Lincoln Vital Signs 2014

The Lincoln Vital Signs Advisory Council has released the Lincoln Vital Signs 2014 report, compiled by University of Nebraska Public Policy Center researchers Nancy Shank, Stacey Hoffman and Teri Perkins. This comprehensive report presents data about Lincoln in seven key areas: Community Profile, Economy and Workforce, Basic Needs, Education, Health, Safety and Community Involvement and Culture.

Lincoln Vital Signs is a collaborative project of numerous organizations and leadership. These organizations have contributed leadership time, data and financial support to ensure the full funding of this effort.

The indicators presented in this study provide data, not a plan for action. Many communities have found that tracking key indicators is a powerful way to understand their community’s assets and challenges. This document summarizes key indicators about Lincoln to paint a picture of our collective successes and challenges. It is hoped that it will catalyze insight and action among individuals and organizations developing a vision for the future.

Channel 5 City TV recorded the Lincoln Vital Signs breakfast held Jan. 23. A link to the video is at www.lincolnvitalsigns.org. At the breakfast, findings from the Lincoln Vital Signs 2014 report were presented, along with responses from Lincoln government, business, non-profit and philanthropic communities. Jeff Kutash, Executive Director of the Peter Kiewit Foundation, provided insights on how the report positions Lincoln well for the future.

The full report is available at www.lincolnvitalsigns.org. Following is the Executive Summary of the report.

Executive Summary

Lincoln is in an enviable position with its strong economy, highly-educated workforce, strong public educational system, high well-being, good health outcomes, and effective civic services. However, Lincoln has not escaped the worldwide recession unscathed. A growing proportion of Lincoln’s population faces real need; among these are Lincoln’s children. The report presents key indicators about Lincoln to paint a picture of our collective successes and challenges, as well as challenges, to the community.

1. Lincoln does many things exceptionally well and these successes should be nurtured.

   • Registrations procedures. Cost is $15 for AARP members and $20 for non-members, payable at the door. Payment by check is required — credit/debit cards are not accepted, nor is cash. All participants must bring their driver’s license and AARP members are required to also bring their ID card and number.

   In this class you will learn driving strategies which encourage confidence and safe driving, including: defensive driving techniques, new traffic laws and rules of the road.

   • how to deal with aggressive drivers

   • techniques to safely handle driving situations, such as left turns, right-of-ways, and blind spots, and

   • how to make the best use of safety features found in most automobiles.

2. A growing proportion of Lincoln’s population is poor.

   • Lincoln’s per capita income trails the national average by $4,000, and trails by $1,400 when adjusted for cost of living.

   • The number of people in Lincoln below the poverty threshold increased 48% since 2005 and the city now has a higher rate of poverty than the nation or Nebraska.

   • Since 2007, Lincoln’s number of homeless individuals has risen 41%.

   • In 2000, Lincoln had no neighborhoods in extreme poverty. By 2010, Lincoln had six neighborhoods in extreme poverty.

   • Lincoln’s children fare poorly on many measures.

   • The percent of children in poverty has doubled since 2008, which is now equivalent to national rates. This translates to 12,500 children in Lincoln living in poverty. Since 2009, the age group with the largest proportion in poverty in Lincoln is children aged 6-11.

   • Nearly 30% of all families with more than two children have incomes at or below the poverty threshold. Few female headed households with more than two children, 68% are at or below the poverty threshold.

   • In the 2013 single day count, one-third of home-less individuals were children 19 years of age or younger (n = 312); this number has increased 26% since 2007.

   • Approximately 44% of Lincoln Public School students participate in the Free or Reduced Price Lunch Program (n = 16,077). Most of these students receive free lunch (n = 13,315).

   • Lincoln’s racial and ethnic minority children and children living in poverty have lower educational achievement than do White children.

   • Lincoln has a much higher percentage of families with all parents in the workforce than the national average, suggesting that Lincoln may have an advantaged or an under utilized quality day care.

   However, no data for Lincoln could be identified that measures the availability of quality child care or its cost burden to families.

   • In Lancaster County, there continues to be a higher percentage of children in foster care than the national average. On any given day almost 1,000 children are in out-of-home placements due primarily to parental neglect (58%), parental substance abuse (30%) and substandard housing (25%).

   • Approximately one-third of elementary and middle school students are overweight or obese and are not proficient in cardiovascular fitness.

   • Lincoln has a high graduation rate. Overall rates of student proficiency are strong in standardized national testing at the third, fourth and eighth grades.

   • Lincoln’s violent crime rate has averaged 44% of the violent crime rate of other comparably-sized cities.

   • Lincoln ranked first in overall well-being in the 2012 Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index®.

   • Lincoln generally receives high marks for lower rates of disease and death for health risks attrib-utable to behaviors.

EGGS

EGGS from proceeding page

Nutrition Center: “The test of freshness involves seeing if an egg floats in a glass of (salt)-water is not a reliable test. In fact, this test has no relationship to the freshness of shell eggs. While eggs do float in a glass of water, the size of the air cell varies from egg to egg when they are laid. Therefore, a freshly laid egg and an older egg might react very similarly,” says Greenblum.

When unsafe about the safety of your eggs, as with all foods — when in doubt, throw them out.

How to Cook Eggs Safely

Proper cooking as well as proper storage is important for eggs safety. Cook eggs thoroughly. Other foods — when in doubt, throw them out.

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Q: How do I protect children from accidental poisoning?

A: Here are some steps you can take:

• Store all cleaning products and medicines out of the reach of children.

• Store foods separate from cleaning products, medicines and beauty aids.

• Put child proof locks on cabinets (especially low ones) containing products that may be harmful or poisonous.

• Always leave cleaning products in the original container.

• Be aware of poison look-alikes. Poison look-alikes are products that can easily be mistaken for safe food, drinks or other products. Many times the product or packaging is very similar to a safe product.

• Learn and teach children the meaning of the words DANGER, WARNING, CAUTION and KEEP OUT OF THE REACH OF CHILDREN.

• Never refer to medicine as candy.

• Keep the Poison Control Center number posted or in your cell phone contacts, 1-800-222-1222.

2014 Household Hazardous Waste Collections

These collections are for households only. Only residents of Lincoln and Lancaster County can bring items to collections.

SOME ITEMS YOU CAN BRING FOR DISPOSAL: Thermometers, thermostats containing mercury, solvents, oil-based paint, paint thinner, stripper, stain, old gasoline, transmission fluid, pesticides, small propane cylinders. You can dispose of compact fluorescent light bulbs at these waste collections.

DO NOT BRING latex paint, fertilizers, medicines/pheromicals, electronics & computers, large propane cylinders, tires, used oil, batteries, antifreeze or ammonium.

For more information or if you have questions how to recycle or dispose of items not accepted, call the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department at 402-441-8021 or go to www.lincoln.ne.gov (keyword: household).