



*“Inspiring Better Health for All”*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**National Public Health Week**

April 6 – April 12, 2026

This year’s National Public Health Week theme is “Ready. Set. Action!” The theme highlights the successes in the area of public health through scientific discoveries, legislation, and community efforts.

Important strides have been made to improve the health of all Americans since the start of National Public Health Week in 1994. Examples of successes in the last 32 years include the following:

- Childhood mortality – The rate was 13.8 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1994. It has fallen to 5.4 deaths per 1,000 live births. This is due to vaccines, better health care access, and nutrition.
- Smoking rates – 25.5% of adults smoked in 1994. It has fallen to 11.4 %. This is due to smoke-free policies, public awareness campaigns, and taxation of tobacco products.
- Mental health awareness and treatment – 40% of people with mental health conditions were not treated in 1994. Progress has been made with increased awareness, parity laws, and integration into primary care. This has expanded access to mental health services and lowered treatment gaps.
- Lead poisoning – 4.4% of U.S. children had elevated blood lead levels in 1994. It has fallen to less than 0.5%. This is due to policies banning leaded gasoline and lowering lead in paint, pipes, and water systems.

A person’s health is affected by where a person lives. A community that continues to work on access to healthy food, access to health care, and access to other needed resources can help prevent disease and injury, as well as promote wellness. Forest County Health Department would like to recognize all the efforts that have been made since 1994 that has improved the health and longevity of our community.

If you would like more information, please contact Forest County Health Department at 715-478-3371 or visit us at <https://forestcountypublichealth.org/>

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