

Oct. 22, 2015

HEALTH EDUCATION WEEK HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Contact:

Communications Office
NewsMedia@flhealth.gov
850-245-4111

Tallahassee, Fla.—The Florida Department of Health is celebrating National Health Education Week (NHEW) this week, Oct. 19-23. Sponsored by the Society for Public Health Education, this annual observance focuses national attention on the role of health education in public health. This year's theme of National Health Education Week is "Health Education: Past, Present, and Future" and is an opportunity to celebrate past successes, present efforts and future opportunities for the health education profession.

"Health education and community engagement are essential to public health," said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. "Knowledge informs choices that reduce risks and prevent disease for Florida's children, adults and families."

A health education specialist uses appropriate educational methods that support the health of individuals, groups, schools and/or communities. The department's health educators work in each of Florida's 67 counties to meet the unique needs of their community.

Looking to the future, the department is working collaboratively to address the number one public health threat facing residents, unhealthy weight. Currently, only 36 percent of Floridians are at a healthy weight. Through health education, the department is addressing this important health issue with the Healthiest Weight Florida initiative.

The Healthiest Weight Florida initiative is a collaborative health education effort. Engaging public and private organizations throughout the state, the department works in communities to help Florida's children, adults and families make consistent, informed choices about healthy eating and active living.

The initiative works closely with partners to leverage existing resources to maximize reach and impact. These partners include the business community, hospitals, non-governmental organizations, non-profit agencies, other federal, state, or local government agencies, and volunteer coalitions.

To speak with someone about the strides health educators are making in your community contact your Florida Department of Health and we will put you in contact with an expert in your area to interview.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](https://twitter.com/HealthyFla) and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/HealthyFla). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit www.FloridaHealth.gov.