



American
Public Health
Association



APHA PHACT Campaign

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION CAMPAIGN



The State of Public Health in Florida

Years of flat funding and budget cuts to vital public health agencies and programs at both the federal and state levels have taken their toll on Florida and the nation as a whole, complicating public health efforts. Additional resources are needed to adequately support improving access to care, controlling diseases, eliminating health disparities, and other public health activities. Make public health a priority this year and help us move towards developing a healthy society.

The Facts:

- **Public Health Funding:** The state of Florida spends an average of \$27.49 a year on the public health needs of each resident, which is below the national median of \$33.26 a year. Total public health spending, including federal sources such as money from HRSA and CDC, amounts to an average of \$143 per person, an amount that places Florida among the bottom half of all states.
- **Disease:** Florida has the 2nd highest rate of infectious diseases, the 2nd highest rate of cancer and the 2nd highest rate of Alzheimer's disease.
- **Access to Care:** 21.2 percent of Floridians are uninsured, the 4th highest level in the nation. 18.99 percent of children under the age of 18 are uninsured, the 2nd highest level in the nation.
- **Health Disparities:** Residents of Florida who live in rural areas are 31 percent more likely to die prematurely than those who live in the suburbs of large cities.
- **The Road Ahead:** Although Florida has made recent improvements in many public health areas, such as decreasing the percentage of children that live in poverty, the state still faces many public health challenges.

Sources: United Health Foundation's State Snapshots; Trust for America's Health, *The State of Your Health Report*, 2008 Edition.

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

A Public Health Worker with the Sarasota County Health Department told us, "We were actively involved in the community-level dissemination of the VERB youth media campaign. The research and materials available through this campaign provided substantial support to our youth obesity prevention efforts. Additionally, though the cut will not be felt until September or October, many job positions focused on chronic disease prevention will be in jeopardy due to the elimination of the Block Grant."

Another Public Health Worker from Tampa, Florida described how her agency is trying hard to adapt to funding cuts: *"Head Start received a one percent cut this year. We do what we can to ensure that services to families are not reduced and cut costs elsewhere."*

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.