

HEALTHY FAMILIES

Communities are stronger when the general population is healthy.



A healthy community is made up of physically and mentally healthy families.

To improve the health of a community, changes need to occur in three areas—health care, behavior and the socioeconomic structure¹

People must know where we can go for healthcare—a general practitioner, an urgent care or a hospital. A change in healthcare is also an economic issue—for

people to go, we must feel we can afford treatment. People need to know that going to a hospital for a case of poison ivy is going to cost thousands of dollars vs. a hundred dollars at an urgent care facility. Additionally, we will all do whatever we can to stay healthy and make sure our child is healthy; however, we need to know what to do—vaccinations, annual checkups, healthy choices, etc. Healthy families and communities are characterized by successful outcomes.

SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES EQUAL STRONGER COMMUNITIES

- Individuals and their children have long lives.
- People make healthy choices nutritionally along with other life-style choices.
- All human beings live lives with trust and safety in families and communities.
- Everyone feels confident, positive and connected to others.
- One and all have access to healthcare and utilize that care.

STRATEGIES

Communication is a key component to a healthier community. A large percentage of change is based on personal behavior. To change personal behavior, people need to

be informed. The ability to gain information via flyers, advertisements, other media and talking to other people is vital. The ability to exchange this information provides us with knowledge and encourage us to reflect on our ideas and practices.

Individuals with stronger literacy skills will be better informed about the communities they live in, which results in:

- Families go to the doctor on a regular basis;
- Individuals choose to have fruit vs. fried foods;
- People treat one another respectfully;
- Children use safe walking routes to school;
- Family members talk to one another about their daily lives.

ENGLISH LITERACY MAKES OUR COMMUNITY STRONGER

If a learner is in class for 6 hours a week for 40 weeks a year, he or she can...

IN A FEW MONTHS :

- Say the words to describe ailments in English.
- Fill in a form with basic information if someone walks them through it.

IN A YEAR OR TWO:

- Describe in simple full sentences how they feel.
- Read a medicine bottle/box and follow directions in English.

IN TWO OR THREE YEARS:

- Read a flyer for a health clinic or a pamphlet on a health issue.
- Ask and answer detailed personal health questions, and communicate symptoms to a doctor in English.
- Discuss why he/she should stop smoking or lose weight.

“Maria went to an urgent care center and used the phrases she had learned in class to get the right medical care for her daughter. Most of the time, she told us, she would end up waiting for hours to get a translator. This time, she told the doctor what was wrong with her daughter in English, saying it was an infection in her eye. This helped the doctor to give a targeted examination and prescribe the necessary treatment. All in all, according to Maria, it took a half hour with the doctor before they were on their way home.”

– Maria, *Impact Silver Spring*

FURTHER READING:

“Health-Related Quality of Life & Well-Being.” Health-Related Quality of Life & Well-Being. Web. <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/health-related-quality-of-life-well-being>

1. Kindig, David, Paul Peppard, and Bridget Booske. “How Healthy Could a State Be?” Public Health Reports 125.2 (2010): Jstor. Web. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2821842/>

MCAEL

Montgomery Coalition for

Adult English Literacy