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20th Anniversary Edition of America's Health Rankings™ **Fact Sheet**

What: *America's Health Rankings™* is the longest running annual assessment of the nation's health on a state-by-state basis. For the past 20 years, *America's Health Rankings™* has analyzed a comprehensive set of behaviors, public and health policies, community and environmental conditions, and clinical care data to provide a holistic view of the health of the nation. *America's Health Rankings™* is the result of a partnership between United Health Foundation, the American Public Health Association and Partnership for Prevention™.

The 20th Anniversary Edition of *America's Health Rankings™* includes:

- Updated national and state-specific scores and rankings
- Forward-looking analysis of our country's top health challenges
- Updated *Rankings* methodology and health components
- Commentaries from leading national health experts
- New online tools available at www.americashealthrankings.org, making it easier to access, compare and share data
- Supplemental Data: Economic implications of our health challenges

Purpose: The purpose of the *Rankings* is to educate America and stimulate individuals, elected officials, health care professionals, employers and communities to improve health in individual states and across the United States.

Methodology: The 20th Anniversary Edition provides a comprehensive, state-by-state analysis of the relative health of the nation. It is based on the perspective that, in addition to our individual genetic predisposition to disease, healthiness is a composite of four essential and controllable components:

- **Behaviors** — Everyday activities we do that affect our personal health
- **Community & Environment** — Daily conditions in which we live have a great effect on achieving optimal individual health
- **Public & Health Policy** — Availability of resources to encourage and maintain health and the extent that public and health programs reach the general population
- **Clinical Care** — Quality, appropriateness and cost of the clinical care we receive at doctors' offices, clinics and hospitals

These components interact with each other to form a complex web of cause and effect. Understanding these interactions is vital if we are to create the health outcomes we desire including a long, disease-free, robust life for all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, gender or socio-economic status.

America's Health Rankings™ employs a unique methodology developed and annually reviewed by a Scientific Advisory Committee of leading public health scholars convened through the University of North Carolina School of Public Health. Each year, the committee conducts a thorough examination of the current index and recommends improvements to maintain the value of the comparative information and reflect the evolving role and science of public health.

This methodology weighs the contributions of the following factors:

Behaviors

- Prevalence of Smoking
- Prevalence of Binge Drinking
- Prevalence of Obesity
- High School Graduation

Public & Health Policy

- Lack of Health Insurance
- Public Health Funding
- Immunization Coverage

Community & Environment

- Violent Crime
- Occupational Fatalities
- Infectious Disease
- Children in Poverty
- Air Pollution

Clinical Care

- Prenatal Care
- Primary Care Physicians
- Preventable Hospitalizations

These factors contribute to the following health outcomes:

- Poor Mental Health Days
- Poor Physical Health Days
- Geographic Disparities
- Infant Mortality
- Cardiovascular Deaths
- Cancer Deaths
- Premature Death

Data:

Data contained within the *Rankings* were obtained from:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Center for Health Statistics — U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Census Bureau and Bureau of Economic Analysis — U.S. Department of Commerce
- National Center for Education Statistics — U.S. Department of Education
- Bureau of Labor Statistics — U.S. Department of Labor
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- American Medical Association
- The Dartmouth Atlas Project
- Trust for America's Health

History: *America's Health Rankings*[™] was first published in the fall of 1990 and ranked the relative healthiness of states' populations based on 16 measures of health. New components have been carefully added to improve the evaluation, while the integrity of this unique, longitudinal health assessment has been maintained.

About United Health Foundation:

Guided by a passion to help people live healthier lives, United Health Foundation provides reliable information to support decisions that lead to better health outcomes and healthier communities. The Foundation also supports activities that expand access to quality health care services for those in challenging circumstances and partners with others to improve the well-being of communities. Since established by UnitedHealth Group [NYSE: UNH] in 1999 as a private nonprofit organization, the Foundation has committed more than \$170 million to improve health and health care. For more information, visit www.unitedhealthfoundation.org.

Visit www.americashealthrankings.org for more information about the report methodology and quick access to key 2009 rankings across the U.S. and state by state.