



Jeb Bush  
Governor

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Secretary

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## **DOH's Division of Disease Control Builds Better Health for Florida's Future**

**TALLAHASSEE** – The Florida Department of Health's (DOH) Division of Disease Control (DDC) is supporting major public health functions, among them Improved Health Outcomes/Health Information and Public Health Preparedness, following the theme, ***Building Better Health for Florida's Future***. The DDC is comprised of the following programs and Bureaus: Epidemiology, Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and Hepatitis, Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD), Immunization, Tuberculosis (TB) and Refugee Health, and the A.G. Holley State Hospital.

"Prevention is the focus of public health," said Deputy State Health Officer Bonnie Sorensen, M.D., M.B.A. "With hurricane season and other public concerns worldwide, we feel it's imperative to let Floridians know exactly what we do and how we support important public health functions."

### ***I. Improved Health Outcomes and Health Information***

- The reported number of new HIV cases declined by 8 percent with significant decreases among black women (down 14 percent) and black men (down 10 percent). The reported incident cases of AIDS in the state declined by 12 percent in 2005.
- During 2005, the Bureau of Epidemiology and its CHD partners investigated, verified and took appropriate control measures for over 38,500 cases of notifiable diseases such as botulism, E. coli/hemolytic uremic syndrome associated with petting zoos and carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Congenital syphilis rates decreased from 39 to 7 per 100,000 live births from 1998 to 2004. Gonorrhea rates declined from 145 to 105 cases per 100,000 persons.
- Perinatally acquired HIV/AIDS declined 94 percent, from 171 babies born in 1992 to 11 born in 2004; preliminary data show only four cases in babies born in 2005.
- Immunization coverage levels (completed basic series) for 2-year-old children rose from 76.9 percent in 2001 to 89.7 percent in 2005, placing Florida on track to surpass the Healthy People 2010 national goal of 90 percent. This accomplishment was recently noted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Coverage Award received March 2006 for "Extraordinary Accomplishment in Achieving 88.5 percent Coverage" and the CDC Improvement Award for "Outstanding Achievement in Improvement of Immunization Coverage of 17.4 percent since 2001."
- Florida youth benefit from the results obtained from a large-scale, school-based survey effort to track indicators of tobacco use and exposure to second-hand smoke in hundreds of schools and tens of thousands of students every year. Partners in this effort include other state agencies, the CDC and local school districts. Results are provided to the Florida Leadership Council for Tobacco Control which was formed in 1998 to provide a unified strategic effort.



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- A.G. Holley Hospital, the nation's only in-patient TB facility, has been nationally recognized for its unsurpassed ability to cure the most difficult cases of tuberculosis, with a cure rate that exceeds 93 percent in a group of patients that traditionally are cured only 50 percent of the time.

## ***II. Public Health Preparedness***

- A.G. Holley Hospital was recognized with awards for its role in setting up and maintaining a Special Needs Shelter for St. Lucie and Palm Beach Counties during the 2004 hurricane season, when local shelters were unexpectedly damaged.
- Preparedness planning was advanced by determining the composition, training and experience needed for Epidemiology Strike Teams, in compliance with the National Incident Management System.
- Partnering with other states and guided by the CDC, the DDC is playing a major part in developing Florida's pandemic preparedness plan that addresses disease surveillance, emergency management, vaccine delivery, laboratory and communications activities and multi-agency response.
- Public Health preparedness for disasters was advanced through completion of the Epidemiology Hurricane Toolkit. This is a set of guidelines and analysis tools designed primarily for county health departments to help plan and carry out enhanced disease monitoring activities, outbreak investigation and management, and other aspects of the epidemiologic response to a natural disasters, such as hurricanes.

"These activities and accomplishments represent the Division's strong commitment to preventing and controlling diseases of public health importance and to improving our ability to respond effectively in the face of emergencies and disasters," said Division of Disease Control (DDC) Director Russell W. Eggert, M.D., MPH.

DOH promotes and protects the health and safety of all people in Florida through a delivery of quality public health services and the promotion of health care standards. For more information please visit [www.doh.state.fl.us](http://www.doh.state.fl.us) or the Centers for Disease Control Web site at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) .

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