



HMP Accomplishments 2001- Now

Remarkable changes have taken place in cities and towns across Maine. The Healthy Maine Partnerships have been building a healthier Maine by collaborating with local school administrative units, community organizations, hospitals, health care providers, businesses, municipalities and many volunteers.

Statewide, the Healthy Maine Partnerships have distributed over 12,000 pedometers as exercise incentives. A Web-based resource for locating walking routes in Maine has had over 200 routes registered since the site was launched in 2003.

High school youth cigarette smoking rates have dropped from 39.2% in 1997 to 16.2% in 2005. At the same time the number of cigarettes sold in Maine dropped from 101 packs person in 1997 to 65 packs per capita in 2006.

Improvements in nutrition are a hallmark of many Healthy Maine Partnership achievements in their local schools. Policy changes within many school administrative units (SAU's) have improved the contents of school vending machines, as well as the food served for school meals and school sponsored events. Between 2001 and 2004 fifty-one SAU's participated in the CATCH training (a Coordinated Approach To Child Health), a proven program promoting healthful eating and physical activity among elementary school students

Individual Healthy Maine Partnerships have pioneered new approaches to improve nutrition, promote physical activity, and reduce tobacco use and exposure. A very short list of highlights includes the following:

“ACCESS Health” in Brunswick launched their “Work Healthy” program to encourage and recognize businesses and organizations in the Mid-Coast area that are promoting improved health for their employees. ACCESS Health coalition members provide technical assistance and provide resources to area employers including the Good Work! kit and other relevant Action Packets.

Linda Christie HMP Director 373-6973 (#4 - Mid Coast)

“Somerset Heart Health” has been reaching out to businesses and encouraging the development of wellness councils as a key facet for the local Chambers of Commerce. Larger employers, such as Madison Paper Industry and New Balance Athletic Shoe,

worked with the HMP to implement a national program called “Quit and Win.” Between 2004-2005 the program helped 62 people to end their addiction to tobacco.

Bill Primmerman HMP Director 474-7473 (#5 Central Maine)

In the greater Portland area, “Communities Promoting Health” partnered with the Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District, Farm Fresh Connection, and Gorham Nutrition Services to organize Maine Harvest Lunch, an effort to promote and use more nutritious and locally grown food in the Gorham Schools. The idea has caught on and other organizations are using this method to educate school staff and students.

Lucie Rioux HMP Director and Amanda Beal, YAP Coordinator, at PROP 874-1140 X 320 (# 2 Cumberland)

“Choose to be Healthy” focused some of its community-based efforts on strengthening municipal tobacco policies, and has also appreciably increased the availability and use of walking and biking trails in the municipalities of York and Kittery.

Deb Erickson-Irons, HMP Director, 439-6504 (# 1 York)

In Fort Kent, at the St. John Valley Partnership, in 2004 members of the Youth Advocacy Program designed and donated t-shirts to the Northern Maine Medical Center for ongoing distribution to all newborn babies. The tiny shirts loudly proclaim, through an iron-on decal, that “I was born smoke-free!”

Rachel Charette HMP Director, 834-4187 (#8 Aroostook).

In 2004 two Healthy Maine Partnerships, “Healthy Peninsula” and “Healthy Acadia,” working with the Cooperative Extension service and county food pantry directors, identified that food stamp clients wanted access to affordable fruits and vegetables. Working together to overcome barriers, the effort succeeded. The 2006 growing season resulted in over 650 pounds of fresh produce donated to the local food pantries for distribution.

Doug Michael and Barbara Peppy, HMP Directors 288- 5331 and 374-3257 (# 7 Downeast)

Bangor and its Healthy Maine Partnership “Bangor Region Partners for Health” made national headlines when it teamed up with the Bangor Chamber of Commerce to establish a worksite wellness program approach that received a coveted national WELCOA award.

Shawn Yardley, Director, Bangor Health & Welfare, 992-4531 (#6 Penquis)

The greater Lewiston-Auburn area pioneered an effort to clear the air in multi-unit rental housing. “Healthy Androscoggin,” responding to several citizens who complained about secondhand smoke exposure, began research and initiated a survey to assess tenant and landlord views on this issue. On the basis of the survey results, the Auburn Housing Authority established the first smoke-free housing policy for all of its units. By doing so, it was the first in Maine, and the third in the entire nation.

Angela Cole Westoff, Exec. Director 795-5990 (#3 Western)

Students at Hichborn Middle School, assisted by their local HMP “Sprint for Life,” wrote to the Howland Town Manager and to each member of the Board of Selectmen requesting that the Memorial Park, used by local youth for baseball and softball, be declared a smoke-free park with appropriate signage. The Selectmen were so impressed

by the youth and their commitment that they agreed to their request through a unanimous vote.

Jeremy Weatherbee, HMP Director 794-7242 X242 (#6 Penquis)

Youth affiliated with “Healthy Portland”’s TREK (Tobacco Resistance Education for Kids) group demonstrated both leadership and creativity when they created a commercial viewed statewide. In the commercial a student dressed in a full body cigarette costume annoys youth, following them around until the youth finally upend the cigarette into a dumpster. The ad won the American Lung Association of Maine Distinguished Service Award for its support for a tobacco-free lifestyle.

Bethany Sanborn and Rick Fortier, HMP and YAP Director respectively 874-8634 (#2 Cumberland)

Another initiative of “Healthy Portland” has been an ongoing effort to better understand the tobacco use patterns of specific groups within the city, and to then prevent youth initiation of tobacco use in a manner that is both culturally sensitive and effective. The Healthy Maine Partnership developed three different videos to enhance prevention efforts among Serbian-Croatian, Sudanese, and Somalian youth. Each video featured members of community delivering the message.

Bethany Sanborn and Rick Fortier, HMP and YAP Director respectively 874-8634 (#2 Cumberland)

“Project NOW: Northern Oxford Wellness” worked with the new management of the Black Mountain Ski Area to succeed in making it the first ski area in the USA to be entirely smoke-free.

Carol Emery, HMP Director 364-7408 (# 3 Western Maine)

In the Calais area, School Union 106 developed a “lifelong physical activity program” by acquiring and storing kayaks, snowshoes, and cross county skis donated through the work of volunteers and community groups. The sports equipment can be signed out free of charge by students, staff and community members on weeknights and on weekends. And, School Union 106 was the first in Maine to adopt a daily physical activity in the classroom policy. Teachers now must incorporate 10-20 minutes of physical activity, with their students each and every schools as a part of each day’s curriculum. **Heather Henry, SHC 454-7787 (# 7 Downeast)**

In School Administrative District #22, a collaborative process successfully changed the policy around vending machines. As a result, soda and unhealthy snacks have been permanently removed and replaced with healthy beverages and snacks. Seven schools made the change through the work of the School Health Coordinator, the school staff, the Food Service Director, and the students.

Courtney (Lehnard) Rice, SHC (223-4282) (#6 Penquis)