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401 North Ewing Street
Lancaster, Ohio 43130
www.fmchealth.org

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Donna Stalter
Fairfield Medical Center
Public Relations Specialist
(740) 687-8108
donnas@fmchealth.org

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COMMUNITY HEALTHFEST IMPACTS LIVES AND MAKES A DIFFERENCE

LANCASTER, Ohio (August 26, 2009) – What is it worth to you to know if you have a health risk? Would you make changes in your lifestyle? Would you visit a physician to be evaluated? Do you avoid screenings because they cost money; you don't want to know the truth or simply don't take the time? All of those questions cause people to pause and think while they search for a few answers of their own, but each year the Community Healthfest creates an atmosphere that is convenient, simple, free and non-intimidating. For safety reasons children are required to have immunizations before attending school. Yet as adults, we go through life skipping our own checkups for a number of reasons.



People from Fairfield County and surrounding counties wait patiently for doors to open at Community HealthFest held on August 8, 2009 at Fairfield Christian Church.

So is there a way to work it out where we can all have our needs met? That's the goal of the Community Healthfest. Fairfield Medical Center has been more than a valued partner in this project; it is the founder and creator of it. In 2006 Fairfield Medical Center partnered with Riverview Surgery Center and Mt. Carmel to revise the event to be inclusive of physical activities, safety, education, agency information, medical screenings as well as offering

children's requirements for attending school. This endeavor grew as community partners began to participate and offer different venues of service. It is now larger than the original organizations as it has become a place where support groups help people become aware that they exist, physicians come to offer services and awareness of new faces, agencies offer free screenings and children get free school supplies to start out the school year.



Judy Root, Lancaster Rotarian, helps children pick out prizes after receiving free immunizations at Community HealthFest.

This year's Community HealthFest was held on August 8, 2009 at the Fairfield Christian Church. From year to year, people visit the Community Healthfest from more than 30 communities. This year over 50% of the cholesterols fell out of normal guidelines. But less than 10% of the glucoses were out of control. Moreover, 13% of the hearing screenings were referred to an audiologist. The Fairfield Medical Center audiologist was working non-stop all day. Hundreds of blood pressures and bone densities were done with many of them needing follow up. 20% of the vision screenings had referrals made along with 10% of the glaucoma screenings. Childhood immunizations totalled 80, with over 200 immunizations provided thanks to the help of the Fairfield Medical Center Foundation, Lancaster Rotary, United Way, and the Fairfield Department of Health.

Resa Tobin, Fairfield Medical Center Community Educator, commented, "This is not a complete list of findings from the Community Healthfest, however in these findings alone, the benefits of this event far outweigh the hours of volunteer time and small budget this event operates on. With each agency contributing, a lot is accomplished." Resa noted that while talking with a gentleman in attendance that was getting his glucose and cholesterol checked, she learned he hadn't been to his doctor in seven years. As a financially stable businessman he simply avoided going to his physician for lots of reasons. He never made time for it and although he knew he should, he just put it off. But he took the extra minute to get some blood work done because he was already there. Another family came because there were so many things they could do, it was like one stop shopping for back to school needs. One couple came because they wanted to see if the change in their diet and medication was really working to lower their cholesterol. It only cost them a needle stick and they could be

encouraged in their lifestyle changes. This couple didn't need anything else and didn't plan to get any freebies or any free school supplies. "Another person told me they had a \$1,000 deductible on a self-employed insurance plan. Healthfest offered them some basics that would save them money, time, and give them peace of mind. In exit interviews taken by staff, attendees remarked about how much they appreciated the school supplies, the car seat checks, the immunizations, and screenings," Resa said.

"Community HealthFest has once again brought value to our community and anyone participating should feel proud to have been involved. It is great to see all the team work and collaboration among other facilities in order to make this event such a success," said Mina Ubbing, President and CEO of Fairfield Medical Center. "Mount Carmel Health System, Fairfield Medical Center, and Riverview Surgery Center are again leaders in this community to inspire lifestyle changes toward healthier living by providing an opportunity for networking to improve the lives and conditions of the participants in our area and surrounding areas."

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