

# Health Promotion at Bangor Public Health & Community Services

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In this edition we're highlighting our work with partners in the community to adopt new policies and practices.

According to 2021 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey data, less than 25% of students meet the recommended one-hour of daily physical activity due to a lack of minimum physical education requirements and only 20-30 minutes of daily recess. To promote physical activity among kids, Bangor Public Health has introduced the Mileage Club, which allows participants to walk, run, roll, snowshoe, cross-country ski, etc. at their own pace to earn rewards. A scanning app, which is paid for by Bangor Public Health, makes it easy for users to track their miles.



With the help of Bangor Public Health, Katahdin Elementary School in Stacyville, began offering the Mileage Club. The program is called "Walking Club" and is overseen by Gail Pocock, who manages the 21st Century Afterschool Program. Every week, Gail takes students on a half-mile loop through the wooded area at KES. Deb Weiskittel, who provides technical assistance for the Mileage Club, says that Gail has been a fantastic champion and role model for student and staff health and wellness.

*Contact us if your school is interested in implementing the Mileage Club Program.*

### **Safe Storage Tools for Families**

We've teamed up with the City of Bangor's Public Health Nursing Program to keep medications and cannabis products locked up and away from kids.

Public health nurses in Bangor are now offering locking bags, boxes, Deterra disposal pouches, and safe storage and disposal information at maternal/child health home visits.

"Safely storing medication and



cannabis products greatly lowers the chances of children and pets accessing them. Now more families have the tools they need to do this", says Brianna Bryant, Certified Prevention Specialist at BPH. "We're excited to have the partnership with the Public Health Nursing Program to get these resources into the community."

Safe storage is an evidence-based strategy proven to reduce youth access to substances. It's more important than ever as Maine has had increases in accidental ingestions of cannabis in kids 0-12 in the last several years. Many cannabis products can be easily mistaken for other foods consumed by youth. There's greater risk to children under the age of 12, too. Their smaller size and weight can result in a more potent and longer-lasting impact if consumed. Locking these products up in homes ensures they are safely away from the inquisitive hands of little kids.

Does your organization work with families in Penobscot County? We'd love to partner with you, too. *Contact us for more information.*



### **New Policy Protects 600+ Tenants from Tobacco Smoke**

The Greater Bangor area has 40 more buildings with 280 rental units that are all 100% smoke-free, and a property manager who feels confident in the plan to protect 600+ tenants who live there.

This new policy is the result of a partnership between BPH's tobacco prevention team and a local landlord/property manager. The landlord faced multiple issues with smoking and adherence to existing rules. The tobacco prevention team's policy expertise helped address these concerns. After some education and information sharing, the team went to



work creating a smoke-free policy with a very clear enforcement component. "Enforcement is a significant concern for landlords. We work closely to ensure they have tools they need and a plan that will work. Enforcement is often easier than they expect." Lisa Dunning, Tobacco Prevention Specialist.



Once written, the new policy was shared with tenants. Each signed a new disclosure agreement to help ensure that they all have a smoke-free environment to live in.

The property manager stated that he "really appreciates the partnership with BPH."

Are you a landlord/property manager in Penobscot County who is interested in learning more about smoke-free policies? *Contact us!*

## **CADCA**

Bangor Public Health staff recently spent four days in National Harbor, MD attending CADCA, the nation's largest training conference for substance use prevention professionals. The team got to hear directly from researchers and experts at NIH, NIDA, DEA, SAMHSA, US CDC, the White House Office of Drug Control Policy and many more. They brought back new resources, contacts, and renewed energy for this important work.



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