



“Working for Your Well-Being”

CCFoPH Newsletter

Sixth Edition – September 2009

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Thank You Friends!

Thanks to the Friends who helped with important health information at two events this summer. “Quitting smoking for your baby is a family affair!” was the key message at the public health booth at both the Coos County Fair and the Blackberry Arts Festival. The display was illustrated with pictures of a baby and a pregnant woman, and had information on how to quit smoking.

Read the article inside by Stephen Brown about why it is so important that we as a community help foster an environment where pregnant women do not smoke. Kudos to the Friends who worked at either (or both) events! Carl Siminow, Donna and Chris Flammang, Molly



Carl Siminow at the Blackberry Festival booth.

Ford, Sherrill Lorenzo, Sylvia Mangan, Crystal Shoji, Karen Devereux, Maria Wartnik, Lindi Quinn, Dale Schlack, Maxine Sigloh, Astrid Diepenbroek, Renee Menkens, and Frances and Joe Smith.

Volunteer Opportunities

- October 3rd Coquille Valley Hospital Health Fair, Coquille, 10 am. – 2:30 p.m.
- October 10th The Elder Resource Fair at Pony Village Mall, 10am – 2 pm Contact Frances Smith if you are able to help (fsmith@co.coos.or.us).
- Flu Clinics! See page 3.

Welcome New Members

Members who have renewed (paid dues) or joined since the last newsletter are:

Judy Moody, OSU Extension, Debbie Webb, Bill and Anne Hudson, Mary Margaret Stockert and Howard Crombie.

Jenny

by Stephen Brown ND, MPH

Arriving for her appointment, Jenny*, 19 years old and 7 months pregnant with her second baby, gets out of her car to stand and smoke a cigarette before hefting her two year old out of her infant seat and heading across the street into the North Bend Annex. This is not uncommon scene for those of us working in the Health Department. Coos County's smoking during pregnancy rate is over 23% and doubles that of Oregon and the U.S.

Tobacco use, beyond being the single greatest preventable cause of death and disease in general, is also the single greatest preventable cause of poor outcomes in pregnancy. Tobacco use during pregnancy raises the risk of multiple problems for the baby, including irritability from nicotine withdrawal, low birth weight and being born too early, cleft palate, death in the womb and in infancy, brain damage that is associated with behavior problems, drug use in adolescence, and lifelong decreased lung function.

Why are so many of our young women addicted to tobacco? Like most smokers, Jenny became addicted in her early teens. She lives with her parents, a grandmother with chronic lung disease (whose husband died of lung cancer at 56), a brother, and her boyfriend. All of them smoke. Many of her parent's circle of friends also use tobacco. Coming from an economically poor and poorly educated family background, Jenny has little sense of being able to change, of being in control of her own destiny. Though she now longs to quit, she is unable to.

Jenny also lives in a community with high acceptance of tobacco use as normal behavior, and where, with special irony, many people see tobacco addiction as an expression of personal freedom. When she goes to the Coos County Fair, Jenny sees that smoking is an acceptable behavior. When she goes to the Community College campus for a class, Jenny sees that smoking is an acceptable behavior. When she buys cigarettes at the grocery store along with her food, it's hard for Jenny to believe that smoking can be all that bad. Although she learned about the harmful effects of tobacco in school, it has little practical relevance for Jenny in the real world of Coos County.



You may believe that Jenny bears some personal responsibility for her poorly informed choice at age 13 to become a nicotine addict, but certainly the responsibility is also shared by the people whose choices create the community she lives in. Living in a community that tolerates tobacco use places young people at high risk of becoming addicted. As individuals, what can we do? Support efforts to create tobacco free environments. Don't smoke around children or at family centered events. Request that others not smoke in the presence of children and if you smoke, make every effort to quit. Help protect our young people from giving up their freedom to an addiction that is the greatest cause of health disparities, an addiction that most tobacco users regret, and an addiction that will lead to the eventual deaths of 1500 of the children alive today in Coos County. Help create a community where the healthy choice is the easy choice and the right choice.

Compared with women who do not smoke,

- Women who smoke prior to pregnancy are about twice as likely to experience a delay in conception and have approximately 30% higher odds of being infertile,
- Women who smoke during pregnancy are about twice as likely to experience premature rupture of membranes, placental abruption, and placenta previa during pregnancy.

Babies born to women who smoke during pregnancy,

- Have about 30% higher odds of being born prematurely.
- Are more likely to be born with low birth weight (less than 2500 grams or 5.5 pounds), increasing their risk for illness or death.
- Weigh an average of 200 grams less than infants born to women who do not smoke.
- Are 1.4 to 3.0 times more likely to die of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

www.CDC.gov

*Jenny is a representative composite of many true Coos County stories.

Swine Flu (H1N1) Vaccine Update

By Frances Smith

Coos County will be receiving the first shipment of the swine flu vaccine within a couple of weeks. The weekly shipments should provide us with enough vaccine to immunize about 27,000 people in the top priority groups. This new flu will be a mild illness for many who get it. If you know someone who was ill this summer with a fever, a cough, and muscle aches (maybe vomiting and diarrhea, too), it was probably the swine flu. Older people (over 65) don't seem to be getting infected as easily. However, there is a concern, based on what has been happening worldwide, that pregnant women, children and young adults—especially those who have chronic conditions—are at risk for serious complications that could result in death. So these are the priority groups who should get the vaccine first:



- pregnant women
- household contacts/caregivers for children < 6 months of age
- healthcare and emergency medical services personnel
- all person 6 months – 24 years of age, and
- persons ages 25-64 with health conditions that put them at risk, such as asthma, diabetes, or compromised immunity

The vaccine will be provided to everyone after the priority groups have been served. Our goal is to quickly vaccinate as many people as possible—no small feat, considering our staffing challenges. The Health Department is coordinating the distribution of the vaccine to hospitals and health clinics, who will immunize their health care workers and also their patients in the priority groups. The Health Department is working on plans for special immunization clinics in the schools and the community college, for Head Start children, for emergency responders, and for anyone else that meets the priority status. Volunteers are needed, especially with the school clinics. Nurses, or other medical professionals licensed to administer vaccine, are needed to administer the shots (or nasal spray version of the vaccine). For every 4 nurses in a shot clinic, at least a dozen other personnel are needed to help with registration and paper work, crowd control, and monitoring supplies.

If you are able to volunteer, contact Karin Kenney at the Health Department: 756-2020, ext. 645, or by email at kkenney@co.coos.or.us. Immunization clinics may begin as early as the week of October 5th.

Rotarians Show Support for CaCoon – Babies First! Program

The Coos County Friends of Public Health recently received a \$5,000 grant from the Coos Bay-North Bend Rotary Club. The funds will be used to provide services to local families through the CaCoon / Babies First! program at Coos County Public Health. The families eligible for this program have children who have been identified as at risk or suffering from special health needs (such as Downs Syndrome, autism, cerebral palsy, ADHD, etc.) The grant funds will support skilled public health nurses who make home visits to assist families in providing the best possible care they can for their children, so that these children may become as independent as possible in their adult years. Families are also assisted in accessing resources and financial services for which the children may qualify. The paperwork involved in seeking help from multiple health care professionals and agencies can be daunting for families. Public health nurses help relieve some of the stress that comes with caring for a special needs child. The skills given to parents in the CaCoon / Babies First! program will help their children grow up healthy and ready to learn. Thanks to the Coos Bay-North Bend Rotary Club for their contribution in helping families with these special needs!

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EMAIL OPTION



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Contact Information: ccfoph@gmail.com, 541-888-6871 or 541-756-2020 x 543

Thank you most recent donors! Bill and Anne Hudson, Chris & Donna Flammang, Debbie Webb, and Margery Whitmer.