



***Increasing Health Care Access and
Reducing Health Disparities in
Rural Communities***

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Overview

- **Health Disparities in Jefferson & Madison Counties**
- **Public Health Interventions**
- **Accomplishments**
- **Directions for the Future**



Health Disparities in
Jefferson and Madison Counties

2X



Health Disparities in Jefferson and Madison Counties

Three main reasons for racial health disparities:

- 1. Access to health care & education**
- 2. Pre-existing health conditions**
- 3. Failures in the health care delivery system.**



Public Health Interventions

- **Disease Management Programs**
 - Care Coordination
 - Group support activities
 - Community education workshops
- **Prescription Assistance Program**
- **Outreach and Education**
- **Community Partnerships**



Public Health Interventions

■ Health Disparities Task Forces

- Groups of community, business, church, and health care leaders that are addressing health disparities and focus on improving teen pregnancy rates, encouraging healthy lifestyles and preventing chronic diseases, and improving maternal and child health.
 - Infrastructure & Resources
 - Strategies
 - Increased Funding
 - Sustainability

Public Health Interventions

Strategies

- Church health ministries
- Health fairs and education workshops
- Increase access and availability
 - Health services
 - Opportunities for physical activity
 - Nutritious foods





Accomplishments

Jefferson and Madison County Health Departments

- **New mobile health unit arrived on June 15, 2007**
- **Hired a full-time dentist for each CHD**
- **Awarded 10 churches with indoor physical activity equipment packages through a migrant program**
- **Provided new outdoor physical activity equipment to city and county recreation parks**
- **Funded the renovation of three playgrounds in underserved areas**



Accomplishments

Healthy Start Coalition of Jefferson, Madison, and Taylor Counties

- *Closing the Gap* grant for Women's Health
 - Provides a family support worker at the health department
 - Supports church health ministries
- Blue Foundation grant
 - Group prenatal care that has shown to improve birth outcomes
 - Provides dental care services, transportation, and basic life skills education



Accomplishments

Big Bend Rural Health Network, Inc.:

- *Closing the Gap* grant provides diabetes care services including a community health worker, nurse coordinator, and support for church health ministries
- Provides ongoing funding to county health department for diabetes supplies and equipment
- Received a federal Medicaid grant to assist health care providers in maintaining financial sustainability while preparing for upcoming Medicaid reform



Directions for the Future

- **Healthy Families Funding**
 - A nationally credentialed, community-based, home visiting program proven to prevent child abuse by promoting positive parenting skills and healthy child development and helping parents set and achieve goals for themselves and their families.
- **Whole Child projects**
 - Address challenges and opportunities that affect children 0-5 and their families. Create Action Teams of community agencies and volunteers that focus on the six dimensions of a *Whole Child*.



Directions for the Future

- **PACE – EH funding to address environmental health issues in low-income, underserved neighborhoods**
- **Community Health Needs Assessment will be conducted this summer by the Healthy Start Coalition and the health departments to determine strategic issues and provide relevant data used to obtain grant funding**



Directions for the Future

- **Increase participation and awareness**
 - **Involve more health care providers**
 - **Engage the business community**
 - **Leverage regional and state resources**
 - **Increase media exposure**

- **Focus on Worksite and Church Wellness programs**
 - **Walking trails**
 - **Indoor and outdoor equipment**
 - **Health fairs**
 - **Group exercise clubs**
 - **Nutrition and cooking classes**



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