

# **Macon County, NC**

## **2008 State of the County Health Report**

**Prepared by the Macon County Public Health Center  
& Healthy Carolinians of Macon County**





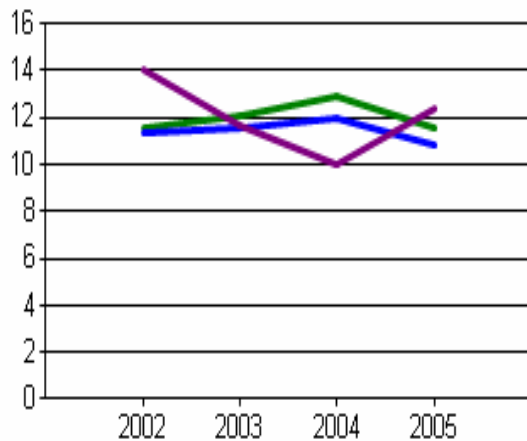
**Health Priorities From the  
2007 Community Health  
Assessment ...  
Why Were They Selected?**

# Access To Primary Care

- Macon County's seasonal residents are not counted in population numbers
- The number of primary care physicians who accept Medicaid patients and/or new patients is low
- The percent of Macon County adults who wanted to see an MD and couldn't was 18% vs. 16% for NC
- Macon County focus groups identified access to primary care as a prevalent concern.
- Macon County's uninsured rate for adults, ages 18-64, is 22.8%

# Macon County Trend Data

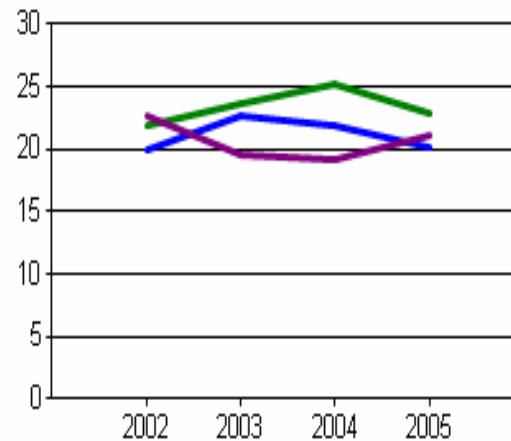
Rates Over Time



— County Rate — State Rate  
— Peer Rate

**% Estimate of Uninsured, Ages 0-17**

Rates Over Time



— County Rate — State Rate  
— Peer Rate

**% Estimate of Uninsured, Ages 18-64**

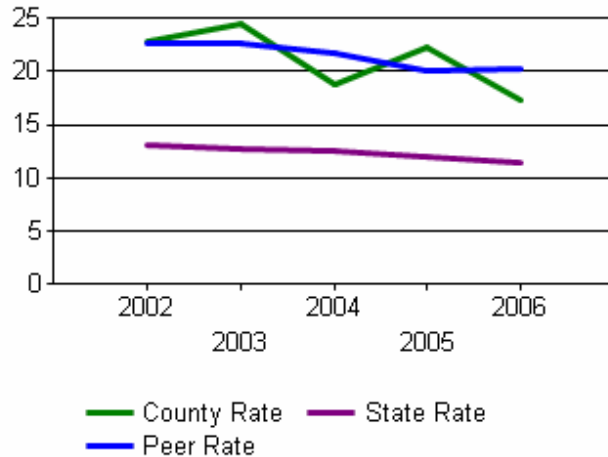


# Strengthening Families to Reduce Youth Risky Behavior

- High childhood obesity rates documented at school health fairs
- Increasing Teen Pregnancy Rates
- Tobacco Usage Among Youth and Pregnant Women
- Self-reported risky behaviors on the Youth Risk Behavior Survey
- Focus Groups and Interviews tied Youth Risky Behavior to Family Life

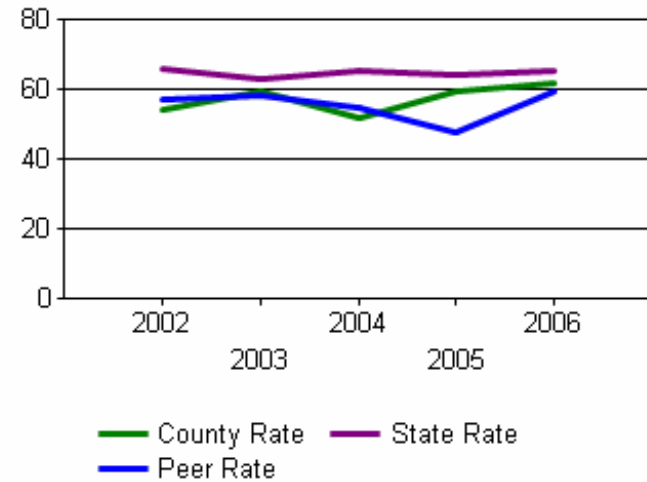
# Macon County Trend Data

Rates Over Time



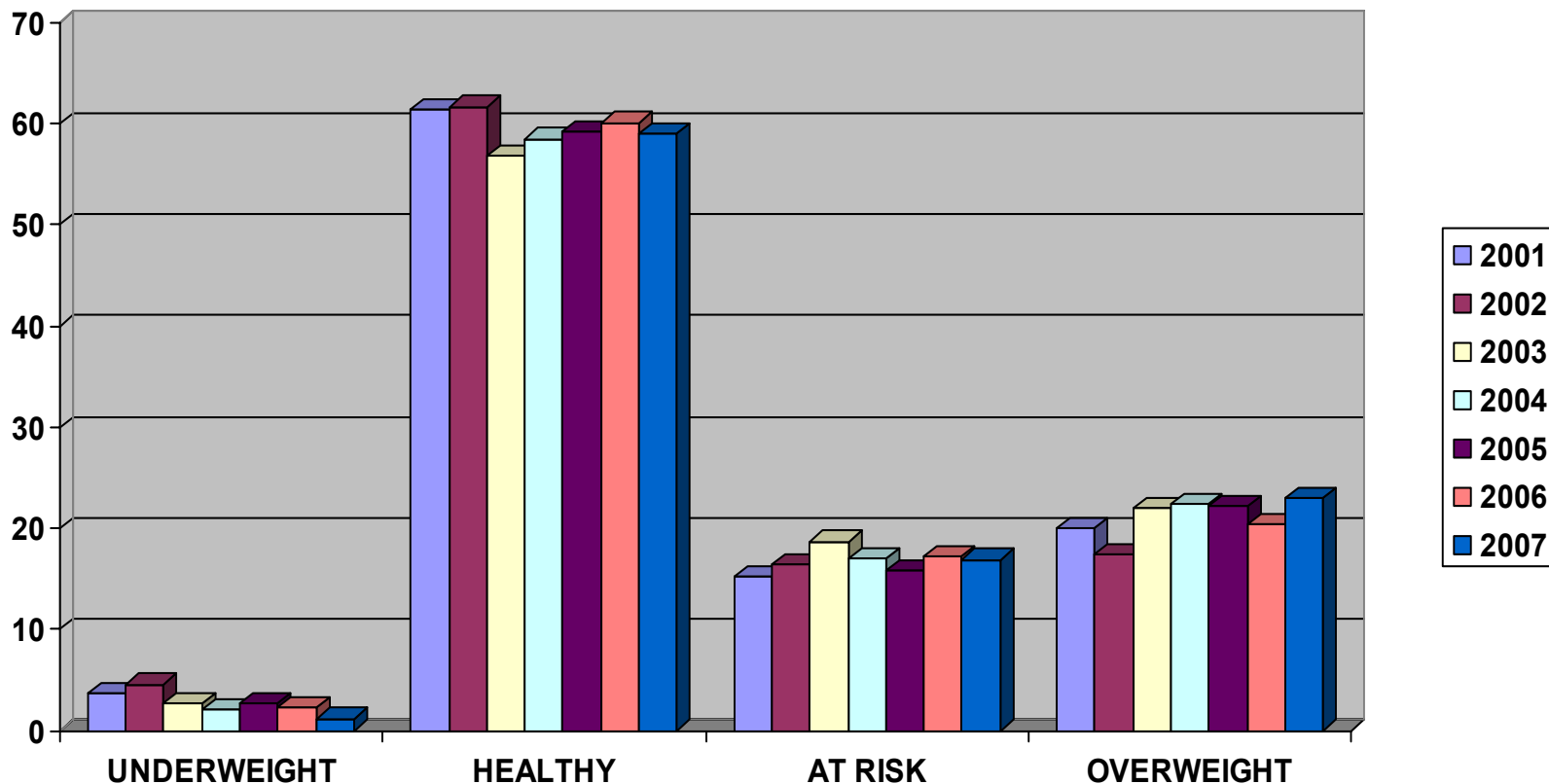
**% of Live Births Where the Mother Smoked During Pregnancy**

Rates Over Time



**Teen Pregnancies per 1,000 Girls Ages 15-19**

# MACON COUNTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS BODY MASS INDEX (BMI) TRENDS 2001-2007



UNDERWEIGHT = LESS THAN 5<sup>TH</sup> PERCENTILE  
HEALTHY = 5<sup>TH</sup> TO 84<sup>TH</sup> PERCENTILE  
AT RISK = 85<sup>TH</sup> TO 94<sup>TH</sup> PERCENTILE  
OVERWEIGHT = MORE THAN 95<sup>TH</sup> PERCENTILE



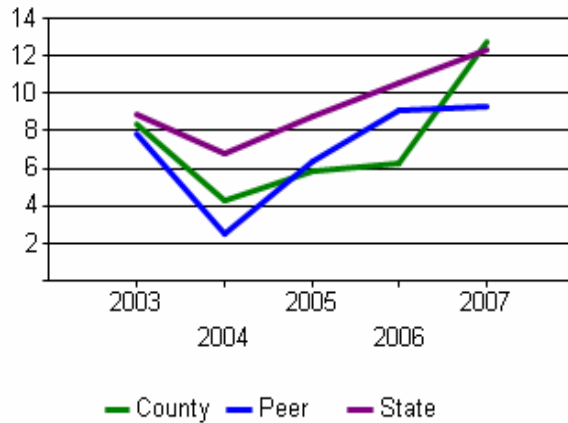
# Planning for Future Senior Needs

- Projected population growth among seniors is one of the highest in the state
- Current percentage of elderly population is one of the highest in the state
- Focus Groups and Telephone Survey revealed that current senior needs are being met; however, there was a need to plan for future growth



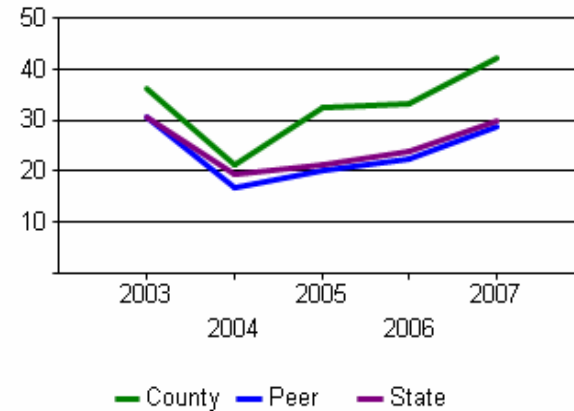
# Macon County Trend Data

Percent of Population Change Since  
Base Year 2000



Population Change,  
Age Group, 75-84

Percent of Population Change Since  
Base Year 2000



Population Change,  
Age Group, 85+

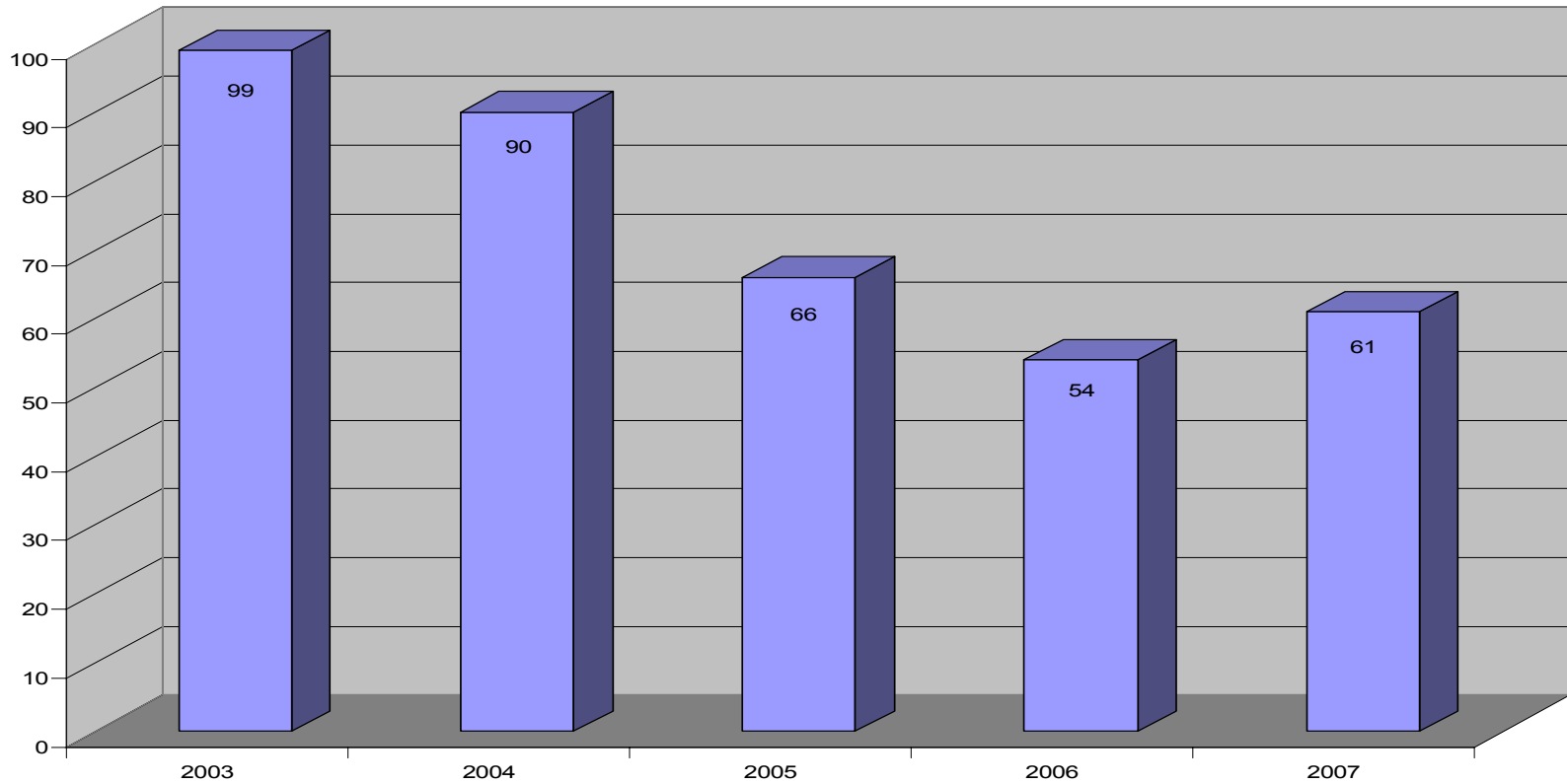


# Environmental Quality

- Septic system failure rates expected to increase due to the age and number of systems
- Septic system application rates are in the top 10% statewide due to vacation / second home market

# Macon County Trend Data

**Macon County Repair Improvement Permits Issued**



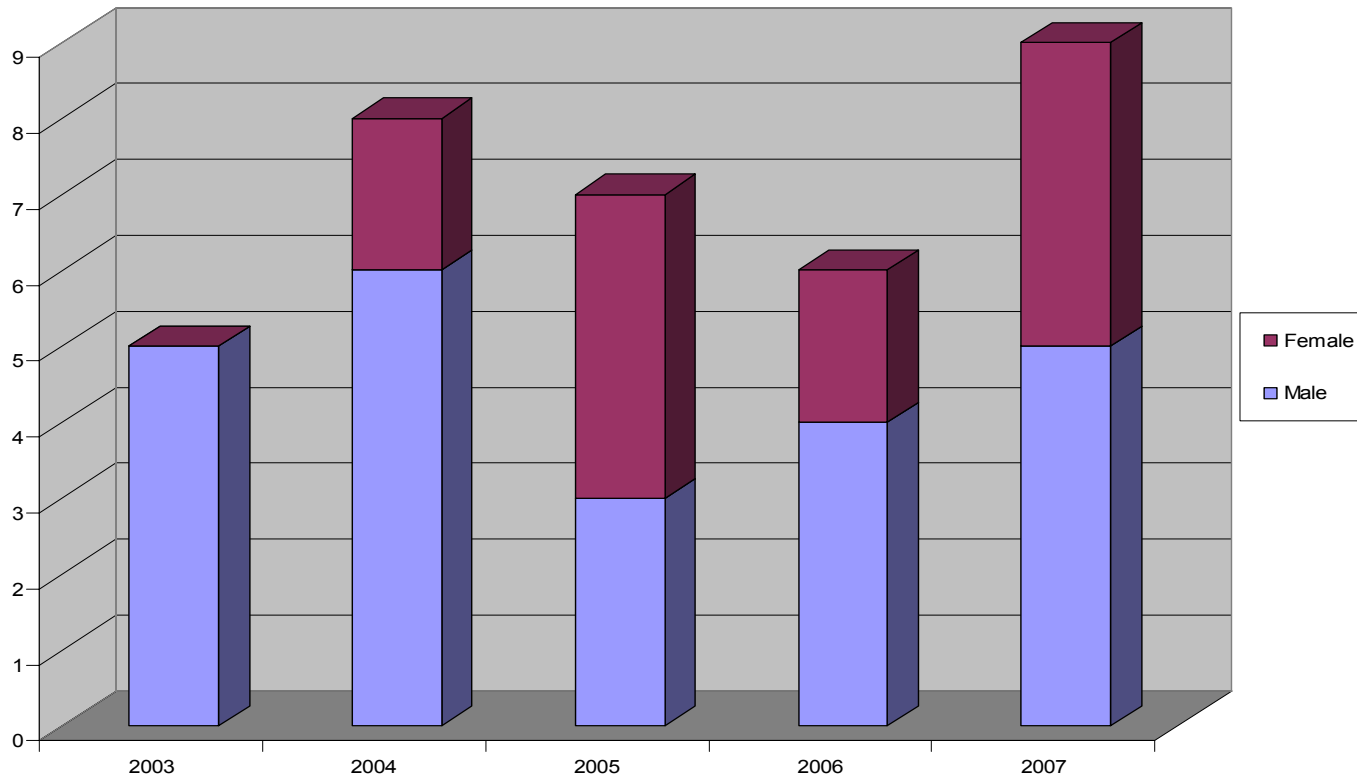


# Mental Health / Substance Abuse

- Access to a psychologist rate in Macon County is 1.3 vs. 3.0 for NC
- Suicide rate is rising; increasingly split between male/female
- Results of telephone survey indicated access to care barriers

# Macon County Trend Data

**Macon County Deaths due to Intentional Self Harm  
(Suicide)**



# Review of Major Health Indicators for Macon County



# Top Ten Leading Causes of Death in Macon County

KEY				
	Rates or percentages include a numerator value less than 20 and are statistically unstable			Macon County's rate is a minimum of 15% higher than the state or peer counties.
	No significant statistical difference			Macon County's rate is a minimum of 15% lower than the state or peer counties

## 2005 - 2006 Age-Adjusted Rate Comparison

Leading Causes of Death	Macon Rate*	Change	Peer Rate*	NCRate*
Total Heart Disease	189.0	-	172.9	198.7
All Other Unintentional Injury Deaths	85.1	+	35.2	27.9
Cerebrovascular Disease	48.8	-	42.4	53.2
Trachea, Bronchus, and Lung Cancer	44.6	-	47.2	60.4
Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases	37.1	-	41.0	46.4
Alzheimer's Disease	29.7	+	24.5	27.0
Diabetes	22.8	-	17.5	25.4
Pneumonia and Influenza	20.5	+	15.4	20.0
Breast Cancer	19.3	-	19.3	24.9
Suicide	18.7	+	23.8	12.3

\* Rates per 100,000 population

\*\* "+" = no. increased since 2005, "-" = no. decreased since 2005

Peer Counties: Ashe, Haywood, Polk, & Transylvania

# Top Ten Hospital Discharge Rates for Diseases, Injuries, and Disabilities (Morbidity) in Macon County

KEY

Rates or percentages include a numerator value less than 20 and are statistically unstable		Macon County's rate is a minimum of 15% higher than the state or peer counties.
No significant statistical difference		Macon County's rate is a minimum of 15% lower than the state or peer counties.

## 2005 - 2006 Comparison

Incidence	Macon Rate*	Change	Peer Rate*	NC Rate*
Cardiovascular and Circulatory Diseases	206.4	+	211.6	189.9
Heart Disease	150.9	+	150.8	129.9
Digestive System Diseases	121.7	+	135.8	109.0
Respiratory Diseases	105.7	-	131.7	107.6
Injuries and Poisonings	96.6	-	105.0	87.3
Musculoskeletal System Diseases	82.2	+	88.1	60.6
Pneumonia and Influenza	48.6	-	47.4	37.7
Genitourinary Diseases	43.3	+	64.6	54.0
Malignant Neoplasm	42.3	+	49.5	39.9
Arthropathies and Related Disorders	39.8	+	40.1	28.1

\* Rates per 10,000 population


\*\* "+" = no. increased since 2005, "-" = no. decreased since 2005

Peer Counties: Ashe, Haywood, Polk, & Transylvania



# Other Health Related Information Pertinent to Macon County

Incidence	Macon	Prior Year Change	Peer	NC
Total Population, 2007	31,883	+	32,888	8,717,079
Population, Under 5 yrs. Old, 2007	4.9%	+	4.9%	6.8%
Population, 5 – 19, 2007	17.2%	+	16.9%	20.7%
Population, 20 – 64, 2007	54.0%	+	56.9%	59.8%
Population, 65+, 2007	23.9%	+	21.3%	12.7%
% Estimate of Uninsured, Ages 0-64, 2006	20.0%	-	17.7%	18.6%
% Estimate of Uninsured, Ages 0-17, 2006	11.6%	-	11.0%	12.4%
% Estimate of Uninsured, Ages 18-64, 2006	22.8%	-	19.9%	21.1%
Per Capita Income, 2006	\$25,848	+	\$29,414	\$31,041
% Unemployed, 2006	4.5%	<b>level</b>	4.4%	4.8%
% Individuals Below Federal Poverty Level, 2005	14.0%	N/A	N/A	14.9%
% Individuals Below 200% Federal Poverty Level, 1999	35.8%	N/A	N/A	30.5%
Teen Pregnancies per 1,000 Girls, Ages 15-19, 2006	61.7	+	59.6	65.5
** "+" = no. increased from previous year, "-" = no. decreased from previous year Peer Counties: Ashe, Haywood, Polk, & Transylvania				



# Status of the Selected Priorities at the End of 2008

# Access to Primary Care

## ■ Progress

- Angel Medical Center continues recruitment efforts for primary care MDs and hospitalists
- Highlands Free Clinic increased its patient capacity by adding a PA to its staff
- August 2008, Veteran's Administration Clinic opened in Franklin
- Medication assistance programs are now available in both Franklin and Highlands
- August & September 2008, Healthy Carolinians members met with stakeholders to assess Franklin's capacity to increase local access to primary care for uninsured



# Access to Primary Care

## ■ Barriers/Challenges

- Limited number of primary care providers accepting new Medicaid patients
- Decrease in community capacity to provide primary care services due to relocation of providers

# Strengthening Families

## ■ Progress

- Healthy Carolinians coalition established a subcommittee to develop a community resource center at the old library and to study the feasibility of a creating a 211 information line
- Habitat for Humanity is developing Emergency Housing Services
- CareNet of Macon County added one lunch day/week to their soup kitchen schedule
- K-8 PE teachers are participating in the SPARK and Fitnessgram trainings
- Macon County schools pilots a staff wellness program
- Access Care of Macon County is implementing pediatric clinical obesity tools in local MD offices
- Church wellness programs offered by the public health center support families exercising together
- BMI rates measured at school health fairs are stable or declining
- Rates of youth tobacco have declined
- A new health education position has been established at Franklin High School to teach reproductive health.



# Strengthening Families

## ■ **Barriers/Challenges**

- Number of pregnant women seen through WIC s who smoke is still higher than that state
- Economic Downturn



# Planning for Senior Needs

## ■ Progress

- Macon County Senior Services and the Southwest Area Agency on Aging have implemented the Senior Friendly Assessment and Planning Process



# Environmental Quality

## ■ Progress

- Healthy Carolinians coalition developed an Environmental Quality task force in January
- Task Force has drafted an educational tool for maintenance of septic systems and drilled wells
- Public Health Center implemented a well inspection program





# Environmental Quality

## ■ Barriers/Challenges

- The public health center continues to experience a staffing shortage and high turnover rate for Registered Sanitarians
- Low awareness of the need for on-going septic and private drinking well-water system maintenance by the general public

# Mental Health / Substance Abuse

## ■ Progress

- A County Commissioner appointed Mental Health Task Force developed a county Mental Health Plan including six recommendations which is now posted on county website.
- County Commissioners appointed Healthy Carolinians to form a Mental Health committee to further develop Macon County's Mental Health Action Plan.
- Macon County proposed an RFP to establish school-based mental health services in Macon County schools.



# Mental Health / Substance Abuse

## ■ Barriers/Challenges

- NC Mental Health Reform continues to be complex and in perpetual flux
- In the absence of state mental health leadership, local officials have taken the initiative to educate themselves about mental health issues and develop a local response plan



## **Changes in Macon County's Economic and Political Environment Affecting Health**

- **Recent economic downturns may affect access to care and environmental quality priorities.**
  - **Local housing starts are down, which in turn affects local employment and wages. The unemployment rate in Macon County has increased from 4.5% in 2006 to 5.4% as of August, 2008.**
  - **Access to care could become more difficult in times of financial hardship due to fewer insured residents and increased need for Medicaid assistance.**
  - **Increased fuel costs may increase the need for public transportation to health care and decrease the ability of residents to heat their homes.**
  - **Impact on the environment may be positive if a corresponding reduction in the number of septic and well permit applications is seen.**

# New and Emerging Health Issues

- Animal control – Improvements expected since the 2008 adoption of an animal control ordinance and approval for a new animal shelter
- Immigrant immunization compliance rates
- Staph infections including Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)
- Increased need for public transportation to health care services due to economic downturn
- Digital mammography is now available at Angel Medical Center