



**Public Health**  
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**Champaign-Urbana Public Health District**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Contact:** Julie Pryde, CUPHD  
217-531-5369  
Amy Roberts, CUPHD  
217-531-4264

## ***We Choose Health* Grant Awarded to Champaign-Urbana Public Health District**

***Community Transformation Initiative Focuses on Obesity and Tobacco  
Prevention, Healthier Children and Workforce to Address a Public Health  
Emergency***

Champaign, IL –The Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD) has been awarded a portion of the *We Choose Health* Community Transformation Grant. The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is awarding \$3.5 million to communities in 60 counties in Illinois and CUPHD will receive \$211,922 for the first year. *We Choose Health* is a multi-year IDPH initiative to encourage and support obesity and tobacco prevention in Illinois communities. IDPH received a Community Transformation Grant (CTG) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to work with communities to implement proactive health programs.

“Smoking and obesity are threatening our community’s health and future. This is a public health emergency that must be addressed now,” said Julie A. Pryde, Administrator of the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District.

According to the CDC, in the State of Illinois, 25-29 percent of individuals who self-reported their height and weight in 2009 were obese. Tobacco use, which is recognized as a significant risk factor in developing several chronic diseases, has increased in Champaign County from 17 percent in 2002 to almost 20 percent in 2009.

“It is important that we all work together, area organizations, schools, local health departments, municipalities and others, to improve the health of people in our communities,” Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck said. “I want to congratulate the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District on receiving one of 21 *We Choose Health* grants and encourage everyone in the community to get involved in the exciting new programs coming your way.”

CUPHD will work with multiple community partners to achieve the goals of the *We Choose Health* initiative. CUPHD and community partners will focus on three areas of change: Coordinated School Health; Smoke-free Communities for creating smoke-free public places and multi-unit housing; and Worksite Wellness.

Champaign Coordinated School Health will focus on making the Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) universal throughout Champaign County Schools. This initiative is to reduce childhood obesity and will work in conjunction with CU Fit Families. The goal is to make Champaign-Urbana more fit through focus on better nutritional options and choices as well as increased options for safe physical activity.

Champaign Smoke-free Communities will focus initially on the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and its over 43,000 students and 12,000 faculty and staff as they explore how to become a smoke-free campus. While coordinating with the U of I Wellness Center, the Champaign County Tobacco Prevention Coalition (CCTPC) will work with off-campus property owners to explore creating smoke-free housing options. CCTPC will also explore community readiness for non-campus smoke-free multi-unit housing options.

Champaign Worksite Wellness will focus initial efforts on government employees. City government staff in Champaign, Urbana, Rantoul, Mahomet, Savoy, Fisher, Tolono and Savoy, as well as employees of the Park Districts, CUPHD and Champaign County Government will be targeted to participate in the “Two Ton Challenge” to lose an accumulated 4,000 pounds by “Cutting Government Waist”. CUPHD will partner with Carle, Provena Covenant Medical Center and Health Alliance to expand the program. CUPHD will evaluate the organizations’ implementation of their own employee wellness programs and develop a program that can be implemented by smaller employers.

CUPHD and their Community Partners will begin the *We Choose Health* initiative in September 2012.

For additional information on the *We Choose Health* grant initiative, go to <http://www.idph.state.il.us/wechoosehealth/index.htm> and [www.c-uphd.org](http://www.c-uphd.org).

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