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Release Date: March 25, 2015
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Division of Public and Behavioral Health

NEWS RELEASE

Annual Rankings Show Where Counties Do Well and Opportunities for Improvement

Carson City - The sixth annual County Health Rankings, released today by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (UWPHI), outline the health status for counties in Nevada. The Rankings are available at www.countyhealthrankings.org.

The Rankings are an easy-to-use snapshot comparing the health of nearly every county in the nation. The local-level data allows each state to see how its counties compare on 30 factors that influence health including education, housing, violent crime, jobs, diet, and exercise.

Nationally, this year's Rankings show that the healthiest counties in each state have higher college attendance, fewer preventable hospital stays, and better access to parks and gyms. The least healthy counties in each state have more smokers, more teen births, and more alcohol related car crash deaths. This report also looks at distribution in income and the links between income levels and health.

The Rankings also revealed the following national trends:

- Premature death rates are dropping, with 60 percent of the nation's counties seeing declines. But for many counties these rates are not improving – 40 percent of counties are not making progress in reducing premature death.
- One out of four children in the U.S. lives in poverty. Child poverty rates are more than twice as high in the unhealthiest counties in each state than in the healthiest counties.
- Violent crime rates are highest in the South. Violent crime rates, which affect health, well-being, and stress levels, are highest in the Southwest, Southeast, and Mississippi Delta Regions.
- Having a job influences health. Unemployment rates are 1.5 times higher in the least healthy counties in each state as they are in the healthiest counties. During the recession, counties in the West, Southeast, and rust belt region of the U.S. were hit hardest by growing unemployment. Many, but not at all, of these counties have seen their unemployment rates drop since the recession ended in 2010.

“In the six years since the County Health Rankings began, we've seen them serve as a rallying point for change,” said Bridget Catlin, PhD, MHSA, co-director of the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. “Communities are using the Rankings to inform their priorities as they work to build a Culture of Health.”

The County Health Rankings & Roadmaps program offers data, tools, and resources to help communities throughout their journey to build a Culture of Health. Also part of the program is the RWJF Culture of Health Prize which honors communities that are working together to build a healthier, more vibrant community.

For more information about the Division of Public and Behavioral Health, go to: <http://health.nv.gov>.




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