

Butte

Butte County ranks low on statewide health survey

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CHICO, Calif. - The Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community campaign started in 2013 and is a statewide collaboration between tobacco use prevention, alcohol prevention and nutrition partners.

The goal is to improve the health of Californians through changes in community stores, and to educate people how in-store product marketing influences consumption of unhealthy products.

In many categories, Butte County residents rank worse than other counties in tobacco and alcohol consumption.

The survey shows statewide, 12.7 percent of adults smoke cigarettes, but in Butte County, it's 15.9 percent.

The percentage of people who can't always find fresh fruits and vegetables is higher in Butte County too. Those numbers are 30.7 percent locally, but 23.4 percent statewide.

"Rural areas, in particular, do tend to struggle with this because we don't have as many large chain grocery stores that can serve our entire population, especially in the more rural areas of our county," explained Sherry Morgado, assistant director of Butte County Public Health. "People have to rely upon small community stores, and small community stores don't necessarily have the ability to carry that array of products."

Morgado said there is also concern with tobacco and alcohol products that are heavily marketed towards children. Displays in Butte County windows often advertise the candy and soda flavors, leading to 36 percent of kids under the age of 15 having tried alcohol, and 22.7 percent using tobacco.

To learn more about the campaign and see the full survey results, visit healthystoreshealthycommunity.com.

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