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Celebrate National Public Health Week April 1-7
Public Health is ROI: Save Money. Save Lives.

2013 County Health Rankings Detail Health Disparities in the Healthiest State

MORRISVILLE – Vermont has been ranked #1 healthiest in *America's Health Rankings* for many years in a row. But Vermonters are not equally healthy, as reported in the latest *County Health Rankings* by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Now available at www.countyhealthrankings.org, the 2013 report ranks Chittenden County as the healthiest in the state, and Essex and Orleans Counties as least healthy.

The rankings are based on health outcomes – length of life and quality of life – and health factors such as smoking, alcohol use, physical activity, access to quality health care, income, education, employment and the built environment.

“Lamoille Valley residents can promote health and wellness by including physical activity in all aspects of daily life and this includes places where we live, work, play and learn,” said Valerie Valcour, director for the Morrisville district office of the Health Department. “Town leaders in Lamoille County and neighboring Caledonia, Orleans and Washington are examining ways to promote walking and biking by making connections to the Lamoille Valley Railroad Corridor, improve sidewalk connections such as School Street and College Hill Road in Johnson, and highlight healthier food options in their stores such as the North Wolcott Country store.”

“Public health requires partnerships between residents, neighborhoods, schools and businesses to achieve and sustain better health for all Vermonters,” Valcour said.

Among the findings in the 2013 *County Health Rankings*:

- 11% of adults in Lamoille County and 13% in Caledonia County report poor or fair health, compared to 8% of adults in Chittenden County.
- 19% of adults in Lamoille County and 22% in Caledonia County smoke, compared to 12% in Chittenden County.

- 18% of adults in Lamoille County and 22% in Caledonia County report they are physically inactive, compared to 15% in Chittenden County.
- No one reported limited access to healthy foods in Lamoille County and 2% in Caledonia County, compared to 4% in Chittenden County.

The *County Health Rankings* rank the overall health of nearly every county in all 50 states. Nationally, the data revealed that unhealthy counties have more than twice the rate of premature deaths than healthy ones and childhood poverty rates are twice as high in unhealthy counties. The *Rankings* allow counties to see how they compare to other counties within the state based on a range of factors that influence health.

Celebrate Health during National Public Health Week

During National Public Health Week April 1-7, the Vermont Department of Health will highlight the daily work of public health, and will launch *Healthy Vermonters 2020* – the state health assessment that documents the health status of Vermonters at the start of the decade, and sets the goals that will guide the work of public health through 2020.

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