

NEWS RELEASE
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**Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department
receives national Model Practice Award**

(Lawrence, KS) – The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department will be honored today at the annual conference of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) in Dallas for developing and implementing a project that demonstrates exemplary and replicable qualities in response to a public health need.

The project, “Developing Tools For Improving Compliance With Child Care Licensing Regulations,” was one of 38 public health initiatives selected to receive NACCHO’s Model Practice Award.

“Your project reflects a strong local health department role, collaboration, innovation and has demonstrated its value through evaluation,” said Ivey Wohlfeld, of NACCHO’s Model Practices Team. “Congratulations for a job well done.”

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department’s Child Care Licensing team conducted a random audit in October 2011 and found 91 percent of home child care providers had been cited for paperwork violations during their last inspection. As a result of the findings, the Child Care Licensing team produced a low-cost organizational system for providers to use along with training sessions on how to use them. Since then, there has been a 79 percent improvement from previous surveys in overall numbers of citations given for paperwork violations. Additionally, the amount of time surveyors spend on an inspection has decreased by about 40 minutes.

“It has been a win-win situation for providers and surveyors,” said Karen Flanders, Child Care Licensing coordinator at the Health Department. “Providers have more time to spend with their children, they’re receiving fewer citations and the survey is taking less time if they use this method.”

Flanders has shared the project with other health departments in Kansas. She also has worked with community agencies like Child Care Aware that can assist child care providers with implementation of the organizational system. There are about 160 child care homes in Douglas County.

“If there’s an emergency, children are going to be a lot safer when the required paperwork is on file,” Flanders said.

Since 2003, NACCHO's Model Practice Awards program has honored initiatives — including programs, resources and tools — that demonstrate how local health departments and their community partners can effectively collaborate to address local public health concerns. To receive the Model Practice Award, the program was reviewed by other local health department professionals and selected from a group of 101 applications. This is the second Model Practice Award for the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department. It received an award in 2009 for public health messaging.

“We are proud to receive NACCHO's Model Practice Award,” said Dan Partridge, Health Department director. “The award is evidence of our commitment to developing innovative public health programs that improve the health of local residents.”

For more information about the NACCHO Model Practice Awards and to view a list of other winners, go to naccho.org.

About the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department has served the Lawrence and Douglas County community for more than 120 years. Its mission is to advance policies, practices and programs that promote health for all, prevent disease and protect the environment.

About the National Association of County and City Health Officials

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's 2,800 local governmental health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for people in their communities.

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