

# MARYLAND PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

January 2001

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Membership Application

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## Note from the President

The Maryland Public Health Association has been doing some soul searching as we enter the new century and it seems most appropriate that this year's annual meeting had as its theme a new beginning. The 2000 annual meeting focused on the Healthy People 2010 objectives and what it will take to get us there. MPHA has over 400 members, a hard working slate of officers, a balanced, if not enormous, budget and some great ideas, so it looks like we are off to a good start. We have some dedicated funds to promote public health using technology, and a grant in Maternal and Child Health. Also we have a new Challenge Grant from APHA to do membership-boosting programs and create a strategic plan, so expect to see some great new programs coming your way and get ready to help too. We are building linkages to partners who can help us in important ways. The Johns Hopkins School of Public Health has given us a permanent home for our files and an address that is not a box number. They are offering us a new improved spot for our web-site too. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is partnering with us to increase physical activity all over Maryland and are helping us get the word out. No less than 12 organizations wrote letters of support for our Challenge grant. Soon we will be finding ways to leverage our resources with theirs for more effective action.

Our theme for the years of increasing physical activity is timely in a State where sedentary lifestyle and high calorie diets are the most important risk issues after tobacco for chronic disease. Ironically, although cars, TV sets and computers that make us into couch potatoes, are hallmarks of affluence, the poor are more vulnerable. People in poor areas may feel less safe outside, too fearful to let kids run and play. Labor saving devices are saving calories too.

Hardly anyone uses muscles at work any more. Those who can afford gym memberships and personal trainers can work off the extra calories.

Two major barriers to active lifestyles are lack of time and feeling unsafe. Making time for activity will take all our ingenuity and a change in how we organize our lives. Making places feel safe can be done too. Patrolling paths where children walk from school can eliminate fear. Improving lighting and working with police to create crime free neighborhoods can turn things around too. But fear can be an illusion. Even in low crime areas, people think they are at risk because of media reports about crime. Getting folks active and outdoors may require group activity. We all know "it takes a village to raise a child" It also takes all of us together to create an active and healthy community.

*Katherine Farrell MD MPH  
President*

## March Legislative Event

MPHA's Legislative Reception will be on March 13, 2001 in Annapolis. Our theme this year is "Eliminating Health Disparities". Watch for further details.

The Anna Baetcher Society at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health will participate in the Legislative Reception as a way to involve their student members in legislative efforts. We are glad to encourage their interest in advocacy in public health.

## MPHA Annual Meeting is May 18, 2000. Save the Date!

The Maryland Public Health Association's 2001 Annual Meeting with the theme of "Increasing Physical Activity Among Marylanders" is set for Friday, May 18, 2000. The meeting is a time to meet with old friends in public

health and make new acquaintances. More information will be sent to you in the upcoming months. Consider submitting an abstract on work not published prior to December 2000. You do not have to be a member but submission of an abstract implies a commitment to present a poster or presentation at the annual meeting. Please submit abstracts by March 30<sup>th</sup> 2001 by e-mail to [gsilver@jhsph.edu](mailto:gsilver@jhsph.edu) or mail to:

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**MPHA Web Site**

Our web site is operational! For information on our mission, membership, meetings, and nursing

section, go to: [www.stwing.upenn.edu/~gbsilver/mpha](http://www.stwing.upenn.edu/~gbsilver/mpha). You will find our electronic membership form and an electronic abstract for our annual meeting. Another way to reach our web-site is through the [www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org) American Public Health Association web-site. Click on "state affiliates" and then on Maryland. Check in periodically as we update and expand our web-site. Please e-mail Gillian Silver, our web-site keeper at [gsilver@jhsup.edu](mailto:gsilver@jhsup.edu) if you have information to post.

**Current News**

The Maryland Board of Sanitarians has asked to meet with MPHA to develop some joint projects. This is a wonderful opportunity to start an environmental health section. If you would like to work

on getting a new section started, please contact Katherine Farrell, MD, MPH at 410-222-7252 or e-mail her at [farrellkf@pol.net](mailto:farrellkf@pol.net).

Special thanks to Gary Wunderlicht of DHMH for his help with our physical activity projects. Thanks to his efforts MPHA has made important contacts with wonderful partners. His help is greatly appreciated.

**MPHA signs INFACT's position paper**

The MPHA Board voted to sign the INFACT statement protesting the Phillip Morris/Kraft marketing strategy, which uses publicity about contributions to needy causes to improve their image while they continue to promote a deadly product.

**APHA Governing Council News**

The APHA Governing Council met during the 2000 Annual Meeting in Boston, Massachusetts. News from the Governing Council includes:

- The Council adapted 42 out of 45 proposed policies. They covered "an array of topics including pesticides, air and water quality, genocide, tobacco control, and debt relief." The five prioritized as being most important are:
  1. Support for a new campaign for universal health care.
  2. Reduction of racial and ethnic health disparities;
  3. Establishment of a Medicare prescription drug benefit;
  4. Development of an international trade policy which improves access to pharmaceuticals in developing countries, and
  5. Assessment of the quality of health information on the Internet.

**MPHA 2001 Annual Meeting Abstract**

**Abstract Title:**

**Authors and Affiliations:**

**Address of Lead Author, including e-mail**

**Abstract:**

A summary of all newly approved policies is available in the December 2000/January 20001 issue of the Nations Health and at [www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org).

- The HIV/AIDS SPIG officially became an APHA Section after five years of organizational work and the Task Force on Credentialing Public Health Workers will be expanded and continued.
- APHA issued a "Call to the Nation to Eliminate Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health" and recruited a National Health Coalition to work together towards the goal of assuring that future generations will be "healthier, happier, and more productive." Coalition members included health advocacy groups, state health departments, federal agencies including The White House, and corporations.

*Michaeline R. Fedder, MPHA APHA representative*

### Your Child's Healthy Heart

Do you ever think about your child's healthy heart beating over 100,000 times a day? Heart disease isn't common in children, so parents naturally focus on more immediate concerns like schools and safety. But current rates of overweight and obese children, related to unhealthy dietary habits and decreasing physical activity, promise a future epidemic of heart disease and stroke that can't be ignored.

Over the last thirty years, the number of overweight children has more than doubled. After the age of three, the likelihood that obesity will persist into adulthood increases with the age of the child. In a study of over 10,000 third graders, higher initial body weight, body

mass index and rate of weight gain were linked to higher levels of blood cholesterol and blood pressure in a sample measured twenty years later.

Restricting children's food intake is not the way to solve the problem since it can interfere with normal growth and development. Offering healthy foods and encouraging physical activity are important steps to promoting children's long-term heart health.

Here's what you can do:

Be a role model. Twelve to fifteen-year olds say parents are the overwhelming first choice as a motivator for healthy eating. Our kids really are listening!

Reward children with your time \* play a game or take a walk. Using empty-calorie desserts as a reward for "cleaning your plate" or for good behavior encourages overeating.

Let your children be active by limiting TV and video game use. Children who watched four or more hours of TV per day (the norm for 11 to 13-year olds) had a greater body mass index than those who watched less than two hours per day, according to data from the third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey.

Focus on the family. Everyone can benefit from eating healthy foods and being active.

For an e-mail copy of the booklet, *Helping Your Overweight Child*, and/or the Food Guide Pyramid for Young Children, e-mail a request to [www.goodheart@dhhm.state.md.us](mailto:www.goodheart@dhhm.state.md.us).

*Editor's Note: Thanks to Gary Wunderlich and the staff at the Community and Public Health Administration's Division of Cardiovascular Health and Nutrition for this article.*

### Public Health Nursing Section

The MPHA Public Health Nursing Section is very active. You are invited to section meetings that are held once a month, generally on the second Thursday of the Month. Visit the MPHA web site to learn more about section activities.

### MPHA Board Members in 2000-01

Katherine Farrell MD MPH, President..

Donald Fedder, DRPH, MPH Past president

Michaeline Fedder, MA APHA Affiliate representative

Katherine Fox, Ph.D. Member at large  
Anne R. Markham, JD , Secretary

C. Daniel Mullins, Ph.D., member at large

Francoise Pradel, Ph.D Treasurer  
John Ryan, MD Member at large  
Judy J. Schuur, RN, BA Chair nursing section

Virginia Seyler , Legislative liaison  
Gillian B. Silver, M.P.H. President Elect  
Katherine Marconi, Ph.D, MS Newsletter editor:

### Membership Renewal

Use the following application form to renew your MPHA membership. We depend on your support as we advance public health in Maryland.



