



SPECIAL BULLETIN

„Health Days Campaign“

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HEALTHY CITIES OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

HEALTH DAYS CAMPAIGN

For the eleventh year in a row, the nationwide Health Days campaign took place between October 4 and 17. Organized by the Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic (HCCZ), the campaign aims to promote a healthy lifestyle in cities and municipalities. Czech cities are becoming increasingly interested in Health Days; while a mere five Healthy Cities joined the campaign in 1995, a record-breaking 24 cities took part in 2005.

Interesting and entertaining, the campaign is designed to teach citizens the right ways to take care of their health and prevent health problems. Its individual programmes promote activities that can contribute to personal well-being. The variety of topics and involvement of numerous expert partners in each city make the campaign the largest healthy lifestyle promoting event in the Czech Republic.

HCCZ members participating in the Health Days campaign in 2005:

Blansko; Boskovice; Brno; Ceske Budejovice; Hodonin; Chrudim; Karvina; Koprivnice; Kromeriz; Letovice, Litomerice; Moravska Trebova; Mlada Boleslav; Orlova; Pelhrimov; Pribram; Strasin; Steti; Trebic; Valasske Mezirici; Velke Mezirici; Veseli nad Moravou; Vsetin; and Zlin.



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lékař***

Media partners of Health Days 2005:

Czech Radio 2 – Prague; iHNed.cz news server; and the Personal Doctor monthly.

In the past, individual cities used to organize separate events on different dates; HCCZ has succeeded in concentrating them in a two-week campaign embracing a variety of educational and awareness-raising programmes, sporting activities as well as events to bring down barriers among minority groups and the society. In addition to facilitating the sharing of experience among the cities, this arrangement makes it easier to promote the topic and the activities of individual cities in nationwide media.

The Health Days campaign is complemented by the International Health Day on April 7; initiated by the World Health Organization (WHO), it raises public awareness of



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specific health areas. The topic of this year's International Health Day is "Make Every Mother and Child Count." A number of HCCZ members organize events on the topic in both April and October, expanding the room for promoting health and the quality of life.

Health Days Raising Awareness and Contributing to Healthy Urban Planning

Health as the physical, mental as well as social well-being is a key topic for HCCZ. HCCZ strives to make health promotion an integral part of the public administration system, incorporating healthy urban planning in the development of cities, municipalities and regions.

It has been a long-term effort of HCCZ to see health promotion integrated in the overall system of strategic management in cities. Currently, HCCZ cooperates with a team of Czech professionals to develop a methodology for expert health plans. HCCZ has come up with DataPlan, a tool to monitor the ways in which the cities, municipalities and regions practically promote health. In October, this new information system was presented at INVEX, an international trade fair of information and telecommunication technologies. HCCZ DataPlan will also include a database of best practice (not only from the health sector) to show the experience of cities, municipalities

and regions and facilitate their sharing of best practice and innovations, making it a natural motivation and inspiration for the others.



Meeting at the Ministry

At the same time, HCCZ has set specific topics for health promotion in 2006, including active ageing, accident prevention, healthy urban planning, and many others. As to accident prevention, HCCZ and the Czech Radio are working on a widespread awareness-raising campaign for 2006 to be concluded by the **Festival of Health and Exercise in Olomouc** next June.

The campaign also included a meeting at the Ministry of Health on the topic of **WHO Community Health Support Programmes**. The seminar focused on issues involving health support in both public and private spheres. For the first time ever, this landmark meeting brought together all of the main actors involved in the health support policy – state and community institutions as well as the business sector. Owing to this, participants were able to take a comprehensive look at the issues. Presentations were delivered by representatives of the Czech Ministry of Health (MH), WHO, HCCZ, Health-Promoting Schools and a Healthy Enterprise.

Following up on the campaign, an MCAP session will take place in Trebic. It will deal with Local Environmental and Health Action Plans (LEHAP) and will include reports of WHO LO Prague, MH and HCCZ representatives on the latest in healthy urban planning and the role of Regional Health Offices and Health Institutes in LEHAP processes. The Healthy Cities of Trebic, Vsetin and Chrudim will report about their experience in this regard.

Healthy Body = Sound Mind

To complement programmes concentrating on people's physical condition, most Healthy Cities also prepared less traditional events for their citizens. In addition to having their blood pressure taken and the level of cholesterol and BMI determined, visitors learned more about how human brain works and could test the functioning of their own. There were also a number of other activities promoting mental hygiene in line with recommendations of WHO, which has brought up the issue of mental health and mental disorders back in 2001.

A number of cities gave lectures relating to this topic, such as how to handle stress or how to be equanimous. At the

psychological centres in Zlin and Hodonin, people could test their IQ or learn about art therapy or music therapy.

It has become a tradition to present various physical activities during the campaign, which visitors can try out themselves. On October 8, for instance, **Days of Health and Exercise** in Vsetin hosted a show of Vladimir Valouch, **World Champion** in sports aerobics.

Apart from regular exercise, physical and mental health requires a healthy diet. Most of the cities' campaigns therefore included promotion of a healthy diet and bio food. Chrudim, for instance, prepared a tasting of healthy dishes; Blansko, too, celebrated its fourth **International Vegetarian Day** by events that included food tasting. The Letovice kindergarten prepared a tasting of fruit cocktails and vegetable salads for the children's parents. The Healthy Cities of Boskovice, Trebic, Litomerice and Moravska Trebova gave lectures on a healthy diet. Zlin organized a presentation entitled the History of Vegetarianism and Czech Medical Doctors as well as an opinion poll regarding the boarding at kindergartens and basic schools, entitled "Fruit and Vegetables Five Times a Day."



Chrudim: Teeth brushing

Ready Kirken and No Name in Concert for Weeks of Mental Health

Weeks of Mental Health took place in Mlada Boleslav and Usti nad Labem between September 6 and November 17. The focus of the campaign was on activities helping eliminate barriers among various groups of citizens and integrate socially disadvantaged people in the daily life of the community. On the occasion of the Week of Mental Health in Mlada Boleslav, the nearby Kosmonosy asylum opened the third exhibition of its patients' works, entitled "Across Your Head." On September 11, the premises of the asylum hosted the "On the Hill" festival; similar to the "Between Fences" festival at Prague's Bohnice asylum, many popular bands appeared at Kosmonosy, such as No Name and Ready Kirken. The **Social Services Fair** is currently one of the most popular events in Usti nad Labem. It is a presentation of social services as provided by non-governmental non-profit organizations based in the Usti region.



The Terry Fox Run

Terry Fox Run and Global Embrace Walk

In connection with Health Days, the Healthy Cities also joined major international campaigns, such as the Terry Fox Run. This non-commercial humanitarian event to support research of cancer and other civilisation diseases is an unconventional gathering connected with active exercise (running, cycling, roller-skating) for people of all ages. Having originated in Canada twenty years ago, the run now takes places in over 50 countries worldwide every year. The Czech Republic has first joined the campaign in 1993; with two hundred locations, the Czech Republic has been the long-term **leader** worldwide in terms of the number of locations where the run takes place during a calendar year. Every year, the collected money is divided among Czech and Moravian research institutes selected by the expert grant committee of the Czech Oncology Society of the Czech Medical Association of J. E. Purkyne. **Blansko, Brno, Chrudim, Orlova** and **Trebic** as well as other cities have included this important event in their Health Days agendas.

Five years ago, WHO responded to the current trend of the population ageing by initiating the Global Movement for Active Ageing. The annual worldwide **Global Embrace Walk** underscores the need to pay greater attention to active ageing and to support harmonious coexistence of generations. In Brno, the route of the seventh year of the walk took the participants



Blood-pressure taking

through the Ricka valley to the Mucha Chalet. After finishing the four-kilometre walk, all participants received a commemorative certificate with a special stamp and could have their blood pressure taken. This year's walk was the third for the Healthy City of Orlova and the fourth for the Healthy City of Chrudim.

Inauguration of Usmev and Domovinka Social Welfare Institutions and the Charity Day in Trebic

On October 10, the Trebic Regional Charitable Trust opened new facilities in addition to its Usmev and Domovinka social welfare institutions at the reconstructed premises of a former kindergarten. Having leased the building from the city, the Trust started reconstructing it in March 2005. The facility has expanded the capacity of the current social welfare institutions for senior citizens and mentally and physically handicapped people, providing extra room for workshops and a library.

Trebic celebrated its **Charity Day** on October 11. On this day, facilities run by the Trebic Regional Charitable Trust – the Centre for Mental Health, the Zamek Club, and the Romany Centre for Children and Youth – were open to the public. People could also visit the Home for Mothers in Distress, the Asylum Home for Men, Noe K-centrum for drug addicts, and the retirement homes in Knezice and Hrotovice with a week-long sale exhibition of self-made products.

Spirometer for Chrudim Hospital

As part of the **Health Days** campaign and the **Healthy Breathing Children** programme, Deputy Mayor Petr Reznicek of the Healthy City of Chrudim delivered a new **spirometer** to the Children's Allergology Ambulance in Chrudim. The spirometer will enable early detection of any health problems related to allergies. Healthy Breathing Children is a project promoting a systematic approach to allergy problems through both primary and secondary prevention in early childhood in



Spirometer

order to reduce the overall occurrence of serious allergy cases. Allowing the monitoring of young patients, the spirometer is a vital contribution to the success of the project. In addition to money raised as part of the Healthy Cities Project, the purchase of the spirometer was supported by a grant of the Pardubice Region and the Healthy City of Chrudim and by individual sponsors.

Health Days at a Litomerice Kindergarten

The kindergarten in Stransky Street in the Healthy City of Litomerice has taken an active part in the nationwide Health

Days campaign. To help the youngest children learn to take care of their health, the teachers came up with entertaining puppet stories and fairy tales. Tony's Tale was a story teaching children about personal hygiene, Little Red Riding Hood at the Kindergarten was about proper eating habits, Armadillo explained why prevention of road accidents was important. Older children did some physical exercise, discussed why exercising was so important for one's health and talked about a healthy diet and other related topics.

CONTACT

Healthy Cities CZ, Srobarova 48, 100 42 Prague 10, Czech Republic
T: +420 602 500639 | E: praha@nszm.cz | W: www.nszm.cz

Petr Svec, National Coordinator of the Healthy Cities Project
(The photographs were provided by the archives of HCCZ member cities, municipalities and regions.)