier community. We’re not there yet, but this is a work in progress.”

The results of these dialogues show that the community believes the top issues to be addressed in order to improve health and quality of life in the community are access to health care, substance abuse, mental health and healthy weight.

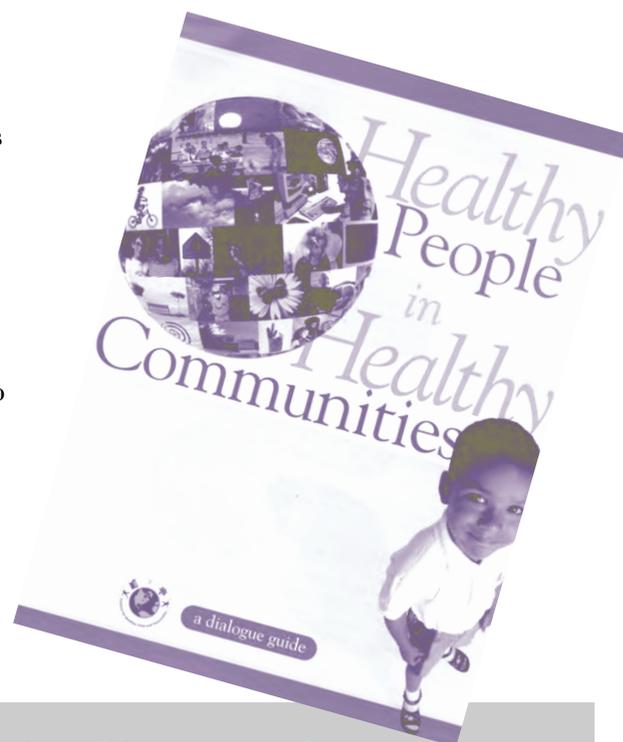
More detailed results from these dialogues can be found on www.healthypolk.org. Further information on the Healthy Community Dialogue Guide can be found at www.healthycommunities.org.

Getting to outcomes Trend-Benders, Workgroups and Indicators

Healthy Polk 2010 is organized around six “Trend-Bender” areas. Trend-Benders are strategic themes that, if addressed successfully, can help a community break an unhealthy cycle in order to create a significant impact on health and quality of life.

The six Trend-Benders for Healthy Polk 2010 are: Access to Care, Substance Abuse, Mental Health, Healthy Weight, Social Engagement, and Spirituality and Health. The first four are aimed at an identified health issue. The last two cut across these and several other health and quality of life issues. The Healthy Polk approach recognizes that these issues are all interrelated.

Each of the Trend-Benders is supported by workgroups that are charged with making progress on specific indicators. The next three pages identify the workgroups and the indicators that will help measure progress. To see the current status of an indicator, go to www.healthypolk.org.



What is an indicator?

Indicators are measurements (data) that can be used to track progress toward a goal. They can tell you how far you’ve come and how much further there is to go.

1. Access to Care

The Vulnerable Populations Study (December, 1998) issued by Healthy Polk 2000 sought to identify primary healthcare concerns of specific populations in Polk County. Hispanic and African American populations were identified by this study as being at the highest risk of not having healthcare needs addressed and lacking access to health care.

Indicators and Outcomes

ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH SERVICES

Children Without Health Care Coverage

- Increase the number of eligible children signed up for the HAWK-I program to 85% by the year 2005 and 95% by 2010. (According to July 1, 2001 monthly enrollment reports filed with MAXIMUS, the state's third party processor for HAWK-I, 19% of eligible children in Polk County were enrolled in HAWK-I.)

Immunizations

- Achieve or maintain immunization levels of at least 90% among children 19-35 months of age by 2010. (In 1998, 91% of children in Polk County were immunized by age two with the basic series. Source: Iowa Health Indicators Tracking System, or IHITS.)

FAMILY PLANNING/ MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Maternal and Child Health

- Decrease infant mortality in Polk County to less than 5 per 1,000 live births by the year 2010 with particular attention devoted to reducing disparities related to race, income, age and location. (The infant mortality rate in Polk County is 6.6 per 1,000 live births. Source: Iowa Vital Statistics, 1999.)
- Educate women about the dangers and risks of using alcohol and/or other drugs during pregnancy and the perinatal period.
- Develop an instrument and method to determine the number of women who receive a complete prenatal physical in the first trimester.

Family Planning

- Identify gaps in services or unmet needs of Polk County males on pregnancy, prevention and family planning issues by 2002.
- Using information compiled relative to service gaps, define and set goals for increasing involvement of Polk County males in pregnancy prevention and family planning by 2003.

BREASTFEEDING

Breastfeeding Initiation and Duration

- Increase the number of mothers who initiate breastfeeding to 70% by the year 2005, and 75% by the year 2010. (The current rate in Polk County is 67.15%. Source: Iowa Metabolic Screening Profile, First Quarter.)
- Increase the number of mothers who breastfeed their infants for 6 months to 30% by the year 2005, and to 35% by the year 2010. (The current statewide rate is 24.8%. Source: 1999 Mothers Survey, Ross Products Division, Abbott Laboratories)
- Increase the number of mothers who breastfeed their infants for the first year to 15% by 2010. (Primary data collection is needed.)

ORAL HEALTH

- Within Polk County schools with 25% or more children eligible for the free/reduced lunch program, increase to 70% the proportion of children who have had a dental exam with screening and referral for treatment if indicated by 2005. (In FY 99/00, 9497 (60%) of 15,900 children had a dental screening and referral for treatment if indicated. This is 15% of the total children attending Polk County schools. Source: Des Moines Health Center's School Smiles Program.)
- Within Polk County schools with 25% or more of children eligible for the free/reduced lunch program, increase to at least 46% the proportion of children who have received protective sealants on permanent molar teeth by 2005. (In FY 99/00 where 25% of the children were eligible for the free/reduced lunch program, 46% (1,978 of 4,302) of children received dental sealants. Source: Des Moines Health Center's School Smiles Program.)
- Within Polk County schools with 50% or more of the children eligible for the free/reduced lunch program, increase to at least 70% the proportion of children who have received protective dental sealants on permanent molar teeth by 2005. (In FY 99/00 the after school-based dental sealant program reported an overall average proportion of children with dental sealants of 69%. Source: Des Moines Health Center's School Smiles Program.)

MINORITY HEALTH

- Reduce African American infant mortality in Polk County by 5% by 2005. (In 1998, the Black infant mortality rate in Polk County was 27.8 per 1,000 live births. Source: IHITS.)

- Increase enrollment of minority children in HAWK-I by 5% by 2005 and advocate against disenrollment of minority children in HAWK-I through advocacy, lobbying and oversight of program administrators. (The total number of children eligible to be enrolled in Polk County is 5,556. Blacks comprise 5.2% and Hispanics are 3.5% of the total population in Polk County. Based on a county population of 364,672, approximately 288 Black and 194 Hispanic children are eligible to be enrolled. According to July 1, 2001 monthly enrollment reports filed with MAXIMUS, 15% of eligible Black children and 39% of eligible Hispanic children in Polk County were enrolled in HAWK-I.)
- By December 2002, develop a comprehensive health screening model and options for additional health education and referral systems which can be used as a plan to achieve comprehensive medical care.
- Develop and identify the number of cases of diabetes in the Latino and African American community in Polk County by 2005. Create an awareness campaign that heightens screening and facilitates health monitoring and healthy living practices.
- By 2005, identify the number of Asian American women who have breast cancer, monitor treatment choices, identify barriers to care, and identify culturally specific resources and educational materials.

POLK COUNTY COALITION ON AGING

Transportation

- Increase the number of older adults who utilize specialized public transportation by 10% by the year 2005. (In FY 00/01, Polk County provided transportation subsidies to 3,907 individuals. Source: Polk County Senior Services. In 1999, there were 70,849 individuals aged 55 and older in Polk County. Source: IHITS 1999.)
- Increase awareness of existing transportation systems among persons 60 and older and their families and among persons who are disabled by at least 5% by 2002. (Baseline to be developed.)

Other Priorities

Unintentional Injuries

- Expand the Safety Town program into three additional schools. (Safety Town is currently in two schools.)
- Increase the knowledge base of participants in Safety Town programs. (Develop pre- and post- tests.)

HIV/STD

- Raise public awareness of HIV/STD risk behavior, treatment opportunities and available resources to infected individuals in Polk County.
- Increase awareness of and access to services within minority communities in Polk County.

*Other Priorities
continued in right column*



“The great thing about Healthy Polk is that it is pushing the envelope for healthcare providers to see health in a broader way and not just from a clinical perspective.”

— Ginny Hancock
Former Executive Director,
Human Services Planning
Alliance

2. Substance Abuse

Data indicate substance abuse is a problem, particularly for young people, in Polk County. (Data from the Iowa Youth Survey administered in September 1999 indicate that 47% of Polk County's 11th graders admitted to having had one drink in the 30 days prior to the survey and 58% admitted to having had 5 or more drinks in a row during the same time period; 44% admitted to having smoked marijuana and 21% admitted to having smoked marijuana in the 30 days prior to the survey; 42% admitted to having smoked cigarettes while 51% of the respondents admitted to having smoked in the past 30 days.)

Indicators and Outcomes

Under-Age Use and Abuse

- Decrease the percentage of 11th grade students reporting first time use of substances at age 14 and under by 6% by 2008. (Current first time use rates are: tobacco- 41%; alcohol- 49%; marijuana- 29%; inhalants- 9%. Source: Iowa Youth Survey, 1999.)
- Decrease the number of young male adults involved in binge drinking by 5% by 2010. (The 1995 statewide rate for males aged 18-24 was 55.9%. Source: Iowa Department of Public Health.)
- Increase by 10% the number of youth who remain substance-free for one year after completing treatment programs (In 2000, 45.7% of adults and adolescents in Iowa reported no use six months after their discharge from treatment. This is based on randomly contacting 5% of adults year-round, 100% of adolescents from January-April 2000 and 10% of adolescents from May-December 2000, six months after their discharge from treatment. Source: Iowa Department of Public Health.)
- Create a unified system to engage all stakeholders and to coordinate effective use of community resources.

Family/Domestic Violence

- Decrease the gap between the number of domestic violence reports and the number of incidents by 1% per year by 2010. (In FY 1995-96, 54% of the number of domestic violence incidents (19,951) were reported (6,788). Source: Reports from Iowa Department of Public Safety; Incidents reported by the Crime Victim Assistance Division)
- Decrease the number of founded cases of child abuse by 12% to 1,356 by 2010. (There were 1,518 founded cases of child abuse in 1998. Source: Prevent Child Abuse Iowa)

3. Mental Health

Mental illness imposes a substantial burden on the health and well-being of the individuals in Polk County as well as the community as a whole. When a sample of Polk County residents was asked about mental health during the 1995 Behavioral Risk Survey, individuals reported their mental health as “not good” an average of 2.5 days each month. Individuals reported feeling “worried, tense or anxious” 5.2 days each month, and reported feeling “sad, blue or depressed” a mean of 2.8 days each month.

Indicators and Outcomes

Access to Mental Health Services

- Increase the percentage of individuals who access mental health services to 20% by the year 2005. (According to the 1999 Annual Report, Polk County Health Services, 2% (6,335) of Polk County citizens received mental health, mental retardation or developmental disability services which were paid in whole or in part with Polk County Funds.)
- Decrease fragmentation of mental health services by creating a collaboration of providers in the community to provide care across the continuum.
- Increase public awareness of and education on mental health issues.
- Advocate for elimination of the disparity between reimbursement of mental health and medical care services.

4. Healthy Weight

Weight reduction programs have been studied intensively and without exception have not produced lasting healthy weights. Therefore, prevention of overweight status should be of primary importance.

Indicators and Outcomes

Sedentary Living

- Convene a discussion with community leaders on the importance of addressing the environmental issues that both encourage and discourage physical activity in Polk County by September 2001.
- Cooperate with the Polk County Trail Board to document current trail usage by August 2001.
- Create a comprehensive map promoting utilization of the existing system of bike and walking routes and trails in Polk County by May 2002.

5. Social Engagement

Social engagement greatly affects all aspects of health, specifically in terms of access to care, motivation to get care, and motivation to live a healthier lifestyle. Engagement can be defined as having adequate transportation, an interest in participation, the means to reach out socially, knowing neighbors, the ability to bridge ethnic status (including language barriers) and economic status, and having social skills.

Indicators and Outcomes

Social Support Within the Community

- Identify the percentage of individuals who report a source of social support.
- Encourage additional support of youth and their involvement in community.

- Develop a campaign targeted at sedentary residents that urges trail system and route use by September 2005.
- Engage local businesses in a process to evaluate how they support physical activity in the community by 2005.
- Distribute “100 Ways to Encourage Physical Activity in Our Community” by 2001.
- Engage school systems in Polk County to increase their commitment to physical activity at all grade levels by 2005.

Overweight Population

- Decrease the rate of unhealthy weight gain among adult Polk County residents and prevent a further rise in the obesity rate by 2010 (Community survey to be developed.)
- Replicate Cardiovision 2020 (Rochester, MN) community action initiative to promote healthy lifestyles by 2002.

Nutrition

- Encourage food outlets (retail, convenience, vending) to promote fruits and vegetables as a choice by 2002.

Diabetes

- Increase the percentage of people with abnormal test results from a new/initial diabetes screening who consult a physician. (In the Des Moines 50517 Diabetes project, 75% of those with abnormal results who had not been previously diagnosed as diabetic consulted a physician.)

6. Spirituality of Health

Defining health as more than the absence of disease allows for a natural partnership within the community reflecting spiritual and religious diversity. Studies demonstrate the beneficial effects of faith on a wide variety of health outcomes, such as well-being (life satisfaction, parenting, and self-esteem), coping (with medical illness, life stresses and care giving), mental illness (depression and anxiety), and healthy behavior (sexual activity, health care utilization, and drug use). The framework for community well-being is strengthened by the faith community and its relationship with Healthy Polk 2010.

Indicators and Outcomes

Faith and Health Partnerships

- Increase the number of congregations with health committees from 34 to 50 by December 31, 2001.
- Identify 25 health committees willing to participate in Healthy Polk 2010 initiatives.
- Develop ongoing learning events for religious leadership regarding medical issues (e.g., annual cardiac residency program for clergy initiated in 2001).
- Design and implement an educational program providing diabetes resources within participating faith communities by December 31, 2002.

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Lead Coalition

- Increase public awareness of the dangers of lead poisoning.
- Promote screening for lead poisoning.
- Procure additional funding for the lead program.
- Obtain additional funding for home improvements.

Cancer Coalition

- Educate women aged 40 and older about the importance of screening for breast cancer.
- Educate women about the risk factors for breast cancer and good breast health.
- Increase the number of women who have annual mammograms. (According to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) 2001 Final Report, “greater than 90% of women surveyed reported they have had a clinical breast examination by a physician.”)
- Educate adults over the age of 50 about the importance of early detection of colorectal cancer.
- Educate adults about the risk factors of colorectal cancer and about good nutrition.
- Increase the number of people over the age of 50 who get screened for colorectal cancer. (According to the BRFSS 2001 Final Report, “Approximately 35.2 percent of respondents reported ever having a sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy screening test... Although only 11.1 percent of people between the ages of 35 and 44 reported ever having this test, over 50 percent of those 65 and older reported ever having it.”)
- Educate all men about the risk factors for prostate cancer.
- Educate health care professionals about screening guidelines offering the best chance of early detection.

Celebrating the Accomplishments



“I look out for the elderly—I try to pitch in and help out with what they need, like shoveling snow or delivering groceries.”

— Lupe Muñoz



“I think we gave three pretty good citizens to the world—our children!”

— Fran Muñoz
on her contribution to making a healthy community

Dear Healthy Polk 2010 Participants,
Congratulations on the start of an exciting new campaign.

We at Polk County Medical Society look forward to working with you to continue to improve the health of our community. As health care professionals, we know that Healthy Polk makes our jobs easier. It is much more effective to keep someone healthy than to help them get better after getting sick or being injured.

It's impressive to see the outcomes of Healthy Polk 2000. And, we look forward to working together on the goals for 2010.

Good Luck to you!

Carole A. Frier, DO
President

Healthy Polk 2000: A Solid Foundation

Healthy Polk 2000 was the predecessor to Healthy Polk 2010. It got underway in 1993 when the Board of Supervisors created the Polk County Health Planning Committee. This action followed the release of Healthy Iowans 2000, a publication patterned on the national Healthy People report. Over the next three years this Committee undertook a process to produce a health plan with achievable goals and objectives which were then published in *Healthy Polk 2000: Health Promotion, Disease Prevention, Health Protection, Goals and Action Steps*.

Unlike many plans, however, this one did not just sit on a shelf. The plan was created in consultation with more than 200 residents during five town meetings across the county. In addition, over 125 organizations and institutions joined. Using this collaborative approach, the early involvement of so many people and organizations meant that once the plan was produced the personal and institutional buy-in needed to implement it would already be available.

The plan also utilized data to ensure that planning was informed by knowledge. Information from the Iowa Health Indica-

tor Tracking System and a behavioral risk study commissioned specifically for this plan formed the foundation for the effort.

Throughout the plan, there is a recognition that health is more than the absence of disease. In the section on Educational and Community-Based Programs, the report says, “The health status of a community is the product of a multiplicity of factors, including education, socioeconomic status, access to health care, lifestyle habits and personal values, to name just a few. The most significant of all of these is education.”

As the accomplishments of the next three pages demonstrate, the nineteen Healthy Polk 2000 workgroups that carried out the plan have met with a degree of success that could only happen with an ideal mixture of good, relevant information and people and organizations willing to step up to the plate and take action on that data.

This process has set an ideal stage for how partnerships at every level can lead to implementation of changes to make Polk County, and all of its communities, an even healthier, even more special place to live. Healthy Polk is “Partnering for a Healthy Community.”

Accomplishments of Healthy Polk 2000

Accomplishments of the Work Groups

Energetic volunteers and committed organizations provide a great start towards improving health and quality of life, but it is even more impressive when there are results. Since the Health Improvement Plan was developed in 1995 and 1996, the workgroups of Healthy Polk 2000 have made major contributions toward meeting the Plan's goals and actions steps. The nineteen Healthy Polk 2000 workgroups, with more than 300 volunteers, have completed over 227 action steps. Here is a list of what has been accomplished so far.

Alcohol and Other Drugs Work Group

Neila Seaman, Facilitator

- Conducted intensive training for early childhood workers for children at risk
- Sponsored alcohol free events during the Drake Relays
- Collaborated with the City of Des Moines to implement substance abuse prevention in the Enterprise Community
- Collaborated with the Red Cross to provide HIV/AIDS training
- Created an interagency consortium of substance abuse treatment providers

Cancer Work Group

Colleen Lemkuil, Facilitator

- Decreased the incidence of cancer among Polk County women through education, screening, early detection and treatment
- Collaborated with other agencies to bring the play "For Our Daughters" to central Iowa
- Annual sponsor of the Race for the Cure
- Increased public awareness of the importance of using sunscreen
- Coordinated educational programs in schools and business on early detection and treatment of cancer
- Provided free prostate cancer screening at area facilities



"We have a better dialogue now at the county level on health issues. It has really changed."

— Yvonne Welshhons
Retired Coordinator
Central Place Family
Resource Center,
Runnels

Cardiovascular Coalition

Kathy Kunath, Facilitator

- Created a multi-organizational multi-disciplinary coalition to address the cardiovascular needs of Polk County residents
- Conducted blood pressure and stroke screening at congregate meal sites
- Conducted education on the early warning signals of stroke
- Distributed "Search Your Heart" kits to area churches
- Created a Fitness Resources Directory
- Distributed "Heart Power" kits to area grade schools
- Compiled information regarding smoking cessation programs, printing and distributing 20,000 brochures
- Created a Guide to Managing Stress

Clinical Preventive Services Work Group

Tony Bassett, Facilitator

- Founded a Minority Health Coalition
- Conducted a study of the vulnerable populations in Polk County, and published results
- Established a Preventive Services Task Force
- Distributed a guide to free and reduced-cost clinical services

Diabetes and Chronic Disabling Conditions

Dr. William Jagiello, Facilitator

- Obtained a grant from the Wellmark Foundation to do diabetes screening
- Established a Health Improvement Task Force
- Obtained a Wellmark grant for treating children with asthma

CASE IN POINT

School Smiles Program

In Polk County, 95% of kindergartners in 2000 went through a dental health screening. State-wide, the figure is only 66%. Why the difference? Much of the credit belongs to the School Smiles Program, a project of the Des Moines Health Center and carried out in partnership with Healthy Polk.

The School Smiles Program takes advantage of many of the strengths of the Healthy Polk approach to creating health and improving quality of life for the entire community. It emphasizes prevention and education. It makes use of partnerships (in this case with the schools) in order to reach people with a health message where it will be effective. And it is making measurable progress towards goals.

According to Mike DeAnda, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Des Moines Health Center, "Good oral health is important to the success of children in school. To prevent tooth decay, we must teach children at an early age the skills necessary to maintain their own oral health. Our partnership with Healthy Polk can have a lasting impact toward improving the oral health of our community."

Celebrating the Accomplishments



“We’re not going to arrest our way out of any problem. That’s why it is important that we maintain communication and collaborate as much as possible with groups like Healthy Polk.”

—Larry Rodgers
Des Moines Police Department



“As youth, we decided to do something about getting an abandoned house cleaned up. We wrote letters, sent emails, and finally the owner took responsibility.”

Desma Carter

Education and Community Based Programs

Daryl Vander Wilt, Facilitator

- Presented The Health Improvement Plan to the community in June, 1996
- Made formal presentations of the Plan to multiple organizations in the community
- Developed a video presentation about Healthy Polk 2000
- Conducted health fairs throughout the community during Public Health Week
- Surveyed employers to determine which offer wellness activities

Environmental Health

Dr. Mary Krieg, Facilitator

- Developed guidelines for response to a bioterrorism, chemical or nuclear event
- Supported implementation of the Safe Drinking Water Act in Polk County
- Supported the reduction of substandard and sealing of abandoned wells in the county
- Encouraged radon testing in homes
- Supported compliance to the Primary Ambient Air Quality Standards and the Clean Air Act
- Continued to support the evaluation of hazardous waste sites
- Working with local governments to decrease the number of abandoned and dilapidated buildings

Family Planning and Maternal Infant Health

Maryann Brekke &

Mary Kay Casey, Facilitators

- Conducted a survey to determine the availability of family planning services in Polk County
- Convened a task force to act on these findings
- Collaborated with Healthy Start to engage clients in the health care system

Food Safety

John Bien, Facilitator

- Maintained a low incidence of salmonella enteritis in Polk County
- Promoted better food handling practices
- Improved pharmaceutical care by increased patient counseling

HIV Infection and Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Pat Breckenridge, Facilitator

- Collaborated with the State Chlamydia Project
- Is working to link computer network reporting of gonorrhea cases
- Decreased the cases of syphilis from 65 in 1996 to 35 in 1997
- Implemented HPV project with Des Moines University
- Encouraged legislative changes on the reporting of HIV
- Collected data on genital herpes

Immunization and Infectious Diseases

Ginny Hancock, Facilitator

- Added private providers to the Iowa State Immunization Information System (ISIS)
- Reduced the number of indigenous cases of vaccine preventable disease in Polk County
- Continued work to reduce the number of infants who acquire Hepatitis B from their mothers
- Working to ensure children in Polk County have completed basic immunizations by age 2
- Provided influenza and pneumococcal vaccine to elderly and high risk populations
- Formed a TB coalition to address this issue
- Participates in immigrant immunization programs
- Ensures appropriate physicians are participating in the vaccine for children program
- Distributed educational material on childhood immunization, county wide

Lead Poisoning

Renee Osberg, Facilitator

- Created a coalition to address lead poisoning in Polk County

Mental Health

Vicki Boelman, Facilitator

- Developed a Guide to Mental Health Providers in Polk County
- Presented a seminar on identifying children and adolescents at risk for suicide and depression
- Collaborates to provide annual depression screening
- Continues to lobby for improved insurance coverage of mental health services

Nutrition and Physical Fitness

Susan Klein, Facilitator

- Developed wellness standards for use in physician offices
- Implemented the Team Nutrition project
- Promotes family recreation at schools and religious sites
- Implemented the 99 in 99 fitness program
- Worksite Wellness Education package developed

Oral Health

Mike DeAnda, Facilitator

- Provides free oral health screening to elementary school-aged children in Polk County
- Provides free dental sealants to Polk County children
- Piloting an oral health care training program in 4 Polk County nursing homes
- Working with area dentists to implement a program to provide free oral health care to adults in need

Survey and Data Systems

Dr. Dean Wright, Facilitator

- Compiled information from the behavioral risk study and the Iowa Health Indicators Tracking System for the Plan
- Distributed data to the Work Groups on an annual basis

Tobacco Work Group

Kathy Kunath, Facilitator

- Promotes legislative changes related to tobacco prevention, especially among Polk County's youth
- Created a survey to work with Polk County health care providers who use tobacco
- Distributing "Get the Facts" program to Polk County schools
- Compiled and printed information regarding the smoking cessation programs in Polk County
- Developed the "Cool Kids and Cool Camels Don't Smoke" campaign
- Collaborates with Tobacco Free Iowa on multiple activities

Unintentional Injuries Work Group

Sheila Lumley, Facilitator

- Conducted the "Safety Town" project for Polk County school children
- Working with senior centers to determine injury prevention educational needs
- Collaborates with The Safe Kids Coalition

Zero Tolerance for Violence Coalition

Scarlett Lunning, Facilitator

- Held a domestic violence conference in conjunction with Mercy Hospital
- Developed "The Healing Path," a guide for surviving domestic abuse
- Met with educators to discuss policies to prevent violence in Polk County schools
- Supported SAVE (Stop All Violence Everywhere) Day
- Promotes October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- Produced a brochure in partnership with the Community Connections Coalition, with 10,000 copies distributed to schools in Polk County
- Developed educational materials on dependent elder abuse

CASE IN POINT

Safety Town

"At the end of Safety Town, every child goes home with a bike helmet, smoke detector (with batteries), and many safety handouts," says Deputy David Knight of the Polk County Sheriff's Office.

Safety Town is a project sponsored by Healthy Polk to educate children on basic safety issues, such as safety on the bus, crossing the street, riding bicycles, dealing with strangers and other topics. It is targeted to reach children entering kindergarten in the Saydel School District. Parents and teachers have noted that kids who have gone through the program are more likely to be safer when crossing streets, less likely to talk to strangers and more likely to tell someone about it when they do.

"Safety Town takes advantage," says Knight, "of the many strengths of the Healthy Polk approach to creating safety and improving the quality of life in the community. We have received great praise from the schools, teachers and parents, and look forward to continuing with this program."



Building on Great Traditions

neigh'bor·li·ness

neigh"bor*li*ness

n: a disposition to be friendly and helpful to neighbors

di·a·logue

diə-lôg', -lôg'

n: an exchange of ideas or opinions

ed·u·ca·tion

ēj'ə-kā'sh ən

n: the knowledge or skill obtained or developed by a learning process

Why does Polk County have one of the best healthy community initiatives in the country? What is it about this place we call home that makes it such a fertile place for positive change? Why have so many national organizations, such as the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the US Coalition for Healthier Cities and

Communities, and Join Together (with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation) identified this place as high-potential?

In the words of one Polk County resident, "We don't have the mountains or the ocean nearby, but what we do have

are traditions that help us identify and focus on what's important." What are these traditions? Different people would have different responses, but three stick out as keys to how Polk County residents continue to make their home a special place: education, neighborliness, and dialogue.

"When we looked for places where a critical mass of people and organizations could be mobilized to improve conditions for families and children in tough neighborhoods, we immediately thought of Des Moines and Polk County. The leadership, policy climate, and track record of community problem-solving place Des Moines in the forefront of cities that are incorporating thoughtful ideas into explicit public policy."

— Douglas W. Nelson
President, Annie E. Casey Foundation



"Through inclusive community-based dialogues and by instituting a unique blend of Healthy Community and Healthy People 2010 frameworks, Healthy Polk has become one of the outstanding healthy community initiatives in America. Healthy Polk 2000 was a great example to other communities, and I'm sure that Healthy Polk 2010 will also serve as an important national benchmark."

—John Kesler
Executive Director, Coalition for Healthier Cities and Communities

"We challenged communities around the country to accept responsibility for ending discrimination in medical insurance and treatment against people with drug and alcohol disease. Des Moines stepped forward with real commitments from leaders in the public and private sectors and a track record of joining together to face real problems and get things done."

—David Rosenblum
Director, Join Together,
which recently awarded
Des Moines a City Partner grant



Participating Organizations

AARP
Aging Resources of Central Iowa
AIDS Project of Central Iowa
Altoona Medical Clinic
Alzheimer's Association - Mid Iowa Chapter
American Cancer Society
American Lung Association
American Heart Association
American Red Cross
Ankeny Community Education
Ankeny Cornerstone Recovery
Ankeny Substance Abuse Program
Apria Health Care Group
Asian American Council of Iowa
Association of Iowa Hospitals
and Health Systems
Blank Children's Hospital
Broadlawns Medical Center
Broadlawns WIC Program
Callahan Middle School
Center for Healthy Communities
Central Iowa Psychological Services
Children and Families of Iowa
Child & Family Policy Center
Communicator Newspaper
Consortium of Iowa Community Colleges
Creative Visions
Des Moines Area La Leche League
Des Moines Area Religious Council
Des Moines Assessor's Office
Des Moines Child & Adolescent Guidance
Des Moines City Council
Des Moines Dental Hygienist's Association
Des Moines District Dental Society
Des Moines Health Center
Des Moines Police Department
Des Moines Public Housing
Des Moines Public Library
Des Moines Public Schools -
Board of Education
Des Moines Public Schools -
Community Education
Des Moines Public Schools - Head Start
Des Moines Public Schools - Health Services
Des Moines Public Schools -
SUCCESS Program
Des Moines University - Osteopathic
Medical Center
Diagnostic and Critical Care Medicine
Division of Adult Children & Family Services
Doris Hicks Pack Institute
Drake University
Drake University - Early Head Start
Drake University - Head Start
Drake University - Department of Nursing
Drake University - Department of
Pharmacy Practice
Dupont Pharmaceuticals
Early Access/Heartland Area
Education Agency
East Des Moines Family Care Clinic
Employee and Family Resources
Enterprise Community
Eyerly-Ball
Family Care Physicians
Family Enrichment Center
Family Planning Council of Iowa
Family Violence Center
Generations Inc.
Grace Lutheran Church
Grandview College
Heart and Hands Health Center
Heartland Area Education Agency 11
Helping Hands Therapy
Infant Children & Family Wellness
Iowa Conference of the
United Church of Christ
Health Care Access Network
Hispanic Educational Resource Center
Home Instead Senior Care
Hopes/Healthy Families
House of Mercy
Human Services Coordinating Board
Human Services Planning Alliance
Hy-Vee
Infant Children and Family Wellness
Iowa Crime Prevention Association
Iowa Dental Hygienist's Association
Iowa Department of Education
Iowa Department of Human Services
Iowa Department of Public Health
Iowa Foundation of Medical Care
Iowa Health System
Iowa Homeless Youth Shelter
Iowa Lutheran Hospital
Iowa Lutheran Hospital/Iowa
Methodist Lactation Services
Iowa Methodist Medical Center
Iowa Paint Manufacturing Company
Iowa State University - Polk County Extension
John R. Grubb YMCA
Johnston High School
Lakeview Center for Senior Health
Latch-On Services
Legal Aid Society
Life Plus Now
Lutheran Social Services
Marshalltown Medical and Surgical
Mercy Clinics, Inc.
Mercy College of Health Sciences
Mercy Hospice
Mercy Medical Center - Des Moines
Mercy Franklin Center
Metropolitan Medical Center
Metro West Learning Academy
Mid-City Vision Coalition
National Association for the
Mentally Ill of Iowa
Newton Medical Services
NHS & Two Rivers Psyc.
Noridian, Inc.
Oakridge Neighborhood Services
Older Adult Service HIS
OSACS
Osco Pharmacy
PACE
Planned Parenthood of Greater Iowa
Polk County Board of Supervisors
Polk County Department of
Community and Family Services
Polk County Health Department
Polk County Health Services
Polk County Manager's Office
Polk County Medical Alliance
Polk County Medical Society
Polk County Senior Services
Polk County Sheriff's Office
Polk County Supplemental Food
Polk County Victims Services
Polk County Youth Services
Powell CDC
Prevent-A-Stroke
Prevention Concepts, Inc.
Principal Financial Group
Proteus
Quad Cities Minority AIDS Project
Quality Management Consultants
Radiology, PC
Southeast Polk School District
Sudanese Case Manager/Refugee Services
Tiny Tot Child Care Center
Tower Family Practice Clinic
Tower Radiology
United Mexican American Community Center
United Way
University of Iowa Hospital and Clinic
Urban Dreams
U.S. Attorney's Office
U. S. Senator Tom Harkin's office
Valley View Village
Veterans Administration Medical Center
Violence Center
Visiting Nurse Services
Wellmark Foundation
Wellness Council of Central Iowa
Westminster House
YMCA of Greater Des Moines
Youth Policy Institute of Iowa
Young Women's Resource Center

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Community Initiatives, Inc.

A history of working together
to create a healthier community.

HEALTHY POLK 2010



Partnering for a healthy community

Healthy Polk 2010

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