

NEWS RELEASE
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Douglas County ranks 27th among Kansas counties

(Lawrence, KS) – A new report released today by the Kansas Health Institute ranks Douglas County’s health 27th out of 105 counties.

The inaugural report, available online at www.ldchealth.org, illustrates the current health of Douglas County and what things will determine our health in the future – behavior, physical environment, economic factors and access to health care. Thirty-one indicators were used to measure these determinants.

“These health rankings point out that we need to continue to be engaged with the community to improve our health and the behaviors that influence it,” said Dan Partridge, Director of the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department. “Oftentimes, people don’t realize that many of the factors that impact our health have little to do with the care we receive in physicians’ offices or hospitals.”

The report listed Douglas County’s top three strengths as:

1. Seatbelt use.
2. Number of homes with decreased lead risk.
3. Number of residents with high school diplomas.

Douglas County’s top three challenges were listed as:

1. High respiratory hazard index.
2. Binge drinking.
3. Number of annually reported Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) cases.

These numbers were either better or worse when compared to the Kansas average.

“Changing our ranking will take a concerted effort,” Partridge said. “The Health Department will continue to work with community partners to improve our ranking for 2010 and beyond.”