



DISTRICT HEALTH DIGEST

News from the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene



Our Mission

The Brooklyn District Public Health Office provides information and works with community partners to reduce the number of people who die early in our communities and to improve the health of all who live here.

SETTING A HEALTH AGENDA FOR NORTH AND CENTRAL BROOKLYN



and with the Health Department. Importantly, in order to create meaningful, sustainable improvements on these issues, we need to work on multiple levels: helping individuals make healthy life choices, creating systems and conditions that foster and facilitate those choices, assuring a health care system that is accessible and addresses prevention as well as treatment of illness, and, not least of all, reducing the burden of poverty and other social disadvantage, which have profound detrimental effects on public health.

There are many health issues facing our communities, and each resident has his or her own unique set of health concerns. The Health Department's District Office works with other city agencies, with community groups, and with individual residents to address the challenge of trying to focus on the most pressing health issues and improve the health of the most people.

Take Care New York is a set of 10 health issues that are of great importance for two reasons: First, they affect many people in our communities. Second, effective strategies already exist to help people deal with these issues.

Community residents can use this list to help them think about how to lead healthier lives and how to talk to their health care providers. And people working in organizations—medical clinics, hospitals, workplaces, schools, community groups—can use this list to set priorities and create partnerships with each other

10 STEPS to a LONGER and HEALTHIER LIFE

1. Have a Regular Doctor or Other Health Care Provider
2. Be Tobacco-Free
3. Keep Your Heart Healthy
4. Know Your HIV Status
5. Get Help for Depression
6. Live Free of Dependence on Alcohol and Drugs
7. Get Checked for Cancer
8. Get the Immunizations You Need
9. Make Your Home Safe & Healthy
10. Have a Healthy Baby

Health Blotter for Bedford-Stuyvesant and Bushwick

COMMUNITY HEALTH TOPICS

JULY – SEP 2004

Deaths to community residents under 65 years of age	177
...from heart disease	30
...from HIV/AIDS	18
...from lung, colon, and breast cancer	16
Infant deaths (deaths to babies younger than 1 year)	7
Babies born to teenagers	131
Babies born with low birthweight	110
Children diagnosed with lead poisoning	82
Visits by children to hospital emergency departments for asthma	570
Visits to "Shape up New York" free exercise program	More than 500

* All data are preliminary; Final vital statistics are published annually by DOHMH

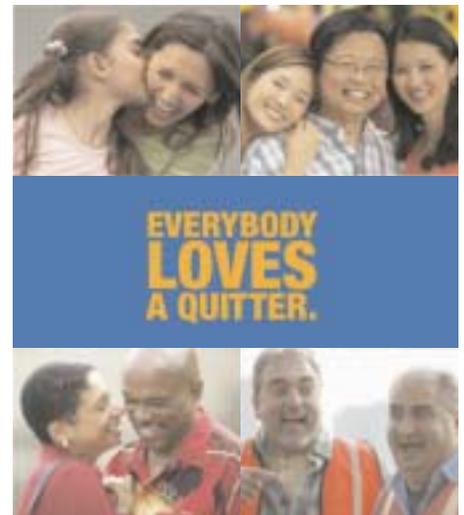
Take Care New York – Health Highlight: *Be Tobacco-Free*

Quit smoking and avoid second-hand smoke to prolong your life and protect those around you.

Smoking is the #1 cause of preventable death in New York City, killing 10,000 New Yorkers every year. On average, smokers die 14 years younger than non-smokers. Smoking increases a person's risk of heart disease, stroke, many cancers (lung, mouth, throat, and esophagus), blindness, Alzheimer's disease, and much more. Smoking also causes many problems in pregnancy, including miscarriage, premature labor, and low birthweight.

Second-hand smoke is also dangerous. It causes cancer, heart disease, and many other illnesses. Babies with a parent who smokes are more likely to die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. And babies and children who live with second-hand smoke are much more likely to have asthma, bronchitis, ear infections, and pneumonia.

If you smoke, quitting is the single most important thing you can do for your health.



Nicotine Patches Available

According to the 2003 New York City Community Health Survey, 67 percent of the 87,000 North and Central Brooklyn smokers have tried to quit. To help people who want to quit, the Health Department is making nicotine patches available free of charge.

The Brooklyn District Public Health Office is distributing the patch through community events, health fairs, community organizations,

and to doctors and their patients. The DPHO is also offering patches on a walk-in basis Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To be eligible, participants must be a New York City resident 18 or over, who is a current smoker. A health screening process will take place on site to ensure there are no health reasons that contraindicate patch treatment.

The patches are being distributed at both Brooklyn offices, located at 335 Central Ave. and 485 Throop Ave. They are also available in the lobby of Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Plaza. For more information, contact our office.

SPARK: A Training Program to Get Kids Moving



Since Fall 2003, the Brooklyn District Public Health Office (DPHO) has been working with elementary schools, daycares and Head Start programs to make a difference in the quality and quantity of physical activity children get each day.

The Brooklyn DPHO has provided free staff training in a physical activity curriculum called Sports, Play & Active Recreation for Kids (SPARK). SPARK teaches staff age-appropriate games and exercises that are fun and non-competitive so that children are moderately to vigorously active at least 50% of the time they are in class. So far, over 51 sites involving 100 staff have attended the full day training.

SPARK was developed in 1989 by a team of researchers and educators that received federal funding to create, implement, and evaluate an elementary school physical education

program that could eventually become a nationwide model.

The Brooklyn DPHO plans to offer more training in the SPARK curricula next year.

If you are interested in learning more about SPARK or the trainings, please contact our office.



SHAPE-UP BROOKLYN!



Sheila Dove, a local teacher, is an enthusiastic participant in the Shape-Up Brooklyn (SUB) program funded by the Brooklyn District Public Health Office under the direction of the Bushwick Beacon Lighthouse at IS 291 (231 Palmetto St.). Ms. Dove, whose last gym membership for herself and her daughter cost \$500 every three months, finds everything both she and her daughter need at the Beacon's program. She feels that the exercise and dance classes have been therapeutic in helping reduce stress and loves the complete cardiovascular workout that has helped her feel better and lose weight.

— FREE FITNESS CLASSES FOR ALL AGES AND ABILITIES

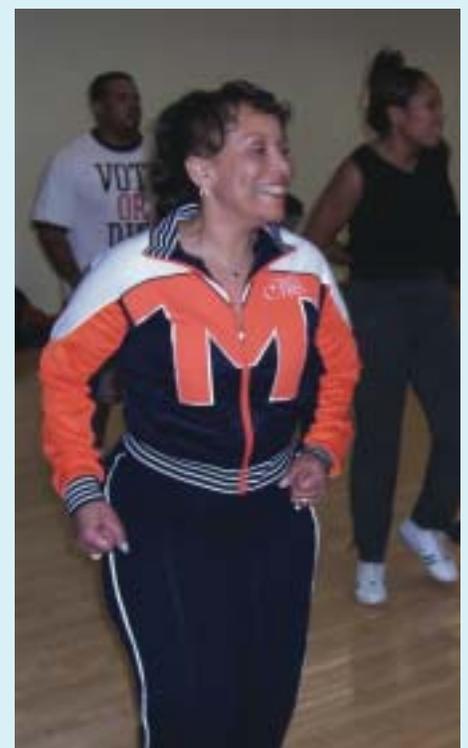
Michael Richardson, another regular at SUB, has been attending for 8 months. He finds his stamina is increased for his basketball game, his weight is down and he has toned up.

SUB is a free fitness program with classes for both children and adults. Sessions are weekday afternoons and evenings and Saturday mornings. Trained instructors lead the classes and individuals of all levels of ability are welcome. During the spring, hundreds of individuals have registered, attending, on average two times a week.

The Shape-Up Brooklyn (SUB) program nicely complements the Beacon's Fitness Center which consists of a fully equipped fitness room and is staffed by personal

trainers. Between SUB classes, teens and adults can develop a personal fitness program. The room is equipped with both weight/strength and cardio machines.

Other Brooklyn Shape-Up programs are located in Bedford Stuyvesant, Brownsville and East New York. For more information contact our office.



Landlords' & Contractors' Nights

New York City's new lead law, Local Law 1 was passed in February 4, 2004, and since then, city agencies and local community organizations in the Bushwick and Bedford Stuyvesant sections of Brooklyn have been playing an active role in educating neighborhood landlords and contractors about the new requirements.

An important aspect of the new law is that, depending on the type and extent of contracting work to be done in an apartment, different work practices and contractor certifications are required. Local landlords need to be aware of these issues and, ideally, local contractors should be trained and certified to do these types of work.

A partnership was created to organize an educational program and reach out to potential participants. The partners were: the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Brooklyn District Public Health Office, NYC's Housing, Preservation & Development's Lead

Education unit, Community Boards 3 and 4, Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizen Council, Bushwick's Beacon Lighthouse @ IS 291, and Bushwick Information-OBUSTY.

The group coordinated ten three-hour workshops at various locations around North & Central Brooklyn. The workshops placed specific emphasis on local contractors and property owners.

The workshops have been a huge success, with over 200 people attending. Attending the workshops made participants eligible to attend a free course on safe work practices from NYC's Dept. of Housing, Preservation and Development. Up to five employees for the contractors could attend, as well as property owners and their superintendents. To date, 73 participants have taken advantage of HPD's offer and have been trained in Lead Safe Work Practices free of charge.

Because of the success and demand for information about the new lead law, additional workshops will be held in North & Central Brooklyn.

NORTH AND CENTRAL BROOKLYN DISTRICT PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICE

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