

# CLARK COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH



## report to the community

DECEMBER 2012





# Partnerships: essential to the work of public health



Protecting the health and safety of our community is important work and Clark County Public Health can't go it alone. Fortunately, we have many partners. They are front and central to our strategic plan, which states, "Through partnerships we will influence the conditions that promote good health for everyone."

It's about more than agencies collaborating on projects of common interest. Increasingly, it's about coalition-building to ensure a strong public health network of public agencies, private sector organizations, and community groups working together to improve community health.

For example, it would be much harder for us to monitor and control disease outbreaks without close cooperation from experts in this network. At various times, they may include health care providers, school nurses, church leaders, and child care providers in addition to the laboratories, hospitals, state epidemiologists, and sometimes the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Certainly, partnerships help all parties leverage scarce dollars. As a way to "do more with less," Clark County Public Health leads multiple community health initiatives, helping to ensure the various parts of the public health network work effectively together.

This way, our communities can continue to rely on safe food and water, protection from disease outbreaks, and effective responses to disasters. More kids will get a healthy start in life. And with a strong public health network, we're also better equipped to tackle the tsunami of chronic diseases that will result from the raging obesity epidemic, which threatens to shorten Americans' lifespans and further drive up the cost of health care.





# CLARK COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH partnership highlights in 2012

## Juggling baby with diploma

When Bailey Karpa became pregnant at 16, she felt she finally had something to live for. But when some people at school judged her unkindly, she dropped out. “It hurt. I cried a lot,” Bailey recalls. Even so, she knew she wanted a high school diploma—a good thing,



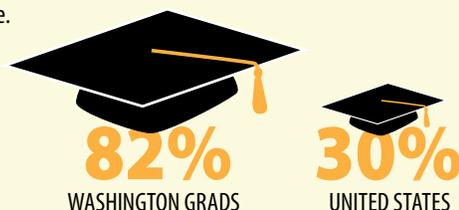
considering that high school dropouts are at greater lifetime risk of poverty and poor health. Luckily, she learned about GRADS, an in-school program supported by Public Health. She enrolled. The program lets Bailey catch a bus to day care, drop off her daughter, Tally, and continue to school. Regular classes are followed by a GRADS class where she and other pregnant or parenting teens get parenting and health information. “It’s so much easier being able to talk with people going through the same things as you,” says Bailey. Her grades are

good and Bailey graduates next June. “It’s awesome to think in a few months I’ll walk across the stage with my diploma and hold my daughter with my cap and gown.” Next, Bailey hopes to enroll in a police cadet program and eventually go to college.

**KEY PUBLIC HEALTH PARTNERS:** Evergreen and Vancouver school districts; 2-1-1 Info, Washington State Department of Health

**MORE INFORMATION:** (360) 397-8000 ext. 7336.

**GRADUATION SUCCESS:** Of 476 students enrolled in GRADS programs in Washington during the 2011-12 school year, 82% earned a high school diploma or continued with school. Nationally, only 30% of pregnant/parenting students continue in high school and earn a degree.



## Farm fresh food in a SNAP!

### EATING HEALTHY FOOD

lowers the risk of becoming overweight or obese, conditions that affect 62% of Clark County adults. However, only 22% of Clark County adults eat the recommended five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day.



From strawberries to blackberries, peaches to pears, the farms and gardens of the Northwest produce a nutritious bounty of fruit each summer. Later in the season, markets overflow with corn, tomatoes, kale, and other locally grown produce. But people who depend on SNAP benefits (food stamps) have limited opportunities to get fresh food directly from the source. If vendors lack

equipment for swiping electronic benefits cards, SNAP shoppers are out of luck. To reduce this barrier, Public Health teamed up with three farmers markets to make changes. Thanks to funding from Kaiser Permanente, New Seasons Markets, and a federal grant, SNAP shoppers can now use their benefits for locally grown food from the Vancouver, Salmon Creek, and Camas farmers markets. They can also take advantage of a “Fresh Match” program that kicks in five additional dollars for buying market fruits and vegetables. It’s helping to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

**KEY PUBLIC HEALTH PARTNERS:** Clark County farmers markets and project funders, listed above

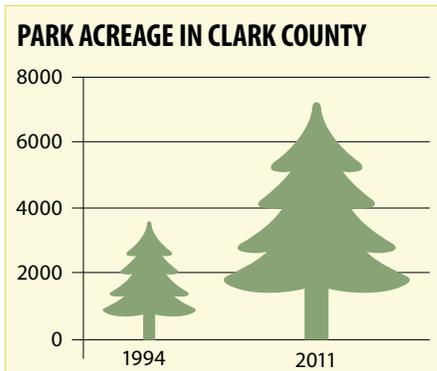
**MORE INFORMATION:** Theresa.Cross@clark.wa.gov



# CLARK COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH partnership highlights in 2012

## Planning healthy communities

Where you live can have a big impact on your health. For example, if you need your car to get to most places, you probably have less time and opportunity for walking. People tend to make healthier choices when their neighborhoods have safe places to walk and bike and are close to services, healthy food sources, parks, and other public gathering places. Clark County's Public Health Advisory Council was concerned by the stark health disparities between different Clark County neighborhoods.



With assistance from Clark County Community Planning and lots of public input, Public Health staff spent months researching local data and best practices for the council to compile a *Growing Healthier Report*. The report recommends updating the county's Comprehensive Growth Management Plan with strategies to improve health

The council determined that giving a health focus to the county's land use policies would be another useful tool for improving community health. With



through land use, transportation, and design. In June, the Board of County Commissioners endorsed the *Growing Healthier Report*, laying the groundwork for community planning that promotes health.

**KEY PUBLIC HEALTH PARTNERS:** Public Health Advisory Council, Clark County Community Planning, Food System Council, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Commission on Aging

**MORE INFORMATION:** [http://www.clark.wa.gov/public-health/community/growing\\_healthy/index.html](http://www.clark.wa.gov/public-health/community/growing_healthy/index.html)

## Stopping the spread of a water-borne outbreak

Last July, Public Health received several laboratory reports about children with *Shigella*, highly contagious bacteria that can cause severe gastrointestinal symptoms. After interviewing their parents, staff learned that all the children had gone swimming in Kline Pond. The Clark County Health Officer closed the pond to reduce the spread of this potentially serious disease. Staff sent water samples for testing and worked with Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation to post lake closure signs. We alerted people who may have been to Kline Pond using an automated emergency community notification system, getting information out through the news media and notifying all health care providers. We needed to find any other infected individuals to make sure they

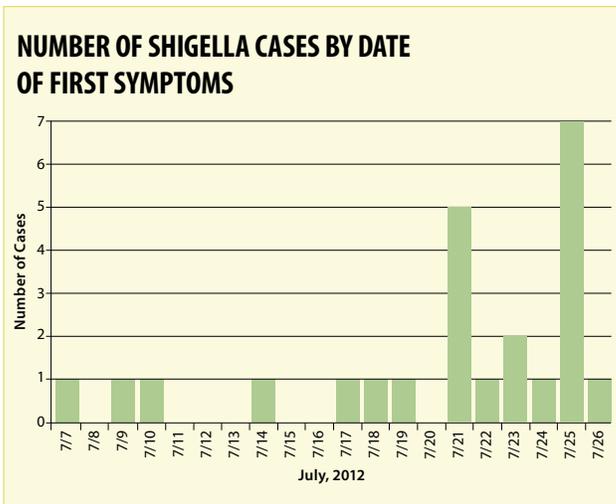




# CLARK COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH partnership highlights in 2012



were evaluated, treated if necessary, and didn't spread the disease to others. Because two of the children attended child care centers while ill, we dispatched a team to both centers to ensure procedures were in place to reduce the risk of *Shigella* transmission. In all, Public Health identified 24 cases, 19 of whom swam in Kline Pond. Had we not closed the pond and notified potentially exposed individuals, many more people could have become sick. Fortunately, the water quality improved, allowing us to reopen the pond just in time for summer's hottest weekend.



**KEY PUBLIC HEALTH PARTNERS:** Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation, Washington State Department of Health, news media, health care providers

**MORE INFORMATION:** <http://www.clark.wa.gov/public-health/pools/beaches.html>

## Averting a surfacing sewage disaster at school

Last summer, Public Health learned that a middle school in Battle Ground had a malfunctioning septic system. Sewage was about to escape the tanks and clog up the drain fields underneath areas where students walk and play, potentially exposing children to surfacing sewage and the possibility of disease. One of our health specialists provided the school options for correcting the problem and a list of operations and maintenance (O&M) professionals to

do the work. These private sector contractors are important public health partners whose routine inspections uncover problems like this one. A contractor proposed correcting the problem by re-routing the wastewater through a more efficient, better flowing pipe configuration. The work was successfully completed in November for about \$7,500. Had the problem not been identified through our O&M program, the system would undoubtedly have failed, threatening the health of students and potentially costing the school as much as \$100,000 to replace the system.



**KEY PUBLIC HEALTH PARTNERS:** Certified private sector operations and maintenance specialists

**MORE INFORMATION:** <http://www.clark.wa.gov/public-health/septic/index.html>

### BUYING A NEW SYSTEM IS EQUIVALENT TO 110 YEARS OF MAINTENANCE COSTS!

**\$100** Approximate annual cost of maintaining a gravity septic system for an average household

**\$11,000** Cost to replace a failing septic system (midpoint of \$7,000 - \$15,000 range)





# CLARK COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH partnership highlights in 2012

## In 2012, Clark County Public Health also partnered with:

**Kaiser Permanente, pharmacies, and other providers** to address a whooping cough epidemic by providing pertussis vaccinations to un/under-insured individuals in Clark County.

**Cascade AIDS Project** to improve access to services and encourage testing for those most at risk for HIV infection.

Area hospitals and health care organizations through the **Region IV Health Care Preparedness Coalition** to ensure that our communities have access to medical care during public health emergencies and other disasters.

**Local governments, emergency management, and first responder agencies** from counties in Southwest Washington and the Portland metro area to prepare our communities for disasters.

The **Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)** to provide free and low-cost health insurance services to low-income families in Clark County.

**Trinity Lutheran Church** to co-chair a faith-based collaborative focused on supporting the health and well-being of children and residents in the Partnership for Healthy Neighborhood focus area of central Vancouver.

The **Safe Kids Coalition** to develop a life vest loaner program at Kline Pond.

**Federal Express** and **Safe Kids Coalition** to host two Walk to School Day events attended by 375 students and their parents, siblings, and friends.

**Clark County Dental Society, Clark College, Greater Southwest**



**Washington Dental Hygiene association, EOCF Head Start/ ECEAP, Free Clinic of Southwest Washington, Medical Teams International, Ronald McDonald House Charities, and Washington Oral Health Foundation** to provide more

than \$100,000 of free dental care on Children's Dental Health Day.

**Ogden Neighborhood Association** and **Maplewood Neighborhood Association** to remove 7.5 pounds of cigarette butts from neighborhood parks on Make A Difference Day.

The **Southwest Regional Food Safety Managers Group** and the **Washington State Department of Health** to develop standards for food safety compliance inspections and food code interpretation.

**SELF (Support for Early Learning and Families)** to promote positive early childhood experiences and literacy.

**ESIT (Early Services for Infants and Toddlers)** to ensure access to screenings for developmental delays and access to interventions.

**Numerous community groups** to prevent chronic diseases by encouraging physical activity and improving access to healthy foods.

**Fort Vancouver Regional Library** to improve early literacy among teenagers' babies.





# CLARK COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

# partnership strategies for the future

## In the next two years, Public Health will work with partners to:

### ENSURE PUBLIC SAFETY AND INCREASE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

- Integrate public health into the regional homeland security program to coordinate emergency preparedness and response planning with fire, emergency management, and other responders.
- When resources are scarce—such as vaccine or ventilators—ensure they're available to people most in need.
- Engage the business community in reasonable, equitable ways to limit person-to-person contact when necessary during disease outbreaks.

**KEY PARTNERS:** CRESA, Region IV Health Care Preparedness Coalition, fire districts, businesses, medical partners, volunteers, other community groups

### INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALTHY LIVING

- Ensure every family has access to healthy food and opportunities for physical activity.
- Increase opportunities for kids to walk and bike to school.
- Increase the availability of smoke-free housing for low-income families.

**KEY PARTNERS:** food system partners, schools, local farmers and farmers markets, community groups, landlords, property owners

### GIVE ALL CHILDREN A HEALTHY START IN LIFE

- Prevent adverse childhood experiences (ACES) by

promoting positive interaction between children and adults.

- Help families receive important child safety information.
- Increase early identification of children with developmental delays.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Schools, child care centers, health care providers, SELF, EOCF, faith-based organizations, other community groups

### ALIGN THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WITH HEALTH CARE REFORM

- Promote greater collaboration among public health, primary care, behavioral health, oral health, and other community providers to:
  - Better care for individuals
  - Improve population health
  - Lower health care costs

**KEY PARTNERS:** Southwest Washington Regional Health Alliance, hospitals, primary care and other health care providers

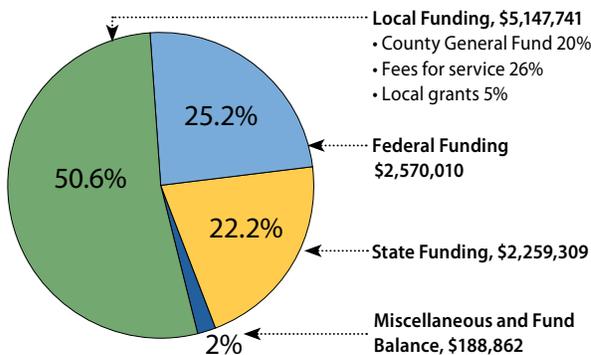
### DEMONSTRATE EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE AND MANAGEMENT

- Promote greater collaboration with other county departments to increase efficiency
- Maximize use of volunteers

**KEY PARTNERS:** Clark County departments, Medical Reserve Corps, other volunteer groups

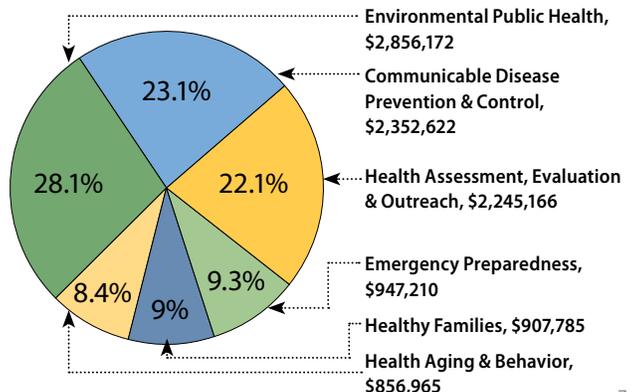
## 2011 Revenues

**Clark County Public Health Operating Revenue**  
Total: \$10,165,923



## 2011 Expenditures

**Clark County Public Health Operating Expenditures**  
Total: \$10,165,923





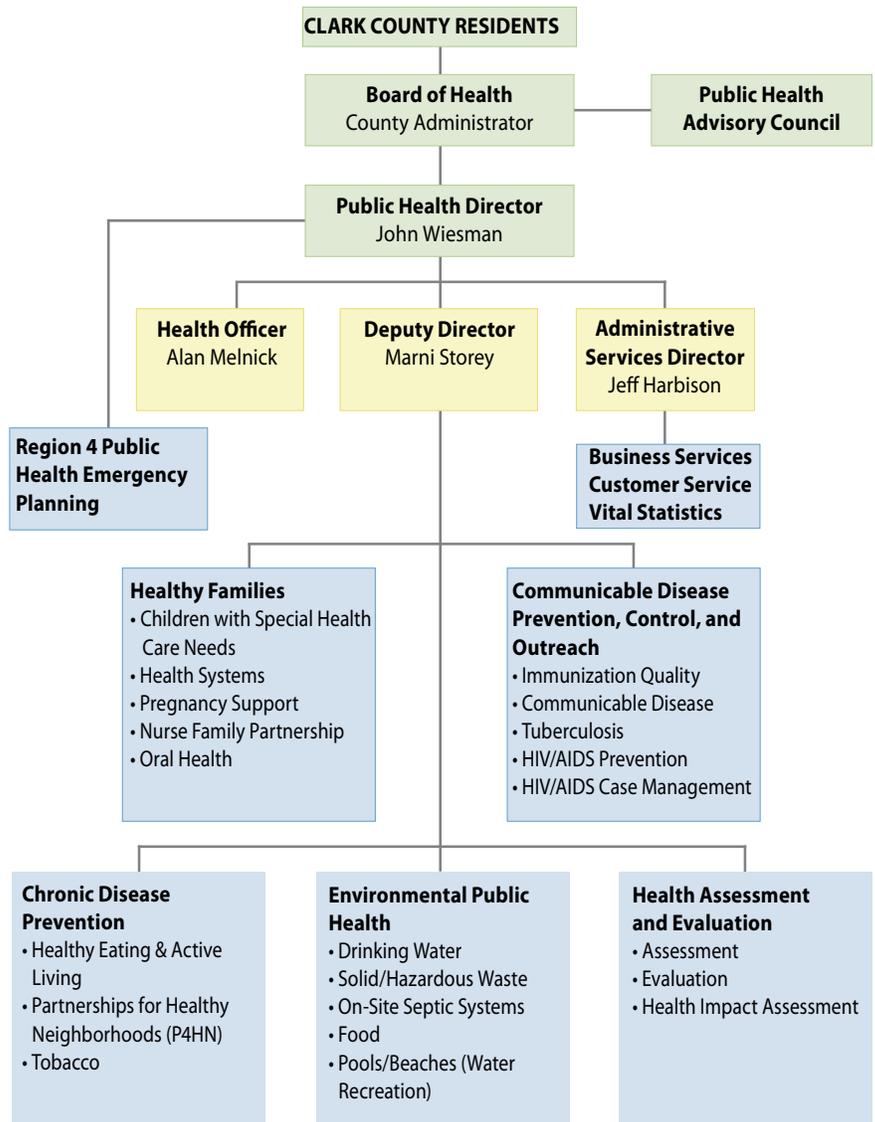
# CLARK COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH partnering with you

## Everyone in Clark County is a public health stakeholder

If you'd like to share your ideas about partnerships that can improve the health and safety of our community, please contact us at **(360) 397-8000** or **Public.Health@clark.wa.gov**.

- Clark County Board of Health**  
 Marc Boldt  
 Tom Mielke  
 Steve Stuart
- Clark County Administrator**  
 Bill Barron
- Public Health Advisory Council**  
*(as of December, 2012)*  
 Renate Atkins  
 Jonathan Avery  
 Betsy Brownfield  
 Joan Caley  
 Paul Childers  
 Justin Clary  
 Mark Collier  
 Nicole Covrett  
 Marilyn Darr  
 Jeremy Diehl  
 Dawn Doutrick  
 Trevor Evers  
 Joanne Huffman  
 Laurie Lebowsky  
 Sandra Mathewson  
 Anna Pendergrass  
 Justin Plummer  
 Bob Richardson  
 Jeff Sarvis  
 David Seabrook  
 Rhonda Turner
- Public Health Leadership Team**  
 John Wiesman  
 Marni Storey  
 Alan Melnick  
 Jeff Harbison

CLARK COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



**CLARK COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH** – Center for Community Health

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Prevent. Promote. Protect.