



## #HealthierMO

Transforming the Future of Public Health in Missouri

### Thankful for Public Health

As our family gathers around the table for turkey and fixin's this Thanksgiving, we'll take a few minutes to remember all the things we have to be thankful for. Public health is at the top of our 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 future pregnancies. It gave baby Nick a safe portable crib to sleep in.

Public health helped Irene continue to breastfeed baby Micah after she went back to work. It made sure Jenna's childcare center knew how to manage her asthma. Through WIC, it ensured nutritious food options for 2-year-old twins 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 when they went out to celebrate his new driver's license. Little TJ may be the only kid in first grade to lose all four front teeth at once, but the teeth 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!*

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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](http://www.HealthierMO.org).