Building Public Health Champions

2014 Rural Public Health Institute
Nat Smith ~ Housing Authority of Henry County
Alison Womack ~ Henry & Stark County Health Department
Community Partners

Housing Authority of Henry County

Henry & Stark County Health Departments
Henry County ~Located in Northwestern Illinois, just 20 miles from the Mississippi River dividing Illinois and Iowa.
Henry County

• Population of 50,486
• 823 square miles
• 91.4% of land area is used for farming
• Race/Ethnicity
  • 92.1% white non-Hispanic

Stark County

• Population of 5,994
• 288 square miles
• 10 small towns ranging in size from 25 to 1,400
• Race/Ethnicity
  • 97.2% white non-Hispanic
Tobacco Use

• Residents who actively use tobacco products
  • Henry County= 19.0%
  • Stark County= 21.0%
• Both counties are above the Illinois average
• However, both have declined from seven years ago
  • Henry= 22.3%
  • Stark= 25.8%

2009 BRFSS
SFMUH Goals Housing Authority of Henry County:

• Research adopted smoke free public housing policies
• Develop draft of smoke free public housing policy
• Publish notice of Policy
• Educational sessions at Tenant Council meetings
• Adoption of smoke free public housing policy
• Implementation of smoke free public housing policy
• Implementation of on-site smoking cessation classes
• Evaluation of effectiveness of smoke free policy
Family Developments:

- **Fairview Apartments** ~ Built in 1940 (175 Units)
Elderly/Disabled Developments

- **Hollis House** ~ Built in 1984 (50 Units)
“Effective Immediately: all new leaseholders will be prohibited from smoking indoors, including apartments. Smoking cessation support is offered courtesy of the Henry County Health Dept. Call Nat at 309-852-3725 for more information.”
Henry County
Healthier Tenants, Happier Landlords
KEY SFMUH ACCOMPLISHMENTS

• Diverse and active coalition with 100% commitment to achieve our SFMUH goals.

• Creating a supportive and working relationship with the CEO, Director of Facilities Management, staff, and property managers.

• Passed an “Adoption of Public Housing Non-Smoking Policy” effective January 1, 2013 reaching 1000 people at 6 public housing properties.
KEY SFMUH ACCOMPLISHMENTS

• Collected all 448 Smoke-Free Apartment Lease Addendums from 6 properties in 3 different towns.

• Offered “Freedom From Smoking Classes “ at public housing site with the most identified smokers.

• Since going smoke free a year ago we have seen a 34% decrease in smoking units and it is now 85% smoke free overall.
KEY CHALLENGES-SFMUH

- HAHC tenants dissent to consideration of adopting a SFMUH policy
- Grandfather clause compromise
- HAHC tenant’s disregard of published deadline for the lease addendum’s.
- Collection of lease addendums
- Transient population
- Culture
- Excessive number of visitors to HAHC tenants
A BIG THANK YOU TO:

- CARRIE BOELENS
- ALI WOMACK