

**Walla Walla County
Public Health**



Prevent • Promote • Protect

Walla Walla County Public Perception Survey2010

Walla County Public Health



Walla Walla County's Voice

Purpose:

Gain insight into the general public's perception of Public Health Services in Walla Walla County

Where it was administered:

The Annual Public Health Report was administered during the July 4th celebration in Pioneer Park, Family Night Out in Jefferson Park and the Walla Walla County Fair.

What the survey contained:

Three sections appeared on the surveys. The first portion gathered demographics. The second asked general questions, and the third addressed specific programs. Its purpose was to gauge the public's familiarity with Walla Walla County Public Health, and understand the areas most valued by community members.

Summary of Results:

The data gathered was an accurate representation of ethnicity. There was a noticeable amount of variation from the Walla Walla County population in the areas of gender, income, education, and town of residence.

The second portion showed that only 26% are very familiar with health department services. It also demonstrated that when given a choice of circling three of the most important work areas, most participants chose Environmental Health, Child Health, and Child Immunizations.

In regards to the specific programs, a majority of the participants believed all of them were very important. Tobacco had 65%. Health education had 82%. ABCD Funding had 73%. Data gathered about Spanish resources showed 79% of people taking the survey in Spanish believed there was enough materials in Spanish and that 91% believed it was of good quality.

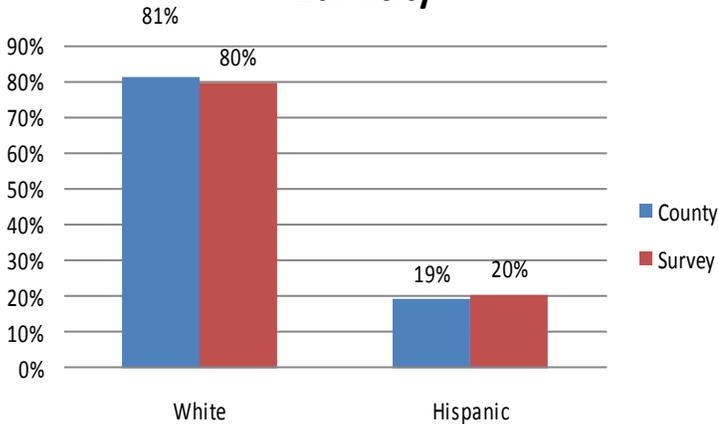




Who participated in the survey?

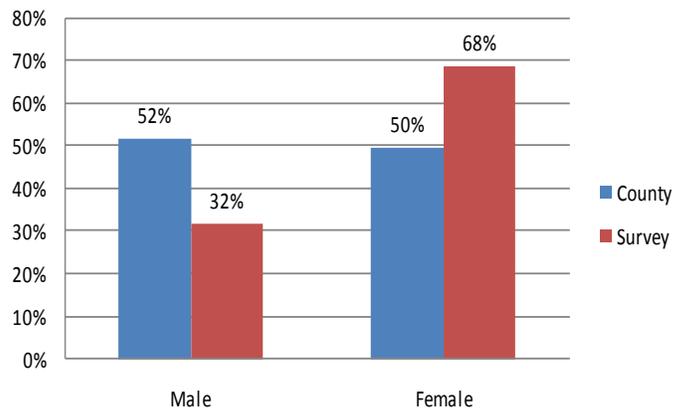


Ethnicity



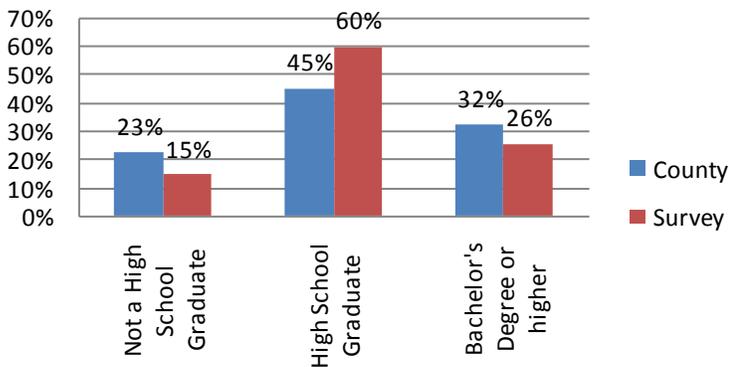
As seen above, 19% of the population in Walla Walla County is Hispanic, and 20% of survey participants identified as Hispanic. This means that Ethnicity had a fairly accurate representation.

Gender



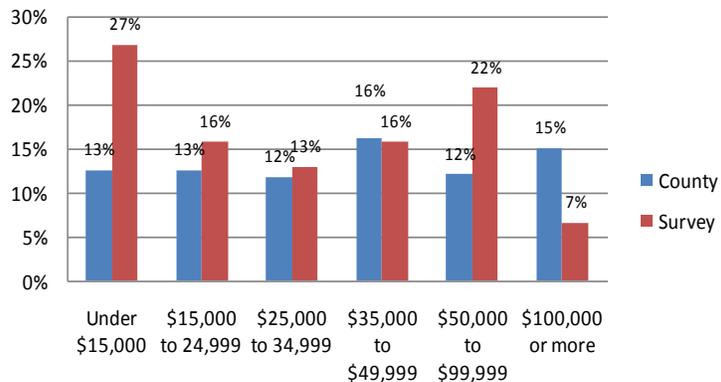
The ratio of Male to Female in Walla Walla is 52% to 50%. The survey had a ratio 32% to 68%. This means that there was a much higher representation of females in this data gathering.

Education



The ratio of people in Walla Walla County and their education from not a high school graduate, High School Graduate, and Bachelor's Degree or higher was 23:45:32, where those represented in the survey was 15:60:26. It appears High School graduates were more strongly represented in this survey.

Income



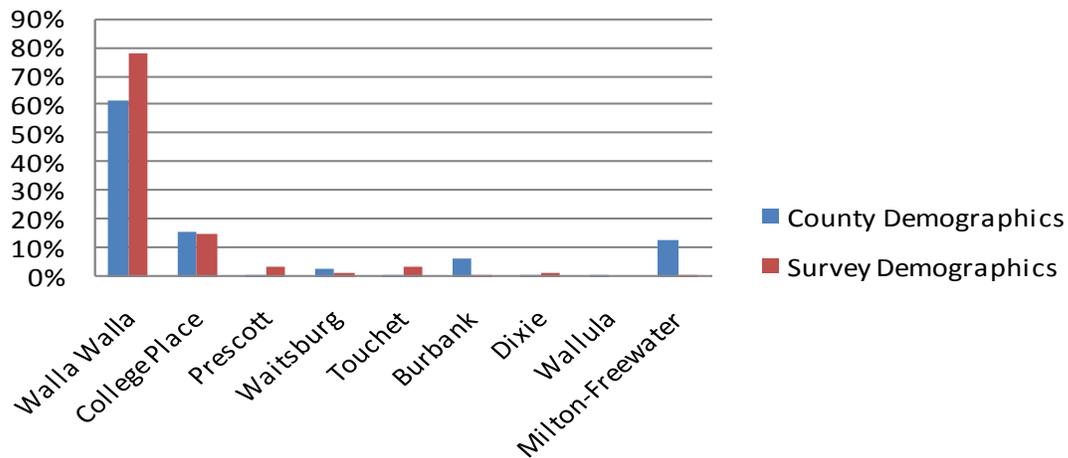
The percentages of people in the county with incomes in half the categories were close to those found in the participants pool. Three categories were greatly different. 27% of survey takers made under \$15,000 while they only make up 13% of the county population. 22% of survey participants were in the \$50,000-\$99,999 bracket while only making up 12% of the county population. Those making over \$100,000 represented 7% of survey takers, but comprise 15% of Walla Walla County.



Demographics Continued

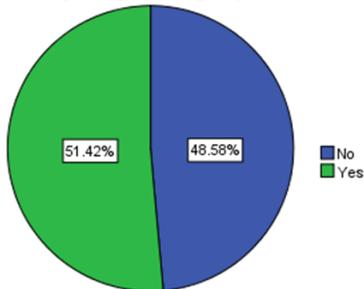


Towns

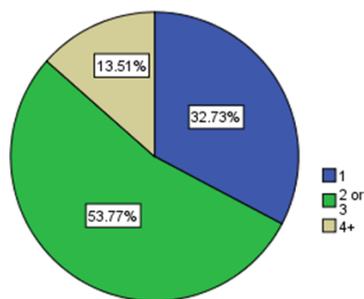


The percentage of people from Walla Walla and College Place was relatively close to that of the census, but Milton Free-water and Burbank was greatly skewed. It is not surprising that a majority of surveys were done by residents of the city of Walla Walla because of the locations that the surveys were distributed.

Do you have school age children 18 or younger living in your home?



If yes, how many?

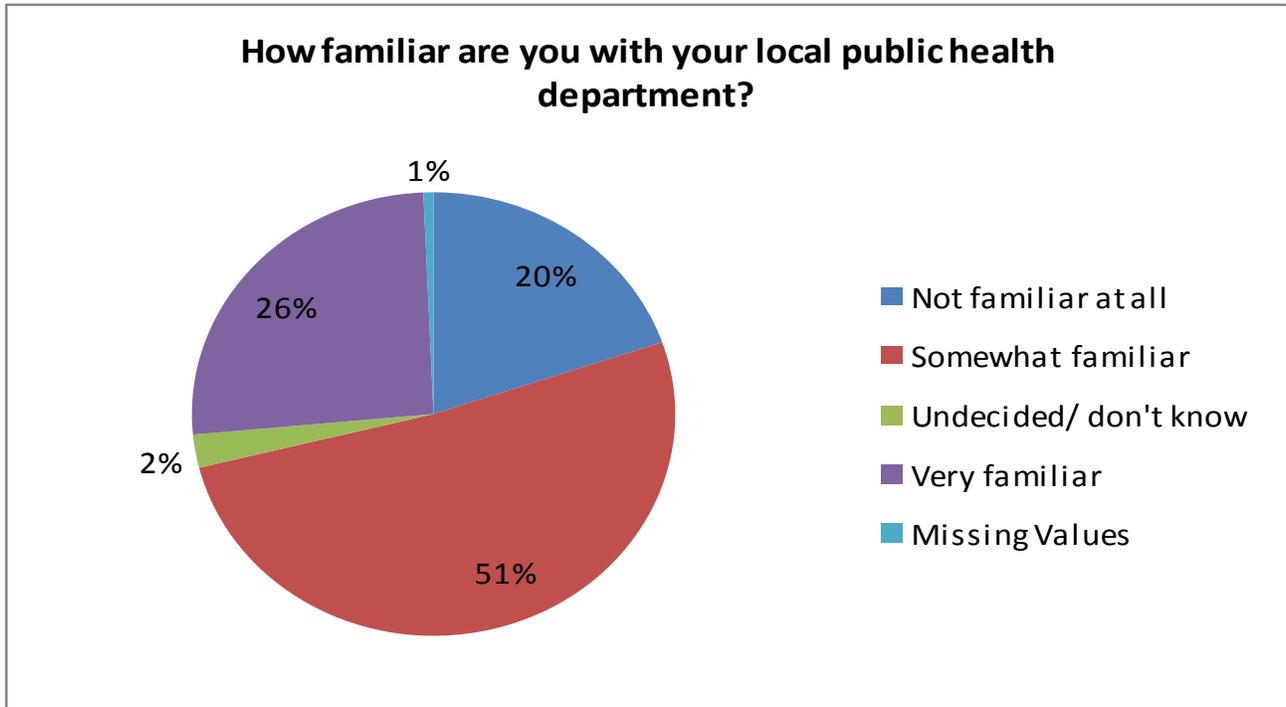


Another aspect we chose to observe was the number of survey takers that currently had children in of school age. This turned out to be nearly a fifty percent split with parents coming out in the majority.

In addition this we asked for the number of children and the majority had about 2 or 3.



Familiarity

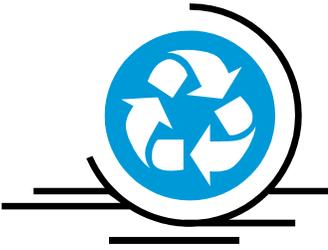


Familiarity in Walla Walla County: When asked “How Familiar are you with your local public health department 26% of participants were comfortable saying that they were very familiar. Those that were somewhat familiar made up a majority of the participants (51%). While it is good that people at least feel informed about health department services, it is still important to make information accessible to everyone.

Why do we care about familiarity?

The survey wanted to focus particularly on the Public’s familiarity with the Services offered by Public Health in Walla Walla County. This particular information was of interest because research done in the United states, shows that those who know more about services offered tend to get the treatment needed in a more timely manner. The effective and early publication of services leads to less emergency room runs and late treatment (Morgan).

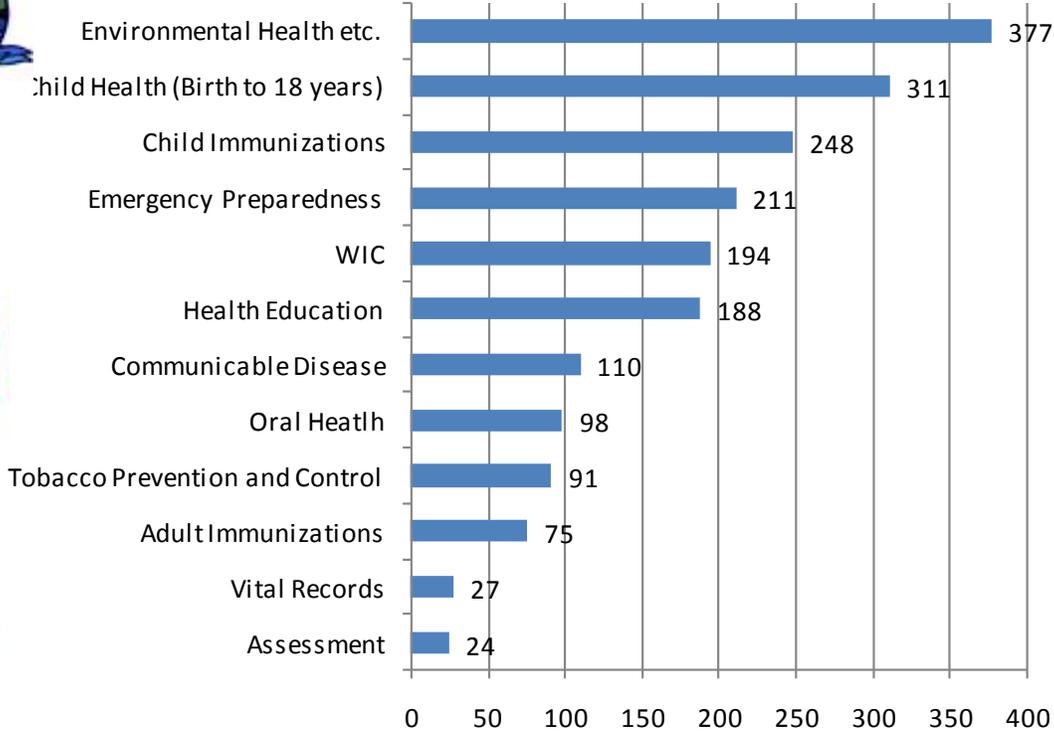




Most Valued Programs



Please circle the 3 work areas of public health that you believe to be the most important within your community.



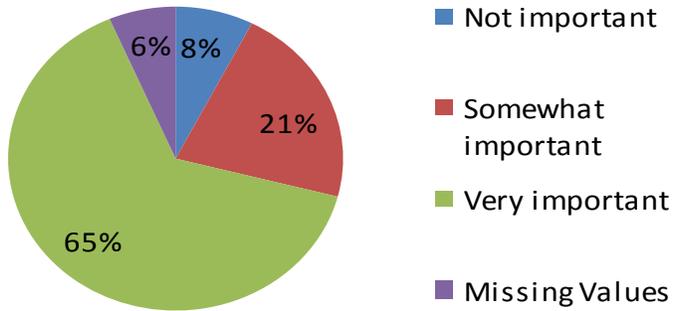
Work Areas of Importance: While all programs were highly valued by at least 24 residents of Walla Walla County, the three most circled were Environmental Health (listed on survey as: Environmental Health: animal bites, drinking water, food inspections, indoor air quality; septic systems solid waste, etc.), Child Health and Child Immunizations. After these there was a slight drop in the number circled, but those include Emergency Preparedness, WIC, and Health Education. Vital Records and Assessment were by far the least circled. It appears many residents focus more on supporting children and trying to maintain a health environment. Less focus is being placed on adult or what may be perceive as adult health.





Tobacco Prevention Funding

In your opinion how important is funding for tobacco prevention?



Walla Walla County’s opinion on Tobacco Prevention Funding:

When asked “ In your opinion how important is funding for tobacco prevention a majority of participants (65%) said that it was very important. 21% believed that it was somewhat important.

This left only 14% who either did not see the question or did not place any value in the program. Although funding is at risk most residents believe that it is important that it remain.

Services offered in Walla Walla:

- Youth Tobacco Prevention
- Smoking complaints
- Adult Cessation
 - Quit Line
 - +English
 - +Spanish
- Stop Smoking Class

What’s happening now?

Record amounts of money from cigarette tax are coming in, yet none of it is being spent on tobacco prevention and education. For every dollar being spent to prevent the tobacco companies are spending twenty to promote their product. On a national level the decline in smoking has virtually come to a halt and without action could remain stagnant or allow for digression.

In June 2011 there will be no funding for tobacco prevention programs unless another source of funding is found. The program is presently in danger of being cut from the list of Public Health Services.

(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/news/newsstory.aspx?docID=633879>. October 13, 2010.)

Why do we still need Tobacco Prevention Funding?

With the discovery of tobacco’s addictive nature and negative health effects, came a surge of programs to prevent the use of tobacco products and thereby avoid future problems. According to the Walla Walla County annual Health report, from 2008 to 2009 Walla Walla county has seen a 7.1% decrease in the number of smokers. Programs from Public Health have aided in this decrease, meaning that continued funding of this programs would prevent regression to previous years.

Although there has been great progress in tobacco prevention, there is still plenty of work to be done. 90 adults die of smoking related disease annually, and tobacco use costs WW county \$12.4 million in healthcare and lost wages every year. 6,300 adults still Smoke in Walla Walla County and 49% of this group have tried to quit. Investing in Tobacco education and quitting services would save lives and money in Walla Walla.





Health Education Funding

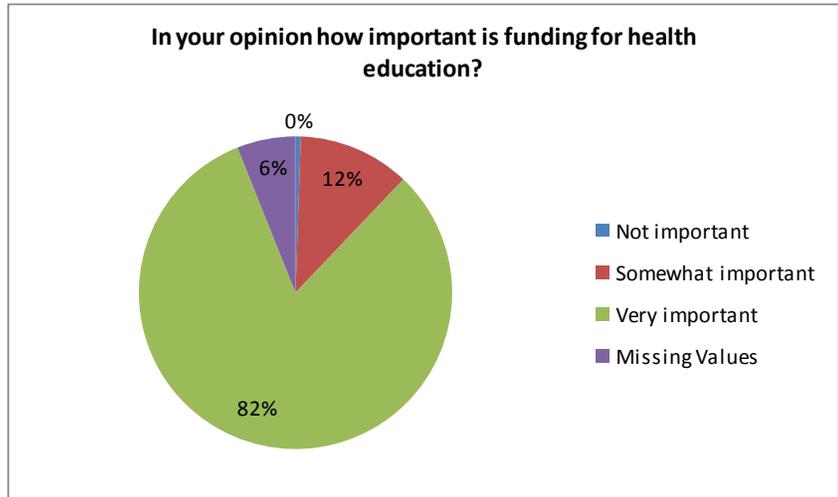
Health Education funds are used to:

1) Increase the uptake of new and under-used child and adolescent vaccines. This is achieved by distributing and providing the public as well as healthcare providers with information about such vaccines.

2) Improve the timely complete identification and standard effective investigation of notifiable conditions such as H1N1, Pertussis and others. (WAC 246-101)

3) Develop and implement effective community health care system interventions to address obesity and its consequent burden of chronic disease.

These issues are being addressed in two big ways. The County sends out a newsletter about peoples progress in health to increase awareness, and the staff is encouraged to act as examples of how to live healthy.



Walla Walla County’s opinion on Health Education Funding:

A majority of participants (82%) believe that funding for Health Education is very important and 12% believe it is Somewhat important. The number who said it wasn’t important was so miniscule that it did not even show up in the percentages, meaning Health Education is a valued program.

Why do we still need Health Education Funding?

One of the best ways to avoid sickness is to educate people so they can make the best choices to promote a healthy life. Walla Walla County has received good ratings for the amount of fruit and vegetables consumed, but still needs help in many other areas. Over half of the population is either overweight or obese and many of the youth do not get as much physical exercise as they should. The amount of underage drinking is much higher than that of the state or nation. Binge drinking has increased since last year (Walla Walla County 2010 Health Report). All of these issues can be addressed through health education. Creating an awareness of peoples health in the classroom or outside allows for a change. People are not only individually empowered by knowledge, but they can also empower others by sharing this information.

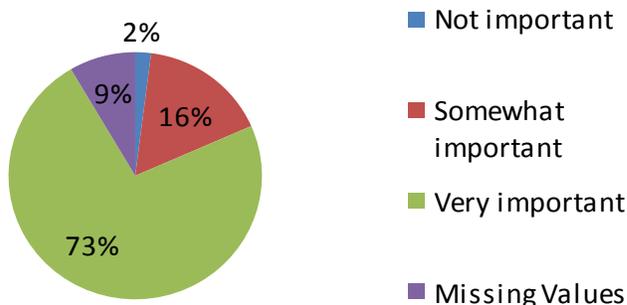


In addition to this, it is important for healthcare providers to have opportunities to learn about current immunizations and what disease are common, so providing them with education help the community as a whole.



ABCD Funding

In your opinion how important is funding for ABCD or Access to Baby and Child Dentistry?



Walla Walla County's Opinion on ABCD funding:

73% of the participants believe that ABCD is a very important program to fund. 16% say that it is somewhat important. Only 2% place no value in it.

This program has plenty of residents that believe it is important to the community.

This program works to:

- Enroll Medicaid-eligible children by age one;
- Educate their families and caregivers about dental hygiene and eating habits;
- Provide outreach and case management to connect families with dental offices;
- Train dentists in the best care practices for young children; and
- Create referral networks of pediatric dentists for children with more difficult treatment needs

What is happening now?

This program is another at risk program. It has been a success in other counties, so if given a chance to grow more many children would have access to dental care who would otherwise not see the dentist. The main goal for now is to get word out to the public that this service exist and in addition to this gain the support and help of more local dentist.

Why do we need ABCD funding?

Often parents do not realize they should or in many cases cannot afford to take their children to the dentist annually by the time they are age one. This is important because the costs of dental disease are severe: impaired nutrition and health, lost school time, worsened job prospects and sometimes even death.

Before the program was launched many children under Medicaid were not receiving proper care partially because they could not afford it, and also because there were not enough dentist trained in pediatric primary care. Now it has helped dentist in their training and ability to serve those who need it. Continuing the program will maintain the progress of to form a healthier County .

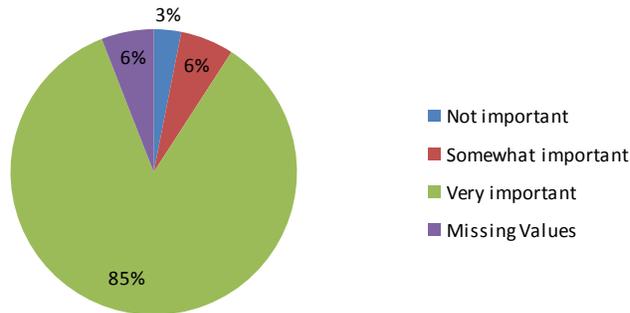
(http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org/uploadedFiles/ABCD_brief_web.pdf)





Child Immunization Funding

In your opinion how important is funding for child immunization?



Walla Walla County's opinion on Child Immunization Funding:

The vast majority of survey participants (85%) believe that funding for child immunization is very important, and 6% say it is somewhat important. Only 3% believe that it is not important.

This at risk program is strongly valued by the residents of WallaWalla County.

Disease that can be prevented with immunization

- Chickenpox (Varicella)
- Diphtheria
- Flu (Influenza)
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Hib disease (Haemophilus Influenzae type b)
- Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)
- Measles
- Meningitis (Meningococcal)
- Mumps
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough)
- Pneumococcal Disease
- Polio
- Rotavirus
- Rubella
- Shingles
- Tetanus (Lockjaw)

(See County website for more information)

Currently:

2009 all vaccines for children were funded, but when 2010 rolled around, children with private insurance were charged for HPV shots. Fortunately insurance companies stepped up and covered this cost.

This year hopefully funding does not fall again, and we cannot determine whether health insurance will continue to step up like before.

Why is Childhood Immunization important?

Currently there are 14 vaccinations against serious and potentially fatal diseases. The administration of these vaccines is a preventative measure of care that is especially important for children who are more easily infected by and more often exposed to sickness. In the past the administration of vaccines has helped to eradicate measles diphtheria and polio. This eradication has saved countless people from suffering.

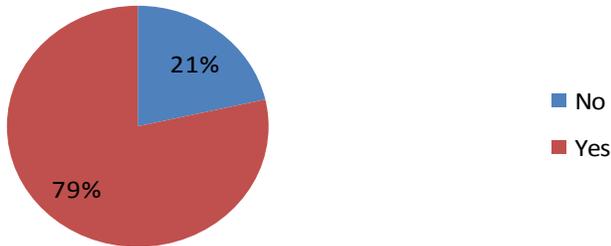
Sickness can often be avoided through good nutrition, good sanitation and good hygiene, but even with all of these germs can be found that are potentially hazardous. It is very rare to have side effects from vaccination, but they have protected many from illness.



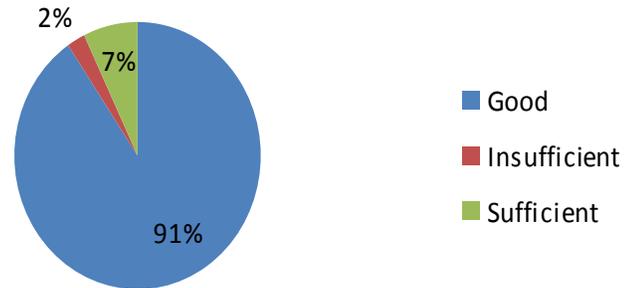


Spanish-Speaking Services

Do you believe that it is easy to find information about Public Health Services in Spanish?



What is the quality of these materials?



Spanish-Speaking Services Offered:

- Food Handling Class
- WIC
- Tobacco Quit Line
- Apple Health

Walla Walla County's Spanish Speaking Populations opinions of Spanish-Speaking Services:

79% of participants who were asked about ease of finding information in Spanish believed it was easy while 21% disagreed with the statement.

The ones who had seen the materials had a vast majority of people say they were of good quality (91%)

It appears the department has done well.

Why are Spanish Speaking Services Important?

In a thriving agricultural county we have people coming from all over and all walks of life. A significant population in the county is the Spanish-speaking community, which has and still does continue to grow. The census has shown that this group tends to be more commonly impoverished. This fact makes it critical for the services to be accessible and in order to target this particular group it is essential that sources of information be made available in their primary language.

It is also critical that these resources be of good quality to avoid potential misunderstandings that can lead to problems for both the care provider and the patient. As the population grows more diverse, there is a need for supportive action.



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