



The State of Public Health In Kentucky

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.

- Kentucky was ranked 36th in Public Health Spending in 2006, having spent only \$112 per capita.
- The prevalence of obesity in Kentucky more than doubled from 12.2% in 1990 to 28.6% in 2006; an alarming increase of 134%.
- In the past year, the prevalence of smoking increased from 27.5% to 28.6%, leaving Kentucky with a staggeringly high smoking rate, one of the largest in the U.S.

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 of Wedco District Health Department told us *"Federal cuts undermine the trickle down from their allocations and reduces the scope and number of services that we can provide, which jeopardizes the community health status."*

A Lake Cumberland District Health Department worker expressed concern regarding how cuts are affecting relationships with the community: *"It is becoming much harder to contract with service providers due to cut-backs to reimbursement capabilities resulting from funding cuts."*

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.