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Area tobacco coordinators play important role

early one in four Alabamians smokes tobacco, in spite of the overwhelming evidence of the harm it causes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released findings from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System indicating that, in 1999, adult smoking prevalence was 23.4 percent in Alabama.

Based in part on this persistently high level of adults smoking, the CDC increased funding to the Tobacco Prevention Branch, located in the Division of Chronic Disease Prevention, Bureau of Health Promotion

and Chronic Disease. This additional funding enabled the program to support full-time coordinators in each of the state's public health areas to facilitate the development of local tobacco control coalitions and to implement the state's tobacco prevention plan at the local level.

The four goals of the state plan are:

- Prevent youth initiation of tobacco use
- Eliminate exposure to environmental tobacco smoke
- Promote cessation in youth and adults
- Eliminate disparities in populations at risk. Tobacco is a problem for all population groups in the state. Data show that Alabama youth begin to smoke at



Pictured here are Alabama's tobacco control coordinators. Seated (left to right), Tammy L. Langlois, PHA 8; Tracy Schofield, PHA3; Laurie Taquino, PHA 6; Theo Vaughn Smith, PHA 4. Standing, Hazel Cunningham, PHA7; Deidra Munnerlyn, PHA 9; Pat Mackey, PHA 1; Tiffany Young, PHA 11; Caroline Brummitte, PHA 5; Liz Todd, PHA 10.

an earlier age than youth across the country. Nationally, 9.2 percent of children in grades 6 through 8 smoke, while 19.1 percent, more than double the level seen nationally, smoke at those same ages in Alabama.

"Youth begin smoking earlier in Alabama; therefore, prevention programs which are designed for these younger ages are critical," said Diane Beeson, branch director.

Alabama's lung cancer death rate, which is highly associated with smoking, is 43.0 per 100,000 persons, and is higher than the U.S.

rate of 37.2 per 100,000 persons. Alabama ranks 29th in the nation for deaths related to smoking, yet Alabama is seventh lowest in the nation with its tobacco excise tax. Alabama is tied with Arkansas for 44th in the nation in total funding for tobacco prevention and control activities, according to the Office of Smoking or Health, CDC, 2001.

Coordinators serve important function

"The coordinators are there to organize and galvanize local support," Ms. Beeson said. "They are fantastic, energetic, extra-motivated people who are the only local

Coordinators......continued on page 2

Coordinators......continued from page 1

level personnel who work 100 percent on tobacco. Their overarching goal is to implement the state plan at the local level."

The Central Office staff provides training to local coalitions through satellite conferences about tobacco prevention educational programs, including news media training. Organizations such as the American Cancer Society and the American Lung Association conduct local advocacy training.

"By developing a local coalition, the citizens of the areas can speak with one voice," said Ms. Beeson. "Local coalitions can advocate for policy changes such as passage of excise taxes and clean indoor air ordinances, and have the advantage of ready access to our data bases."

Ms. Beeson noted that two local tobacco coalition achievements are an ordinance prohibiting smoking in Selma city buildings and the passage of a tobacco excise tax in Linden.

Area coordinators serve a variety of functions. Coordinators participate and support annual activities such as Red Ribbon Week, Kick Butts Day, World No Tobacco Day and the Great American Smokeout. The coordinators conduct Teens Against Tobacco Use (TATU) training, a program which teaches older teens how to encourage younger teens and preadolescents to not use tobacco products, and are certified trainers for Not on Tobacco (NOT), a program designed to facilitate smoking cessation by teenagers.

Central office staff are responsible for providing training, administering grant funds, and working with other state partners who are involved in tobacco prevention and control. Some of these include the Coalition for a Tobacco Free Alabama, the Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Board, and the Governor's Task

Force on Teen Smoking. Branch staff have expanded the Tobacco Prevention and Control section of the department's web page with links to local coalition pages and the latest training opportunities. The state tobacco prevention and control plan is also on the site.

Information which can be obtained by logging onto http://www.alapubhealth.org/tobacco includes the following options: cessation services, help to quit, areas, what's the problem?, what can I do?, statutes, workplace policies, links and a sample ordinance. Check the site for additional information.

Alabama's tobacco activities are beginning to receive more national recognition. Alabama is one of only seven states funded to evaluate NOT. Alabama is one of eight states selected by the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) to conduct a smoking cessation demonstration for Medicare beneficiaries. If the demonstration is successful, a Medicare smoking cessation benefit could be implemented with Congressional approval.

For further information about the branch, contact Diane Beeson at 334-206-5560, or dbeeson@adph.state.al.us.

ALABAMA'S HEALTH

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Informational materials in alternative formats will be made available upon request.



Humorous health educator, BioCryst CEO, Marshall director to speak at AlPHA conference

number of excellent speakers will be on the program for the

annual Alabama Public Health Association health education conference which will be held April 18-20 at the Marriott Hotel adjacent to the Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville.

Mark Warren Potuck, M.S.P.H., will deliver the keynote address titled, "Health is No Laughing Matter - Or Is It?" In this presentation, Potuck uses music, theatrics and humorous slides to encourage the adoption of a healthy lifestyle. He deals with normal wellness topics such as physical fitness, nutrition and stress management, in an abnormal way. Also emphasized are personal responsibility and the need for laughter and playfulness in our lives.

Charles E. Bugg, Ph.D., chairman and CEO of BioCryst Pharmaceuticals, Inc., will be the speaker at the E. Kenneth Aycock breakfast Thursday. Prior to joining BioCryst full time in 1994, Dr. Bugg had been with UAB since 1968, having served as Director of the Center for Macromolecular Crystallography, Associate Director of the Comprehensive

Cancer Center, and Professor of Biochemistry.

On the conference's final day, the closing keynote speaker will be Amanda Harris Goodson, director of Quality Management of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Marshall Space Flight Center. She will speak on the subject, "We Bring People to Space; We Bring Space to People." In her current position, she directs the safety, reliability and quality activities on all Marshall Space Flight Center programs with responsibilities encompassing a broad range of activities in support of the nation's space program.

The program offers up-to-date continuing education information for everyone, and continuing education credit certificates for some disciplines. Topics will include everything from information technology, to environmental law, to genetics, to alternative therapies, to organizational effectiveness. Section meetings will also include interesting speakers such as Pete Conroy, Dr. Nancy Dunlap and Leslie Ragers.

For additional information, please contact Tony Thompson, Executive Director, AlPHA, P. O. Box 2343, Montgomery, Ala. 36102, (334) 244-8938.

Half of Alabama mothers breastfeed as they leave the hospital, survey indicates

he goal of the annual Alabama Breastfeeding Data Hospital Survey is to provide a consistent statewide mechanism for reporting breastfeeding data between public and private health.

Michell Grainger, MSN, RNC, IBCLC, state lactation coordinator with the Division of WIC, stated, "As we seek to improve health care among women and children, it is imperative that we collectively gather breastfeeding incidence and duration rates. This will allow all health care providers in private and public health to determine where assessment, intervention and follow-up care is needed on a statewide basis."

The 2000 Alabama Breastfeeding Data Hospital Survey was distributed twice during 2000 to every Alabama hospital providing obstetrical services. Of the 75 surveys mailed, 45 hospitals (60 percent) returned the completed survey.

Results found that half (50 percent) of breastfeeding mothers supplemented with formula during the hospital stay. Other results are as follows:

- 68 percent of hospitals provide lactation services/support
- 48 percent of breastfeeding mothers receive WIC benefits

- 75 percent of hospitals provide follow-up counseling to breastfeeding mothers after discharge
- 80 percent of hospitals offer prenatal breastfeeding classes
- 23 percent of hospitals offer postpartum breastfeeding classes
- 77 percent of hospitals give breastfeeding mothers gift packs with formula
- 80 percent of hospitals provide staff with breastfeeding training
- 68 percent of breastfeeding mothers receive a manual breastpump in the hospital

WIC and hospitals are working to promote breastfeeding as the optimal source of nutrition for all Alabama babies. Ms. Grainger said, "It is important that the WIC program and Alabama hospitals work together to incorporate strategies that will improve the breastfeeding initiation and duration rates."

For additional information you may contact Ms. Grainger at (334) 206-5673.

Pat Mooney strives for perfection without seeking recognition

nselfish, kind, sweet, mild-mannered, helpful, and humble are all words to describe Pat Mooney who was selected the Central Office Employee of the Month for January 2001. A 35-year veteran state health department employee, Ms. Mooney serves as the administrative assistant to director of the Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease.

Commenting on her many years of service, Ms. Mooney said, "I started working for the State of Alabama after attending Massey Draughon Business School in Montgomery. I've been working ever since with the state. It doesn't seem as though it's been 35 years. I love my work, and I enjoy interacting with my fellow co-workers. I believe that we all are important and serve a vital function within the bureau."

According to nominator Zahid Khawaja, "Every employee in the bureau relies on her experience and her

knowledge about the departmental policies and procedures."

Khawaja also praises Ms. Mooney for her kind, polite and helpful nature. "She is pleasant and courteous all the time. She was the image I had for a 'true public servant.' She influences other employees through her positive attitude. She is one of the most hard working employees in the bureau but has never sought personal recognition."

Khawaja continued, "Each year, Ms. Mooney loses a considerable amount of annual leave, indicating her devotion to her work. She takes time to help other employees, although she is busy with her own work. It has been past due to recognize her services for the department, which she deserves for her professionalism and dedication to public health."

By Geraldine Rose Daniels

Commendations

ealth department employees who are listed here have received letters of commendation recently. To recognize other employees, please send letters through your supervisors or the state health officer to *Alabama's Health*.

Patty Boyd
Dick Brennan
Arthenia Calhoun
Loula Walker Cook
Stella Wesson Johnson
Health Provider Standards

from Patti Turenne Montgomery, Ala.

Ricky Elliott

Escambia County Health Department

from Knoxye Williams Montgomery, Ala.

Jack Hataway, M.D., M.P.H. Tammy Langlois Nancy Lavey Teela Reynolds Marion Wilford

Health Promotion and Chronic Disease

from Martha Ellis Prattville, Ala.

Rick Harris Eddie May

Health Provider Standards

from Tom Bolton Homewood, Selma, Greenville, Ala.

Nick Moss

Video Communications Division

from Alice McKinney Montgomery, Ala.

Nick Moss

Danny Williams

Video Communications Division

from Gayle Sandlin Montgomery, Ala.

Kathie Peters

Center for Health Statistics

from Gregory Estelle

Address unlisted Karen Rasberry

Center for Health Statistics

from Robert and Sharon Threatt Address unlisted

Bob Simms

Communications Design

from Arrol Sheehan Montgomery, Ala.

Reginald Strickland

Center for Health Statistics

from Laura Atkinson Gladys Brockman Judy Taylor Stacy Young Birmingham, Ala. and from Barbara Nye Scottsboro, Ala.

Louie Albert Woolbright, Ph.D.

Center for Health Statistics

from Deborah D. Ingram, Ph.D. Washington, D.C.

Health promotion conference set for April

he 19th National Conference on Health Education and Health Promotion, "Plan for Success: Strengthening the Public's Health through Health Promotion," will be held April 25-27 Crown Plaza Ravinia in Atlanta, Ga. The conference is sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Association of State and Territorial Directors of Health Promotion and Public Health Education.

Supporting organizations include: the Alabama Public Health Association, American Association for Health Education, Public Health Education and Health Promotion Section of the American Public Health Association, Arthritis Foundation, Florida Public Health Association, Georgia Public Health Association/Health Education and Health Promotion Section, Kentucky Public Health Association, Morehouse School of Medicine Prevention

Research Center, National Association for County and City Health Officials, North Carolina Public Health Association, Public Health Education and Promotion Network of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the South Carolina Public Health Association.

On-line registration is now available at www.astdhpphe.org/conf19/19confindex.htm.

Those registering prior to March 16 will be automatically entered in a drawing for a round-trip airline ticket on Delta for travel in the continental U.S. The winner must be present at the time of the drawing at the final session of the conference on Friday, April 27.

Information is available at www.astdhpphe.org and www.astdhpphe.org/conf19/19confindex.htm.

New assisted living facility rules: Resident relocation is not usually necessary

ew assisted living facility rules, which took effect in November, created two levels of care within the assisted living industry in Alabama. The new rules were prompted by incidents resulting in death or injury to assisted living residents suffering from dementia. Numerous comments about the rule changes were received during public comment periods and at public hearings last summer.

Under the new rules, assisted living facilities caring for residents with dementia are now required to meet more rigorous standards for staffing, staff training and resident security. Assisted living facility operators who do not wish to meet the new, higher standards will be permitted to admit and care for residents who have no significant symptoms of dementia.

State Health Officer Dr. Donald E. Williamson has assured family members that new state assisted living facility rules will not require relocation of massive numbers of residents.

"The intent of the new rules is to protect our senior citizens, not to forcibly relocate large numbers of residents," Dr. Williamson said. "Our plan is to phase in enforcement of the new assisted living rules to prevent those kinds of disruptions."

Dr. Williamson announced that the department will begin enforcing the new rules by concentrating first on residents who have high-risk medical or behavior problems that make regular assisted living placement dangerous to their health and safety. Examples include:

- residents who exhibit wandering behavior
- residents with severe pressure sores
- malnourished residents

The department's second enforcement priority will be to focus on new admissions to assisted living facilities, rather than conducting strict evaluations of existing residents.

"In those cases where we encounter existing residents with dementia who might be technically ineligible for continued stay under the new rules, but are suffering no immediate distress, we will work with facility staff members, families and family physicians to ensure those residents get the help they need to remain safe and healthy without necessarily being forced to move," Dr. Williamson stated.

"On the other hand, facilities which are unable or unwilling to meet increased care and safety requirements for residents with dementia will not be permitted to continue to admit new residents who need care that those facilities are not equipped to provide. We believe this is a reasonable and prudent approach to phasing in the new rules."

Eligibility determined by 90-day rule

Dr. Williamson also emphasized that even the strictest

Rules......continued on page 6

Alabama abstinence-only education program helps empower youth to reach their potential

ith support from Title V of the Social Security Act, the Alabama Abstinence-Only Education Program of the Alabama Department of Public Health provides funding to 14 community-based agencies/organizations and city/county school systems for abstinence-only education projects. The overall goal of the program is to reduce the occurrence of sexual activity among adolescents.

Abstinence-only education as defined in the Title V legislation is "an educational or motivational program which":

- has as its exclusive purpose, teaching the social, psychological, and health gains to be realized by abstaining from sexual activity;
- teaches abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage as the expected standard for all school-age children;
- teaches abstinence from sexual activity is the only certain way to avoid out-of-wedlock pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and other associated health problems;
- teaches that a mutually faithful monogamous relationship in context of marriage is the expected standard of human sexual activity;
- teaches that sexual activity outside of the context of marriage is likely to have harmful psychological and physical effects;
- teaches that bearing children out-of-wedlock is likely to have harmful consequences for the child, the child's parents, and society;
- teaches young people how to reject sexual advances and how alcohol and drug use increases vulnerability to sexual advances; and
- teaches the importance of attaining self-sufficiency before engaging in sexual activity.

The 14 community-based projects are implementing abstinence-only education in 26 of Alabama's 67 counties. A statewide slogan, "DOIN'IT DOESN'T GET IT - SAVE SEX

FOR MARRIAGE," is used to promote and reinforce abstinence-only until marriage.

Over the five-year duration of the grant period from fiscal year 1998 through fiscal year 2002, Gerald Halpin, Ph.D., and Glennelle Halpin, Ph.D., Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology, Auburn University, are conducting a comprehensive, intensive longitudinal evaluation of these projects.

The evaluators are tracking the rates of pregnancies to unmarried teens and the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases among youths 18 years of age and younger. Further, they are assessing knowledge, attitudes, and behavioral intentions regarding abstinence-only until marriage.

Although definitive data are not yet available regarding teen sexual activity, self-reports by participants in the abstinence-only education program show an increase following program participation in the percentage intending to remain abstinent until marriage. Program participants also report a greater understanding of the benefits of abstinence-only until marriage and of the risks associated with teen sexual activity. Their self-efficacy or belief that they can remain abstinent is improving with program participation as are their decision-making skills.

Susan Stewart, director of the Alabama Abstinence-Only Education Program, said, "Continued hard work and dedication, by all concerned citizens at the community level to promote abstinence from sexual activity among adolescents, will empower Alabama's youth to reach their goals and full potential."

For more information about this program, or to find out how you can become involved in promoting abstinence until marriage for adolescents, please contact Ms. Stewart, program director, at (334) 206-2901 or visit the Alabama Abstinence-Only Education Program's web site at www.alapubhealth.org/abstinence.

Abstinence......continued on page 7

Rules.....continued from page 5

rules interpretation allows leeway for individuals with temporary conditions. This means that residents who suffer from acute illnesses or infections, or those who are adjusting to new medications, remain eligible to remain in an assisted living environment even if they display temporary symptoms that appear to make them ineligible.

Dr. Williamson said, "We have a 90-day rule in determining eligibility for assisted living residence. A disqualifying symptom or condition should result in a finding of ineligibility only if it results from a problem that cannot be resolved within about 90 days. This applies to both regular assisted living facilities and specialty care facilities licensed to care for individuals with dementia."

Rick Harris, director of the department's Bureau of Health Provider Standards, urged family members to ask many questions if told by an assisted living operator that new state regulations require their loved one to be moved, or will require large additional fees.

"Ask what additional services will be provided for these new fees. Ask what it is that your relative needs that he or she is not now receiving at the current price. Ask to be shown a copy of the regulation that calls for the change," Harris said.

Family members should also contact the local long term care ombudsman at the area agency on aging, or contact Eddie May, Acting Director, Assisted Living Facilities Section, Bureau of Health Provider Standards, The RSA Tower, Suite 600, P.O. Box 303017, Montgomery, Alabama 36130-3017, (334) 206-5075, or email emay@adph.state.al.us if they have additional questions or complaints.

Abstinence......continued from page 6

Abstinence-only Education Programs

- * AIM Program The Abstinence in Motion (AIM) Project began at Edge Regional Medical Center/Charles Henderson Child Health Center in Pike County and has been extended to Barbour, Bullock, Crenshaw and Coffee counties. It targets seventh and ninth graders in 15 schools.
- * Boligee 2000 Inc. Abstinence education teachers challenge teens on issues of responsibility and self-control as they stress the benefits of abstinence-only until marriage. Targeted are students in grades 7 through 12 at Paramount High School and Greene County High School. Most of the participants signed a card pledging to abstain from sex until marriage. They believe that they can do so and still be popular.
- * Circle of Care "SmHeart Choices" Targeted are sixth through ninth grade students in Chambers County public schools, the Lanett City School System and private schools in Lanett and Lafayette.
- * Crittenton Teen Services Educates students attending elementary, middle and high schools in the Mobile County Public School System and Parochial Schools. Contract presenters provide a multi-sensory abstinence message through lectures, videos, discussion, question-and-answer sessions, games, role play and review.
- * Dale County WAITS Program Funding is provided to the Dale County Abstinence Advocacy Council. Students targeted in the Wiregrass Abstinence Instruction, Training, and Support (WAITS) project are seventh through tenth graders in both the Dale County School System and the Ozark City School System at six participating schools.
- * H.E.R.O. Family Resource Center Uses an interactive curriculum with a different emphasis at each grade level in Hale County public schools. The abstinence educator provides a multi-sensory abstinence message through lectures, visual demonstrations, role playing, games, discussion, question-and-answer sessions and review. Targeted are all sixth through eighth graders.
- * Huntsville City Schools Targeted are seventh and eighth graders in the 10 middle schools within the system. Evaluators are tracking the rate of pregnancies to unmarried teens and the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases. Further, they are assessing knowledge, attitudes and behavioral intentions regarding abstinence-only until marriage.
- * Lee County Youth Development Center Young people targeted are seventh through tenth graders in the Lee County, Auburn City and Opelika City Schools. Youths who receive residential and community-based services at the Youth Development Center are also included.

* Madison County Schools - Targeted are seventh and ninth graders in the 10 middle schools and five high schools in the

county school system. A year after program participation, attitudes favoring abstinence have been maintained, an impact study of the younger participants found.

- * Marshall County Schools - Alabamians for Quality Education receives funding to educate seventh through tenth graders in 16 schools within the county.
- * Montgomery YMCA - The abstinence education

Shown are, left to right, Rebecca Warren, R.N., B.S.N., coordinator; Susan Stewart, R.N., M.S.N., director; Glennelle Halpin, Ph.D., and Gerald Halpin, Ph.D., evaluators.

teacher targets fifth and sixth grade students at Paterson Elementary School and Highland Gardens Elementary School in Montgomery and Central Elementary School in Mosses (Lowndes County).

- * Morgan County Schools Educators target seventh and ninth graders in four high schools and 10 middle schools. The abstinence education specialists help seventh graders develop skills to resist pressures to be sexually active. At the ninth grade level, a reinforcing message is provided.
- * Piedmont City Schools- The abstinence educator provides a multi-sensory abstinence message through lectures, participatory activities, videos, handout materials, discussion, question-and-answer sessions, review in middle and high schools and provides guidance activities with elementary students.
- * T.G.I.F. (4-H Teens Getting Involved for the Future) Program Participants are sixth grade students and teen leaders in the eleventh and twelfth grades in Choctaw, Conecuh, Coosa, Elmore, Lamar, Marion, Pickens, Sumter and Tuscaloosa counties. Teen leaders strongly agree that abstinence is the only way to avoid out-of-wedlock pregnancies, that monogamous relationships in marriage are the expected standard of human sexual activity, that sexual activity outside of marriage causes harmful psychological and physical effects, and that drugs and alcohol increase the vulnerability to sexual advances.

March is National Social Work Month and National Nutrition Month.

Calendar of Events



March 14 Cardiovascular Health in Children and Adolescents, 2-4 p.m. Public Health Staff Development. For

more information contact Fay Smith, (334) 206-5655.

March 21 Home Care for the Patient with Diabetes, Home Health Aide Continuing Education, 2-4 p.m. For

more information contact Gayla Hollis, (334) 347-2664, extension 403.

April 2-8 National Public Health Week, "Healthy People in Healthy Communities" is again the 2001 theme.

April 6-7 Alabama's Choice: Tobacco or Health, Marriott Hotel, Highway 280-459, Birmingham. Open to all.

For more information contact Dianne Smith-Yoder, (334) 690-8186, email dsyoder@adph.state.al.us

or check the agency website for conference brochure, http://www.alapubhealth.org.

April 10 Alabama WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program, 1-3 p.m. For more information contact Richard

Burleson, (334) 206-2929.

April 11 Vaccines and Your Clinic, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Fay Smith, (334) 206-5655.

April 18-20 Alabama Public Health Association Annual Educational Meeting, Marriott Hotel, Space and Rocket

Center, Huntsville.

April 22 Earth Day

April 26-27 The Second Annual Rural Health Conference, Bryant Conference Center, Tuscaloosa.



May 9 Women's Health, Public Health Staff Development, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Fay

Smith, (334) 206-5655.

May 16 Nutrition and Exercise, Home Health Aide Continuing Education, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Gayla Hollis, (334) 347-2664, extension 403.

June 13 The Pain of Arthritis, Public Health Staff Development, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Fay

Smith, (334) 206-5655.

June 14 ADPH Statewide Staff Meeting, 3-4 p.m. For more information contact Jim McVay, Dr.P.A., (334) 206-5600.

June 26 PHALCON Update, 3-4:30 p.m. For more information contact Debbie Patterson, (334) 206-5310.

