



#HealthierMO

Transforming the Future of Public Health in Missouri

Thankful for Public Health

As we gather around the Thanksgiving dinner table, we're reminded of all the things our family has to be thankful for – and public health is at the top of the list!

Public health gave Aunt Kathy instructions on how to thaw the turkey safely in the refrigerator and not on the counter top. It taught her to cook the stuffing in a casserole dish instead of inside the turkey. Since cousin Cassie doesn't know how to cook, we're all relieved she brought potato salad from the local deli. They aced their last food inspection, so we can eat without fear of foodborne illness!

Public health taught cousin Katie's kindergarten class to wash their hands before eating. It taught Uncle Ben to choose steamed broccoli instead of sweet potato casserole to help manage his diabetes. It helped Uncle Rob quit smoking. It offered family planning services to cousin Isabelle to help her space out her pregnancies.

Public health helped Irene continue to breastfeed baby Micah after she went back to work. It made sure little Jenna's childcare center knew how to manage her asthma. It provided nutritious foods for the 2-year-old twin terrors Mikey and Justin. It gave us all flu shots before we gathered today.

Thanks to public health, Trevor and his girlfriend Becky were wearing their seat belts last week as they celebrated his new driver's license. TJ lost his four front teeth, but the ones he has left are healthy and strong, thanks to public health ensuring there is fluoride in the city water system and providing TJ with regular dental exams.

Public health provided an after-school walking program at Junior's middle school that helped him lose 10 pounds and motivated him to try out the new walking trails public health put in around town. Public health monitors Grandpa Joe's blood pressure regularly to help lower his risk of having another stroke. And thanks to public health, Grandma Ruby is still with us, after a mammogram caught her breast cancer early enough to start treatment.

Yes, this family has definitely been blessed by public health!

Though the characters in this story are fictitious, the impact of public health is real. Public health touches every life, every day – and that's something we should all be thankful for!

The Missouri Public Health Association is leading the #HealthierMO initiative in partnership with Support KC. Funding for the first phase of this multi-year initiative was provided by the Missouri Foundation for Health and the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City. To learn more, visit www.HealthierMO.org.