

Healthy Johnson City Initiative

The Johnson City Commission has created a Blue Ribbon Commission on Health. Johnson City has become the first city in Tennessee to institute such an effort which was sponsored by Commissioner Jane Myron. The Taskforce is called **Healthy Johnson City** and a campaign titled “**Up and At ‘Em**” has been launched.

In response to reading a report that indicated Tennessee was near the bottom of states nationally in a ranking of obesity, Commissioner Myron decided to take action. For Jane it was a personal issue as she had addressed similar issues as a child and knew the problems overweight children can face. “I saw a larger group of children having these problems, and it really is a community issue.” “Most adults who don’t have children assume physical education is the same now as when they were in school, that children have P.E. everyday. It is more like once a week, if not pre-empted for something else.”

“We will be doing some testing,” says Jenny Brock, who chairs the Healthy Johnson City Task Force. “Nationally, 16 percent of children are obese and through the health department we can do body mass index testing to give us an idea of where we are.” An educational component will be provided for children who are at risk, and help those that are already overweight.

“**This is not just a quick fix program,**” concluded Myron. “It’s an institutional view of our health status.” Although the initial work efforts will focus on children, the Task Force will develop a campaign involving all components and age groups in the community including senior citizens. “Johnson City is a progressive medical community with an abundance of expertise. A start point has been defined and action is underway locally to address a growing statewide and national problem that will be one of the key issues of the 21st Century.” Representatives from the EDB, the Chamber of Commerce, medical and educational specialists, and local government volunteers are serving on the Blue Ribbon Commission.

Up and At ‘Em — the first citywide health campaign to hit the state of Tennessee — will kick off at Freedom Hall Civic Center on April 29. Attendees will learn how they can become part of the healthier Johnson City that City Commissioner Jane Myron has in mind. If you’re interested in getting on board, Myron said the best thing to do is show up at Freedom Hall on April 29. The event begins at 10 a.m.