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MEDIA RELEASE

County Health Rankings Released
Shawnee County Ranks 65th in Healthiest Kansas Counties

The third annual County Health Rankings were released today by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, ranking Shawnee County 65 out of 100 in overall health compared to other counties in the state. This report looks at how healthy people are and how healthy they can be, based on a number of factors.

In 2010, Shawnee County ranked 67th and in 2011 61st. Some measures used to calculate the rankings include: adult smoking, obesity, binge drinking, access to primary care providers, rates of high school graduation, rates of violent crimes, air pollution levels, unemployment rates and the number of children living in poverty.

As we evaluate the status of Shawnee County based on this report, it is important for the community to understand data comes from a variety of sources and from years 2001 – 2009, depending on the individual factor. There are a number of positive things taking place in Shawnee County that have developed over the last three to five years. These efforts are not reflected in this data due to the years being used for the report.

"The community of Shawnee County is making great strides in collaborative efforts such as Safe Streets, Heartland Healthy Neighborhoods, Sodium Reduction in Communities grant and the Shawnee County's Largest Workout," said Allison Alejos, Director of Local Health Department, Shawnee County Health Agency. "This data serves as a call to action for residents and organizations alike. It is a reminder that while great things are going on, we still have work to do. It takes everyone making an effort to create the changes we want to see Shawnee County."

The top five healthiest counties in Kansas are Riley, Johnson, Doniphan, Ellis and Coffey in overall health.

The online report, available at www.countyhealthrankings.org includes a snapshot of each county in Kansas.

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