



About Us...

Custer/Washita Health Action Team (CWHAT) was formed in 2007 by combining coalitions from Great Plains Systems of Care, Project Picket Fences, and Custer County Turning Point Coalition. Project Picket Fences, Coalition for Teen Pregnancy Prevention and the Area Prevention Resource Center began a local movement to collaborate with other coalitions/teams to provide a stronger voice for the Custer/Washita communities. Although all three movements had different goals all carried the same vision; to strengthen the community.

In 2007, a sub-committee, Washita Health Action Team (WHAT), was awarded a three year meth grant from Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. City of Cordell acted as Lead Agency on this grant endeavor. After conducting assessments, WHAT worked with Burns Flat, Canute, Cordell, Sen-

tinel, and Washita Heights school systems to implement the “Too Good for Drugs” curricula. This curriculum is still being taught in all four school systems.

In 2008, CWHAT advocated and passed Social Host Ordinances in Weatherford and Clinton. They also sponsored a 2M2L (2 Much 2 Lose) youth leadership camp.

During 2009, WOTCC hosted Gruen VonBehrens, Oral Cancer Survivor, as a speaker for local schools. Gruen spoke personally about the harmful effects of spit tobacco use and the marketing tactics used by the tobacco industry to target youth as tobacco users. Arapaho Students Working Against Tobacco conducted their first Tobacco Teardown Campaign.

At the beginning of 2011, CWHAT partnership found itself in a lull. They had always heard that partnerships go through peaks and valleys but this was the first time CWHAT

was experiencing a valley first hand. After many discussions, CWHAT decided to engage their local Turning Point Field Consultant to begin Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP). They set their initial goals as:

1. Revitalize the current partnership.
2. Engage community residents.
3. Identify community issues.
4. Identify missing community sectors.



Arapaho-Butler SWAT team with Gruen Von Behrens.

C-WHAT

Custer-Washita Health Action Team

“Creating partnerships to educate, support, and empower communities to promote healthy lifestyles.”

Partnership Priorities

- Physical Activity and Nutrition
- Substance Abuse Prevention
- Teen Pregnancy
- Systems of Care



Historic Cordell Courthouse at Christmas. Custer County.

“In a nutshell, CWHAT provides great networking and communication between agencies to enable us to combine our resources to achieve more in our sparsely populated rural area.” — Alex Damon, Chair



Wind Turbines on the plains by Weatherford in Custer County.

Community Profile: Strengths and Challenges

Custer And Washita Counties are located approximately 90 miles west of Oklahoma City on I 40. The county seat for Custer county is Arapaho and Cordell is the county seat for Washita.

The combined population for both counties is 39,098 with a land mass area of 1,989.86 square miles.

Some of the community strengths include a very active Regional Prevention Coordinator, Red Rock; a strong tobacco prevention

network through Western Oklahoma Tobacco Control Consortium; enthusiastic ministerial alliances in Weatherford and Clinton; high quality medical facilities; regional university; eight public school districts and one private; technology center; two state parks; over 30 recreational areas; Veterans center; and a committed coalition to improving the quality of life in both counties.

Weatherford and Clinton have both passed tax cred-

its for improvement.

Challenges for the community will be addressing the 9.7% suicide rate, the increasing obesity and diabetes rates, along with the increasing rate of substance abuse, tobacco use, methamphetamine use, and prescription drug abuse.

However, the coalition’s overall vision to create a Community Health Improvement Plan will focus their efforts on the identified needs.

Description of Assessments

According to the 2011 County Health Rankings by the University of Wisconsin Health Institute, Custer County ranks 9 out of 77 in Health Factors and 22 out of 77 for Health Outcomes. Washita County ranks 19 in Health Factors and 26 in Health Outcomes.

Health factors include health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and physical environment while health outcomes include mortality and morbidity rates.

Thirty percent of the adult population in Custer County report having a BMI greater than 30 while

Washita County reports 28%.

Custer County reports a 23% prevalence tobacco use rate and Washita County reports that 26% of adults either smoke greater than 100 cigarettes or currently smoke

Binge plus heavy drinking rates for Custer County are 10% while Washita County reports 6% .

According to Oklahoma Vital Statistics, Custer County has a birth rate of 48 in 2011, while Washita County is 54. Sexually transmitted infections for Custer County is 223 re-

ported cases and Washita county reports 128.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for all ages in both counties. From 2006-2008, the total charges for all heart disease related hospitalizations for Custer County was \$35,894,031 and Washita County was \$18,889,614. Total charges are an indicator of community health, however, these are hospital-based charges and not payments or costs of actual illness. The direct and indirect costs of disease are actually much higher (i.e. loss of employee wages, loss of tax revenue, loss of years of life.)

Custer-Washita Community Health Forum

CWHAT held a community health forum on June 10 in the Weichell Conference Room at Integris Clinton Regional Hospital. Save the date invitations were mailed to 55 community organizations serving Custer and Washita counties.

Twenty-five participants attended the forum. Community sectors represented at the forum were *community based organizations,*

county health department , governmental, elected officials, businesses schools, universities, technology centers hospitals and faith based.

The core focus for the community health forum was to engage the participants in open dialogue regarding four questions:

1. What is an ideal healthy community?

2. What are important characteristics of a healthy community for all who live work and play here?
3. What is working in Custer/Washita counties?
4. What is missing in Custer/Washita counties that can get us closer to that idea?

Forum participants quickly identified their vision for an ideal healthy community. Healthy communities would include quality education, outside active living, access to public transportation, access to health-care, availability of affordable fresh fruits and vegetables, and tobacco free environments. Within the community there would be an overall awareness of health.

Funding

- ◇ **Grant: Communities of Excellence**
- ◇ **Purpose: Tobacco Prevention & Cessation**
- ◇ **Funding Period: October 2004-September 2014**
- ◇ **Funder: Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust**

- ◇ **Grant: Systems of Care**
- ◇ **Purpose: Wrap Around Services for At-Risk Families**
- ◇ **Funding Period: July 2011-June 2012**
- ◇ **Funder: Oklahoma Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services**

- ◇ **Grant: OCCY Partnership**
- ◇ **Purpose: Board Funds**
- ◇ **Funding Period: July 2011-June 2012**
- ◇ **Funder: Oklahoma Commission on Children & Youth**

- ◇ **Grant: Specific Prevention Framework/State Incentive Grant**
- ◇ **Purpose: Substance Abuse**
- ◇ **Funding Period: July 2011-June 2016**
- ◇ **Funder: Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services**

Impact

The recent efforts of the coalition to mobilize the communities through their community health forum resulted in engaging local state representative, Todd Russ. Representative Russ attended the forum and shared his insights with the coalition on state

efforts to improve the health of Oklahoma.

Through the tenacious work of the sub-committee, Washita Health Action Team, all students in Washita County participate in the evidenced based "Too Good for Drugs" curriculum in their local schools.



Contact Information



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Organizational Members

- Alex Damon, Mayor of Cordell
- Centre 29
- City of Clinton
- Custer County Health Department
- Department of Human Services
- Integris Clinton Regional Hospital
- Oklahoma Turning Point
- Presbyterian Church-Burns Flat
- Red Rock Area Prevention Resource Coordinator
- Representative Todd Russ
- Southwestern Oklahoma Developmental Authority
- Southwestern Oklahoma State University
- Systems of Care
- Western Oklahoma Tobacco Control Consortium

Partnership Outcomes



Southwestern Oklahoma State University Faculty and Staff Tobacco Free Campus July 1, 2011

Western Oklahoma Tobacco Control Consortium worked with Southwestern Oklahoma State University to implement a 24/7 Tobacco Free Campus on July 1, 2011. Approximately 5,100 students and 210 full time faculty are covered by a tobacco free environment.

Three (Cordell, Canute, Burns Flat/Dill City) of the four school districts in

Washita County are 24/7 Tobacco Free Schools. Eighty-five percent of the students in the county attend school in a tobacco free environment.

Two (Clinton and Weatherford) of the four school districts in Custer County are 24/7 Tobacco Free Schools. Eighty-two percent of the students in the county attend school in a tobacco free environment.