

Health Education

Health Education is a division of the Stephenson County Health Department that offers various presentations free of charge. We are located at:

10 West Linden St.
Freeport, IL 61032

You can contact Anna at 815.235.8323 for setting up times for presentations. We look forward to hearing from you!

What is Health?

According to the World Health Organization, “health is the state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” If you simply look up the definition of “health,” you will find some of the following explanations: “freedom from defect or disease”; “general condition of body or mind”; a “toast wishing health or happiness.” No matter where the definitions are coming from, there seems to be a theme running through all of them, and that is that health is a positive force. Health is good; the lack of it is bad. The word “health” implies involvement of the entire individual. When an individual has a high level of health, all dimensions of health function in harmony.

Dimensions of health:

Physical Health is the physical condition of the body. Some ways it can be measured include: blood pressure, heart rate, body composition, flexibility, strength, and endurance. Physical health serves as a foundation for achieving wellness in the other dimensions of health.

Emotional Health is most often defined as the ability to: feel and express a full range of human emotions; give and receive love; achieve a sense of fulfillment and purpose in life; develop strong levels of personal commitment and coping skills; and be able to face challenges. Emotions can affect our physical health.

Social Health refers to the ability to perform the expectation of our roles effectively, comfortably, and with delight. What is important to social health is need for love, intimacy, safety, companionship, cooperation, and acceptance.

Mental (or Intellectual) Health does not just include the process of reasoning, evaluation, humor, curiosity, creativity, and memory. It also includes the ability to make sound decisions and to think critically. Emotional health and mental health intertwine, as emotions can affect the intellectual decision being made.

Spiritual Health involves aspects such as: the meaning of life, common bonds between people, and one’s perception of faith (not necessarily meaning religion).

All *five* dimensions of health are important, and none should be overlooked. Each person has to make decisions about his or her health, and what is needed to make the best decisions is knowledge.

Overview

Community health promotion and education services are available to address major factors of ill health, such as smoking and tobacco use, substance abuse, sedentary lifestyle, environmental hazards, family stress, nutrition, peer pressure, healthy relationships, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), HIV, abstinence, and sexuality education. Here's a look at some of our free programs:

- **MyPyramid**, the symbol that explains healthy eating habits for life.
- **Body Mass Index**, which includes the formula to help you calculate your own BMI.
- **“Smoke Free, That’s Me”** is a program for 2nd, 4th, and 6th graders which educates youth about the hazards of smoking.
- **Smoke-Free Restaurant Recognition Program** is sponsored by the Illinois Department of Public Health. An updated list can be viewed at www.idph.state.il.us/tobacco/ilsmkfree.htm.
- **Tobacco Compliance Checks** are done in conjunction with the Freeport Police Department and the Stephenson County Sheriff’s Department. The point of these checks is to ensure that retailers comply with laws concerning youth access to tobacco in our county.
- **RISK** is a simulation activity that provides teens with a visual understanding of the costs associated with sexual behavior.
- **World Asthma Day** is celebrated every year in May. Our goal is to help raise awareness about asthma and to teach people about the triggers of asthma and how to take care of them.
- **Heart Smart for Teens** is a nine-week program to educate adolescent girls about the risk factors of cardiovascular disease and to teach them the importance of healthy diets and physical activity.
- **Break the Habit** is a smoking cessation program available to anyone, which combines Nicotine Replacement Therapy with Illinois Tobacco Quitline counseling.

Healthy Habits for Life

The MyPyramid symbol was created by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to remind people to make healthy choices and to be active every day.

Colors used to represent each food group:

- **Orange**-Grains
- **Green**-Vegetables
- **Red**-Fruits
- **Yellow**-Oils
- **Blue**-Milk
- **Purple**-Meat and Beans



The food group bands on MyPyramid are wider at the bottom and smaller at the top to remind people to eat more whole foods (like an apple) and less processed foods (like a piece of apple pie). The different color bands remind us that we should eat from all food groups each day for good health. A healthy eating plan is one that emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, nuts, and fat-free or low-fat milk products. The amount of food you should eat each day depends on:

- if you are male or female,
- what your age is, and
- how much physical activity you get.

According to the USDA, physical activity simply means movement of the body that uses energy. Walking, gardening, briskly pushing a baby stroller, climbing the stairs, playing soccer, or dancing the night away are all good examples of being active. For health benefits, physical activity should be **moderate** or **vigorous** and add up to at least 30 minutes a day.

Moderate physical activities include:

- Walking briskly (about 3 ½ miles per hour)
- Hiking
- Gardening/yard work
- Dancing
- Golf (walking and carrying clubs)
- Bicycling (less than 10 miles per hour)
- Weight training (general light workout)

Vigorous physical activities include:

- Running/jogging (5 miles per hour)
- Bicycling (more than 10 miles per hour)
- Swimming (freestyle laps)
- Aerobics
- Walking very fast (4 ½ miles per hour)
- Heavy yard work, such as chopping wood
- Weight lifting (vigorous effort)
- Basketball (competitive)

Some physical activities are not intense enough to help you meet the recommendations. Although you are moving, these activities do not increase your heart rate, so you should not count these toward the 30 or more minutes a day that you should strive for. These include walking at a casual pace, such as while grocery shopping, and doing light household chores.

Body Mass Index

Body Mass Index provides an estimate of the appropriateness of your weight for your height. *Caution: This calculation can identify lean/muscular individuals as overweight.

Body weight in pounds x 705, divided by height (in inches) squared.

$$\frac{\text{_____}}{\text{(weight)}} \times 705 = \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{(Wt. X 705)}}$$

$$\frac{\text{_____}}{\text{(Height)}} \times \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{(Height)}} = \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{(Height Squared)}}$$

$$\frac{\text{_____}}{\text{(Wt. X 705)}} \text{ Divided by } \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{(Height Squared)}} = \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{(BMI)}}$$

Body Mass Index Range:

- Underweight = <18.5
- Normal weight = 18.5-24.9
- Overweight = 25-29.9
- Obese = 30 or greater





Smoking and Tobacco Use

Did you know that there are over 4,000 chemicals in one cigarette? Or that smoking one pack of cigarettes every day for a year equals one quart of tar in your lungs?

The American Lung Association of Illinois and the Stephenson County Health Department offer a free program called ***Smoke Free—That's Me!*** that teaches children in 2nd, 4th and 6th grades about smoking awareness. The program discusses lung health issues, peer pressure, and advertising. Take-home learning materials are provided for the students, along with additional activities for the classroom.

We believe that it is important to educate young children about remaining tobacco-free. Children need information to make an educated decision early, before they are confronted with peer pressure to use tobacco.

This program is 60 minutes long, and teachers may request it for their classroom by contacting Anna at 815.235.8323.

Tobacco Compliance Checks

The Stephenson County Health Department, in collaboration with the Freeport Police and the Stephenson County Sheriff's Departments, enforces the laws regarding the sale of tobacco products to minors. Each year we conduct three rounds of tobacco compliance checks. Our goal is to have a 90% compliance rate. The Illinois Liquor Control Commission is the state agency designated to develop strategies to reduce the illegal sale of tobacco products to minors. The Compliance Check Program is under the umbrella of the state's Tobacco Enforcement Program.

Are you looking for an easy way to make some \$\$\$?????

If you are between the ages of 15 and 17, have no previous run-ins with the law, and have a state ID or driver's license, then being a Tobacco Compliance "Sting" Inspector might be for you!!! All youth inspectors must complete a one-hour training, which will be held in September.

"We will not sell to minors"

Trained Youth Inspectors work one-on-one with law enforcement officers by checking tobacco retailers in Stephenson County to make sure that they comply with the state law and do not sell tobacco products to individuals under the age of 18.

Please contact Anna at 815.235.8323 if you have questions or are interested in signing up.



RISK

The purpose of “RISK: Real Issues of the Sexual Kind” is to impact the beliefs and attitudes teens have about sexual risk-taking. By making non-risky and less risky behaviors more relevant and recognizably beneficial to adolescents, RISK encourages youth to change or avoid sexual risk-taking behaviors. RISK is a simulation activity with guided discussion that provides teens with a visual understanding of the costs associated with sexual behavior. The simulation tells a story in which each participant becomes a character. The characters face issues related to sexual activity, including pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV/AIDS, abstinence, contraceptive use, drug and alcohol abuse, sexual abuse, and rape. RISK incorporates national statistics into the storyline. This program is available to anyone and lasts about 45 minutes.

Asthma

Asthma is a chronic lung disease characterized by recurrent breathing problems and symptoms such as breathlessness, wheezing, chest tightness, and coughing. When asthma is not under control, the airways of the lungs are thick, swollen, and inflamed. The airways become overly sensitive to environmental changes, and an asthma attack can happen easily. During an asthma attack, the lining of the airways swells, muscles around the airways tighten, and mucus clogs the tiny airways in the lungs, making breathing difficult.

In the United States alone, more than 6 million children suffer from asthma, which is the most common serious chronic disease of childhood. In addition, asthma accounts for one third of all pediatric emergency room visits, and is a leading cause of school absenteeism.

In response to these alarming statistics, and in an effort to raise public awareness of the risks faced every day by 20 million Americans living with asthma, each year the Stephenson County Health Department joins with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to participate in Asthma Awareness Month and World Asthma Day.

Each year all across the world, events are held in May as part of Asthma Awareness Month. Each event will raise awareness about indoor and outdoor pollutants that trigger asthma, and ways to prevent children’s asthma episodes.

Heart Smart for Teens

Heart Smart for Teens, funded through the Illinois Department of Public Health's Office of Women's Health, is a nine-week program to educate adolescent girls about the risk factors of cardiovascular disease and to teach them the importance of healthy diets and physical activity.

Some of our goals with this program are to:

- educate teenagers on the current recommendations for nutrition and physical activity presented in the new USDA dietary guidelines
- provide teenagers with an opportunity to build skills to make improvements that positively impact their current and future health
- increase their knowledge on the current MyPyramid to ensure they understand how different foods and levels of activity work together
- explore new physical activities and healthy snacks in a fun and entertaining way

Our goal is to positively impact each teenager's health through the development of lifelong healthy eating and physical activity habits, and for them to have fun learning. Each student is provided with and taught how to use a step counter to monitor her daily physical activity.





Break The Habit

This is a successful proactive approach that integrates Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) with Illinois Tobacco Quitline (ITQ) counseling services!



When a tobacco user calls the ITQ, they will be informed on the Break the Habit program. If the caller decides to participate, the counselor communicates via e-mail with health department staff regarding contact data, consultation content, and use of NRT. The participant will receive a two-week supply of NRT, and must continue with the ITQ counseling service before they can receive more NRT.



For more information, please contact Anna at 815.235.8323.



Smoke Free Illinois Act

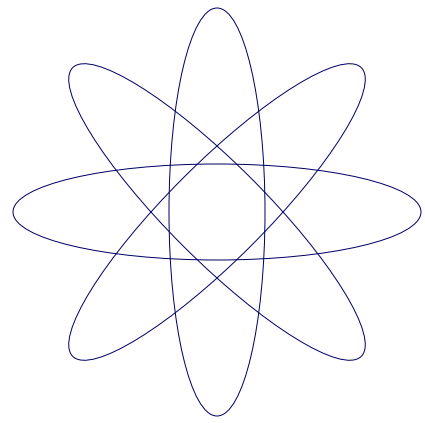
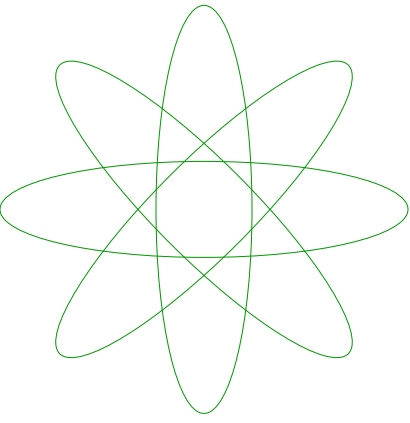
This law went into effect on January 1, 2008. It protects employees and the public from secondhand smoke. Under this law, smoking is prohibited:

- in public places and places of employment
- within 15 feet of any entrances, exits, windows that open, and ventilation intakes that serve an enclosed area where smoking is prohibited



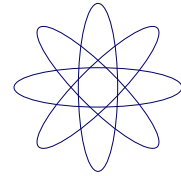
To find out more information or to file a complaint, visit www.smoke-free.illinois.gov or call toll free 866.973.4646





For questions, comments, or to schedule a program:

Anna Nierzwicki, MS
Director, Community Health Education
Stephenson County Health Department
10 West Linden Street
Freeport, IL 61032



Phone
Fax
Email

815.235.8323
815.232.7160
anna.nierzwicki@aeroinc.net

