

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
March 18, 2008**Contacts:** Beverly Thames, (650) 573-3935  
San Mateo County Health Department**A Mixture of Good News and Bad News:****The 2008 Community Assessment: Health & Quality of Life in San Mateo County**

**REDWOOD CITY, Calif.** — The votes are in and, as usual, there's good news and there's bad news.

The *2008 Community Assessment: Health & Quality of Life in San Mateo County* was released today in two community events. The report focuses on the status of County residents' health as measured by various indicators and access to health care services, and on the quality of life in San Mateo County using factors such as the local economy; cost of living; education; child care; home prices; homelessness; and traffic congestion.

This is the fifth such triennial report and includes trends data over past years. There are 10 significant community diagnoses.

The bad news touches on many topics. Residents aren't eating their vegetables – at least not enough of them. Since 2001, there's been a significant drop in the number of people who report having some type of health insurance. The incidence of both gonorrhea and chlamydia are going up and not down as in previous surveys. An estimated 75,000 to 90,000 county residents are hungry or worried about not having enough food to eat.

There is good news, but it's almost always moderated. Looking at mortality, we're healthier than we've ever been before. More pregnant women are receiving prenatal care than previously, and the numbers of births occurring in females 17 and younger has decreased significantly. Many more people are participating in vigorous physical activity than before – but still fewer than 50 percent. Although the mortality rates for heart disease in African Americans decreased significantly, but the average life expectancy for African Americans residents is 65 – ten years less than residents of other ethnicities. The County population has grown increasingly more diverse. San Mateo County's crime rates remain below both state and regional rates and have continued their downward trend.

“We continue to see an increasing incidence of obesity and other negative health factors,” Dr. Scott Morrow, County Public Health Officer said. “While we're doing well right now, unless we make serious changes, we're headed for big trouble.”

Sponsored and funded by members of the Healthy Community Collaborative of San Mateo County, the survey is conducted every three years. It is a scientifically valid study of 2,000 county residents. The 2008 data includes an over-sampling of the Coastside and African American populations to ensure a statistically valid sample size. The report is used by hospitals, health care organizations, government agencies and nonprofit organizations to plan programs to benefit the County's residents.

The 2008 results are easily accessible by checking out the Peninsula Library System's Community Information Project's online presentation at <http://www.plsinfo.org/healthysmc>. Executive Summaries can also be requested from the Hospital Consortium by phone at (650) 573-3930 or by e-mail [fsdickson@hospitalconsort.org](mailto:fsdickson@hospitalconsort.org).

The *2008 Community Assessment: Health & Quality of Life in San Mateo County* is sponsored by the Healthy Community Collaborative of San Mateo County: the Hospital Consortium of San Mateo County (Mills-Peninsula Health Services, Seton Medical Center/Seton Coastside, Sequoia Hospital, San Mateo Medical Center, San Mateo County Health Services Agency); Health Plan of San Mateo County; Hospital Council of Northern & Central California; Kaiser Permanente, Redwood City & South San Francisco Medical Centers; Lucile Packard Children's Hospital; Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health; Peninsula Community Foundation; Peninsula Library System Community Information Program; San Mateo County Human Services Agency; Stanford Hospital & Clinics; and Youth & Family Enrichment Services.

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