



COUNTY OF KENOSHA

John T. Jansen, Director
Department of Human Services

Cynthia Johnson, Director, Health Officer
Division of Health Services
Job Center / Human Services Building
8600 Sheridan Road, Suite 600
Kenosha, WI 53143-6515
Phone: (262) 605-6700
Fax: (262) 605-6715

Contact: Cynthia Johnson, Director/Health Officer
Telephone: (262) 605-6760
Email: Cynthia.Johnson@kenoshacounty.org

HEALTHY PEOPLE KENOSHA COUNTY 2020 RECEIVES \$460,000 COMMUNITY GRANT TO CREATE HEALTHIER PLACES TO LIVE, WORK, AND PLAY

Kenosha – July 24, 2012 – Healthy People Kenosha County 2020 announced today that it was awarded a Transform Wisconsin grant to spearhead a program that helps Kenosha County residents lead a healthier, more active lifestyle. The grant will invest in promoting physical activity, healthy food systems, and smoke-free living over the next two-and-a-half years.

“This is exciting news for Kenosha County residents,” said Jim Kreuser, Kenosha County Executive. “We have been working hard to improve people’s health and with this unprecedented opportunity, we can elevate our work to reach even more citizens.”

Healthy People Kenosha County 2020 received \$460,000 to work on three specific areas in the Kenosha County area: expanding smoke free environments to include apartment buildings, strengthening farm to school programs so Wisconsin students have access to fresh fruits and vegetables, and increasing physical activity for kids by promoting and implementing open gyms between schools and community agencies.

“Our goal is to transform communities by making healthy choices the easy choice,” said Mary Bohning of the Kenosha Unified School District. “We need to provide kids with a safe place to walk or play and have healthy and affordable foods available for everyone.”

The grant comes at a time when concern for people’s health is at an all-time high. The Institute of Medicine’s *Weight of the Nation* report found that one-third of adults are now obese and that for the first time kids will have a shorter lifespan than their parents.

“There’s a real need for change,” said Joyce Erickson, of the KRW Tri-County Tobacco Free Coalition. “The good news is there are proven solutions. But we need everyone to get involved.”

“Prevention efforts are the key to improving the overall health of Kenosha County citizens,” said Cynthia Johnson, Health Officer/Director with the Kenosha County Division of Health. “Not only will people lead healthier lives, we’ll save millions of dollars in health care costs to treat preventable diseases like cancer and heart disease.”

Healthy People Kenosha County 2020 is a collaborative effort of local organization and community groups, including the Kenosha County Division of Health, Kenosha YMCA, Kenosha Unified School District, and the KRW Tri-County Tobacco Free Coalition.

The Healthy People Kenosha County 2020 project is one of 30 communities around the state awarded Transform Wisconsin grants in an effort to create healthier places to live, work and play. \$6.6 million will be invested over the next 26 months with the goal of creating healthier communities and reducing preventable chronic diseases. Transform Wisconsin is built on the idea that smoke-free air, fresh fruit and vegetables, and safe places to play should be available to everybody. Eight communities, including Kenosha County, are receiving Transform Wisconsin grant funding to promote healthy food systems.

The Transform Wisconsin project will directly reach about half the state’s population -- over 2.6 million residents. All across the state, communities will be building on local efforts to improve health by empowering individuals to make healthier choices and preventing chronic disease.

For more information on Transform Wisconsin grants and to sign up to volunteer for this project, please visit www.transformwi.com.

###