

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

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State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

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**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN WALTON COUNTY
ADDRESSES COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS**

WALTON COUNTY – The Florida Department of Health in Walton County (DOH-Walton) recognizes the value in measuring health outcomes and today acknowledged the sixth annual County Health Rankings & Roadmaps tool released by the University of Wisconsin and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This study highlights the many community factors that influence health and uses established data, much of which is available from the department at www.floridacharts.com.

These rankings are a snapshot of the health of counties across the country and they emphasize that health is not a singular effort but a combined work in progress across all community partners. The department works in collaboration with local governments, non-profit organizations, health care facilities, business groups, schools, faith-based organizations and many other stakeholders to improve the health of all people in Walton County. These rankings use data related to physical environments, social and economic factors, health behaviors and clinical care.

“Working together to make Walton County a healthier place to live is critical. We all have a stake in creating a healthier Walton; no single person or agency can overcome the health challenges we face,” said Holly Holt, DOH-Walton Administrator and Health Officer. “Working together, we can make Walton County a healthier place to live, learn, work and play.”

In Walton County, the Community Health Improvement Plan is designed to address specific opportunities for improved health that have been identified by the community. The department has partnered with many stakeholders to implement the improvement plan and collaborates regularly to track progress. Over the last year, the Walton Community Health Improvement Partnership (WCHIP) members collaborated to improve healthy behaviors by promoting a physically active lifestyle and consumption of healthy foods through multiple venues, i.e., promotion of walking history tours and geocaching, cooking classes, and community or container gardens. Efforts to increase use of screening services, preventive and primary care services included agency collaboration to provide diabetic screening and awareness at local events. And, finally, the WCHIP partners are implementing innovative ways to increase awareness of local health and wellness resources through community resource leaders and social media.

“The Walton County Prevention Coalition understands the value of being a part of the WCHIP as we coordinate drug prevention initiatives that promote drug-free communities and wellness. Delivering a unified message reinforces the positive aspects of each campaign while educating the community about how drug abuse prevention fits into overall public health. Everyone who is interested in promoting wellness should be part of the WCHIP,” states Bryan Callahan, Coalition Coordinator, Walton County Prevention Coalition.

“I would like to personally thank members of the Walton County Health Improvement Partnership for working to make a difference in the health of Walton County citizens. Their dedication and service have impacted me personally and professionally. Through my interaction with WCHIP partners I was able to reinforce the need for one of my own family members to seek the help they needed for success,” said Latilda Hughes-Neel, Planner, City of Freeport.

“The time spent with the people involved with the Walton Community Health Improvement Partnership is valuable to me as I serve our families in need. WCHIP helps me to help families in Walton County, especially the children,” said Tamara Hightower, Case Manager, Children’s Volunteer Health Network.

Learn more about what is happening in Walton County by attending the Walton Community Health Improvement Partnership meeting April 22, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. at the DOH-Walton facility located at 362 State Highway 83 in DeFuniak Springs or call (850) 892-8040, Extension 1163.

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