



## *The State of Public Health In Indiana*

Years of cuts to vital public health programs and agencies on both the federal and state levels have taken their toll and further complicate our efforts to support ongoing disease and injury prevention activities and to ensure we are prepared for an infectious disease outbreak, or other public health emergency. The current Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill, which funds most federal public health programs, contains increased funding levels for many of these programs for the first time in recent years.

- Indiana spent \$117 per capita on public health programs in 2005 and 2006, following a decrease from \$120 since 2004; funding for public health is below the national average, ranking 34<sup>th</sup>.
- The percent of the population without health insurance has remained at 14.2% since 2005.
- Indiana ranks low compared to other states for immunization coverage for children; the percentage of children covered dropped from 79% in 2005 to 78.1% in 2006.
- Indiana has the second-highest smoking rate of all American states, having risen from 24.8% in 2005 to 27.3% in 2006. Obesity rates also rose over the same period to 27.2% of the population.

Sources: *America's Health Rankings, 2006 Edition: A Call to Action for People & Their Communities*; *The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation State Health Facts*.

In response to an informal electronic survey sent out to our membership and 53 state affiliates:

A Public Health Worker from the Department of Health in Indianapolis, Indiana told us, ***"Cutting the federal funding provided to states is reducing the funding that will trickle to the Local Health Departments and the community served. Doing more with less leads to significant project cuts, reduced travel, and an overall inability to greatly expand to currently underserved areas."***

Another Public Health Worker from Terre Haute, Indiana described, ***"The anticipated cuts in 2007 will affect our public health preparedness programs significantly. Another anticipated cut in federal 317 funds will affect our entire 'fall between the cracks' population because VFC does not pay for those who have any insurance even when the deductible is very high or they do not pay for immunizations."***

Founded in 1872, APHA is the oldest, largest and most diverse organization of public health professionals in the world. The association aims to protect all Americans and their communities from preventable, serious health threats and strives to assure community-based health promotion and disease prevention activities and preventive health services are universally accessible in the United States. [www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org).