

Herkimer and Oneida Counties
Handbook for a Healthier Community



CENTRAL NEW YORK
MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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September, 2010

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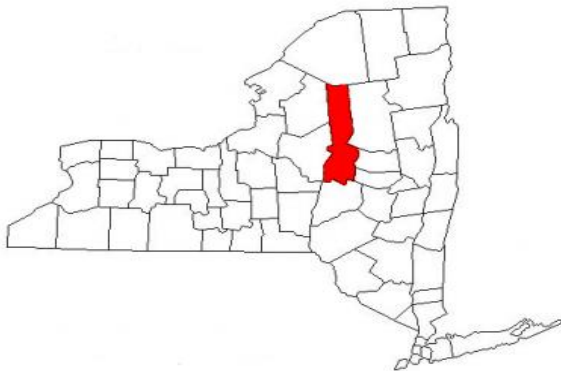
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What is the Get Moving Initiative?

The Get Moving! initiative was developed by the *Regional Health Council* of Herkimer and Oneida Counties with the help of the community's voice through the 2010 Regional Health Summit. The project is spearheaded by a number of influential policy makers and public health advocates from both Herkimer and Oneida County in addition to many local not-for-profit organizations.

Get Moving! was funded by the *Healthy Communities Grant* from the NYS Department of Health through the Oneida County Department of Health with substantial support by Herkimer County Healthnet and the participation of the Herkimer County Public Health and the United Way of the Valley and Greater Utica Area. Get Moving! supports the goal of improving the health/wellness of Herkimer and Oneida County residents. More specifically, Get Moving! aims to address the issues of physical activity and nutrition at three levels of implementation across both counties.

These three levels have been defined as **the schools, the workplace, and the community**. Research suggests that successful interventions at all three levels will help to reduce the number of sedentary and overweight individuals residing in our region of NYS and subsequently reduce the poor health outcomes and large health care costs associated with obesity.

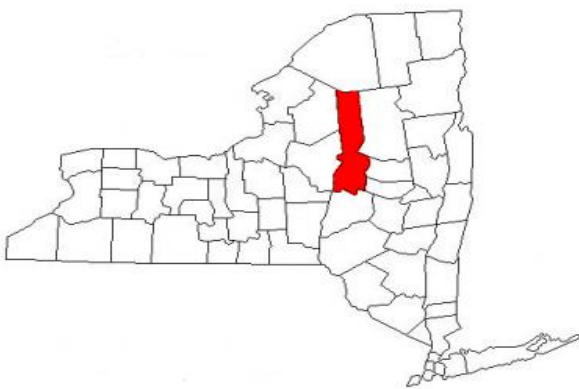


Get Moving! Objective

To develop and disseminate a geographically sensitive, community wide set of initiatives for Herkimer and Oneida County that has the potential to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with obesity.

What is the Regional Handbook?

This handbook is an evidence-based best practices guide to feasible physical activity and nutritional interventions that will help make our community healthier. With a focus on a la carte interventions, the hope is that this handbook will act as a resource to all recipients. It has been created specifically to address the challenges and needs of Oneida and Herkimer County and, with that in mind, should be the foundation for an ever-growing effort to transform our region of NYS. The handbook itself was designed to bridge the gap between evidence based research and implementation and will help foster a sound environment for implementation to become a reality.



Needs Assessment! (Why Physical Activity and Nutrition?)

Currently, throughout the United States, approximately two thirds of adults and one fifth of U.S. children are obese or overweight (1). Over the past 30 years the prevalence of US adults that are classified as obese has doubled and the prevalence of being overweight among children and adolescents has seen a substantial increase as well (1). That said, being either obese or overweight poses a huge health risk. For example, excess weight increases the risk for such chronic diseases as type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, various cancers, and stroke. With such a significant and multi-faceted problem at hand, reversing the obesity epidemic in the United States will require a comprehensive and coordinated approach that uses policy and environmental change to transform communities into habitats that support and promote healthy lifestyle choices for all U.S. residents (1).

In this context, the term healthy lifestyle is primarily referring to physical activity and nutrition, as those are the two major modifiable components of an individual's body composition. Altering caloric intake is controlled under the nutritional aspect of a healthy lifestyle and altering caloric expenditure is controlled by the physical activity aspect of a healthy lifestyle.

It was this needs assessment, along with the Obama administrations "Lets Move," campaign headed by the first lady, the Healthy People 2010 goals, and the Robert Wood Johnson (RWJ) Foundations Community Health Rankings, that influenced the Get Moving! team to get to work!



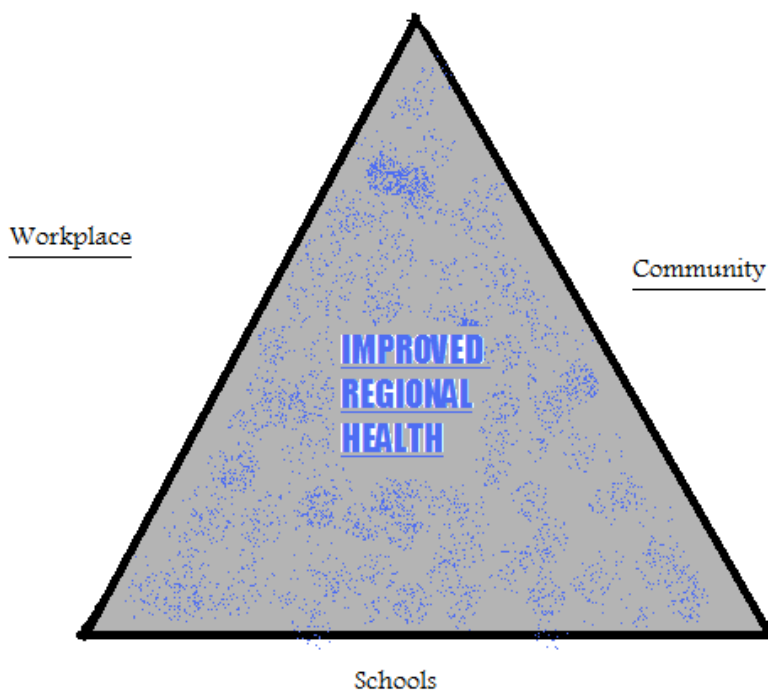
Needs Assessment! (Herkimer and Oneida County)

Not surprisingly, Herkimer and Oneida County residents are no better off than the rest of the country when it comes to obesity and its associated physical and mental illnesses. In fact, according to the most recent publication of County Health Rankings by the RWJ Foundation, rural areas of NYS such as Herkimer and Oneida County may be at greater risk. The 2010 report ranks Herkimer and Oneida County 20th and 25th of 62 counties under the Health Factor Rankings for Health Behaviors. The meshed county data from the 2009 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data available from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention includes some interesting, and alarming figures. (2,3)

- Age adjusted regional obesity of 27.6% compared to the NYS average of 23.1%
- 83.25% of adults in the region received advice to lose weight by a health professional among adults provided weight advice
- Regionally, 22.5% of adults report that they had no leisure time to be physically active
- Less than ¼ of the adult population consumes 5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily
- 5% of the region has been diagnosed as having coronary heart disease.
- 12.1% of adults in Herkimer and Oneida County declared they have had poor physical health within the last two weeks.
- 11.55% of adults in Herkimer and Oneida County declared they have had poor mental health within the last two weeks.

It is clear that the above data support the need for a public health intervention. That is why Get Moving!, along with the well-established extended public health network throughout the community, encourage you to implement one or more of the action plans discussed later in this handbook!

The Get Moving! Triad



The structure of this deliverable was influenced by various U.S. Surgeon General reports, the National Institute of Health, and other acclaimed action plans. However, what makes this handbook different, and hopefully of more value locally, is its specificity. The national level strategy guides do not develop individual needs assessments, they do not take into consideration the limitations of the recipients, nor do they develop a list of potential resources. Using “SMART” guidelines the Get Moving! Handbook was able to address these shortcomings.

The methodology behind this product was selected specifically to address the needs of Herkimer and Oneida County inhabitants. *No matter if you work, live, learn or play in this region, the Get Moving! Team wants you on our side.*

Section 1: Schools



Thomas R. Proctor High School is a public high school in Utica, New York.

As outlined in the needs assessment, childhood obesity is an ever-growing problem in the United States. What is more alarming is that all of the co-morbidities associated with obesity have an increased probability of occurring over the lifespan if obesity is developed at a young age (4). To reduce the high incidence of childhood obesity in our region of NYS, the schools must play a critical role in its prevention. Principals, teachers and parents need to help make schools healthier places to learn by providing quality nutrition, integrating physical activity during the school day, and teaching children about the importance of embracing a healthy active lifestyle (5). Get Moving! selected **Schools** as one of its three focus areas for this very reason. Across both counties, there are 97 public schools attended by local children (6,7). At least one of the interventions discussed in the school section can be integrated into each and every institution.

Throughout this handbook, the interventions have been divided into 2 categories. They are 1) Physical Activity and 2) Nutrition. Over the course of the research it was not uncommon to find studies or programs that integrated both of these components together. However, the report structure attempts to offer a simple way to access the information you seek both quickly and efficiently.

Additionally, each intervention is listed as minimally demanding or resource heavy. The Get Moving! handbook offers a range of interventions to allow organizations with different resources to get involved.

Section 2: Workplace



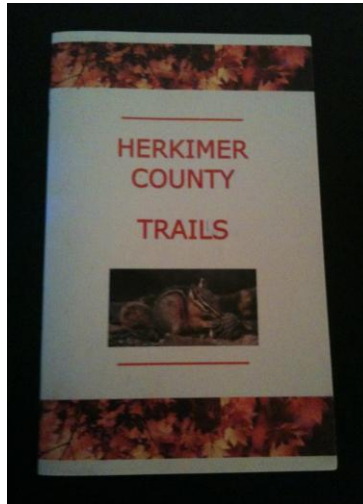
The Savings Bank of Utica in Utica, New York.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), as countries develop there is a trend towards decreased daily physical activity (8) and increased consumption of processed foods. One well-defined component of this problem is the higher demand for jobs that promote a sedentary lifestyle and leave little time during the workday for fresh food preparation.

As Herkimer and Oneida Counties have long been an industrialized area, many residents spend upwards of 40 to 50 hours a week at their place of employment. If primary work responsibilities require hours sitting at a desk or low levels of physical activity, physiological adaptations that are tough to alter begin to become a problem. When this is combined with an increase in disordered eating which, in some form is experienced at almost all jobs throughout our nation, it is no surprise that Get Moving! chose the **workplace** as the second of its big primary focus areas.

Work Site Wellness, as the term is coined, is any combination of educational, organizational, and environmental activities designed to support behavior conducive to the health of employees of a business and their families (9). There are a variety of outlets for these types of activities and throughout *Section 2* some of the most well researched and effective work site wellness interventions are discussed.

Section 3: Community



Herkimer County HealthNet Trail Guide, 2010

By definition, a community is a group of people with a common characteristic or interest living together within a larger society (10). This is not to be confused with community health, which often focuses on the health and development of individuals and families today and for future generations (11). Although community health is an important discipline in the public health field, this section of the handbook looks directly at the regions natural and built environments to generate interventions that will help bolster physical activity and nutrition for everyone. In essence, it evaluates the unique features of Herkimer and Oneida County and ties them into the Get Moving! obesity prevention campaign.

The Herkimer/Oneida region is rich in history and tradition. Located in Central NY, and spanning up towards the foothills of the Adirondacks, there is a solid balance of economical development and natural preservation. Its residents value community history and remain family oriented. That said, these counties are two of the more rural counties in NYS and financial stability has proven to be an issue. The reality of this region is that implementing community wide policy changes is not an easy task, which is why Get Moving! chose the **community** as its third and final focus area. *Section 3* specializes in practical interventions with program components that utilize resources already in place.

School Initiatives

Develop a “Walk to School” Day



Category: Physical Activity

Cause: Increase the number of pre- and post- school exercise opportunities (Addressed at the 2010 Regional Health Summit)

Intervention: Develop a “Walk to School” day

Resource Commitment: Minimal

Overview: The journey to school is an opportunity for increasing children's daily physical activity. Walking just 1 mile can burn between 50-100 calories in a child depending upon their weight and their walking speed (12). This policy is not suggesting that a school or district should implement a permanent walk-to-school program for all local students though there is plenty of literature on that topic. Instead, this intervention focuses on a planned day, once or twice an academic year, where guardians of students walk with their children to school. This is an optimal intervention for the Herkimer and Oneida region because of the relatively low number of heavily trafficked roads. Additionally, the changes in seasons make for a comfortable, and beautiful walk with the children. The primary level of implementation is K-6 graders.

Evidence: Walking to school is associated with an increase in OVERALL physical activity. One study indicated that of those who took part in the study, those who walked to school (65%) were significantly more active than those who traveled by car over a 7-day period via a standard accelerometer measurement. Hourly activity patterns demonstrated that those who walked to school were more active after school and throughout the evening than were car users (13). An additional benefit of this

intervention is that students get to experience their towns' sidewalks/streets/trails from a different perspective, and they are generally more attentive and focused when they arrive to school.

Model Programs Available:

- Kids Walk to School Resource Materials provided by the CDC (14)
- <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/resources.htm>
- International Walk to School Day (15)
<http://www.walktoschool.org>
- *How to Walk to School: Blueprint for a Neighborhood Renaissance* [Print] (16)

Implementation Tip:

For this intervention to become a reality certain resources are required. Below is a list of these resources with an explanation of why they are necessary and some information of how to acquire/utilize them appropriately.

Forge Partnerships (14)-

Principal or Superintendent (if the activity is going to be district wide) – They will need to be on board with any school wide initiative

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) – Have substantial power in many school districts and can be the deciding factor on the fate of events like this

Police and other public officials – The police force is needed to keep you and your children safe while public officials get an opportunity to support public health. If these individuals are on board and at an event, generally there is media coverage. This means that not only will your event get publicity, but your children may also get to be on television, which is always an incentive for those not keen on the idea of walking.

Refreshments-

Depending upon how big the event is, and they can be as simple as a few kids and parents meeting to walk to school or very elaborate celebrations, the event organizers may want to serve fresh fruit and water or another healthy alternative once the children arrive to school.

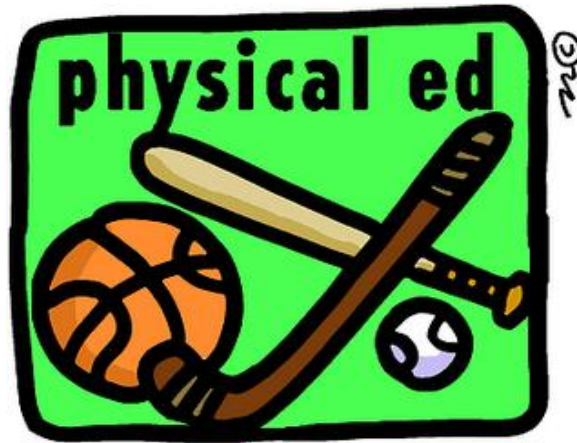
Local Contacts:

Paul Evans
Regional Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 2
Utica State Office Building
207 Genesee Street
Utica, NY 13501
Phone: (315) 793-2433

Sharon Bryant-Heyboer
Transportation Analyst
NYSDOT
Program Development and Management
207 Genesee Street
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 793-2648

Matthew VanSlyke, Senior Planner
Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Study
Boehlert Center @ Union Station
321 Main Street
Utica, NY 13501
315-798-5710
www.hocts.org

Comprehensive Physical Education Program



Category: Physical Activity

Cause: Increase the number of hours students participate in physical education during a school week

Intervention: Establish a comprehensive program

Resource Commitment: Heavy

Overview: A school-based physical education (PE) program is a key part of efforts to help young people develop healthy habits that last a lifetime. While it is important to promote family involvement in wellness, most children and adolescents spend more hours in school and childcare than they do at home, making school the perfect environment to establish healthy habits for our youth (17). The current physical activity guidelines, developed by the department of Health and Human Services in 2008, suggest that children and adolescents should participate in an hour or more of physical activity every day that is developmentally appropriate and enjoyable (18). However, being physically active is not the only component of school-based physical education. The education aspect of PE strives to develop self-confidence, proper mechanics, and awareness amongst students. It is often overlooked, yet it is the very reason schools have properly trained physical education staff in the first place.

Currently, NYS does mandate physical education in schools through The New York State Department of Education Regulations on physical activity. However, these policies are outdated and they must be reevaluated and modified. Since this is unlikely to be a timely process, a voluntary intervention at the level of an individual school may be the best option.

Evidence: There is a strong body of literature that supports increased physical education in schools. In one review study by Kahn et al. evidence suggests increasing PE is effective at increasing levels of physical activity and improving physical fitness. At the same time, no evidence of harm regarding academic performance was found to be effected by the time spent on physical education (19). In another study an active school model was implemented in cluster-randomized control trial that included 8 schools across a 1-year period. At the conclusion of the study the schools that had the intervention policy saw a 20% increase in fitness over the control schools (20). Additionally, school-based self-management programs are usually well received. In a 2009 study that investigated active lifestyle program perceptions the results were very positive. Students enjoyed the program and over half of the respondents reported being more active. Teachers and parents also perceived the lessons as useful and half of them reported an improvement in their children’s physical activity awareness (21).

Model Programs Available:

- Sport, Play and Active Recreation for Kids (SPARK) (22)
<http://www.sparkpe.org/>
- Action Schools! BC (23)
<http://www.actionschoolsbc.ca/content/home.asp>
- Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) PE (23)
<http://www.catchinfo.org/>

The three programs above are all evidence-based and well developed. In fact, a professor at our local Cornell University even discusses the effectiveness of CATCH in a recent paper and describes it as “the biggest bang for your buck” (24). That said, the Get Moving! team understands that this can all be very confusing and a lot to handle. To help you get the ball rolling, we have generated a short list of interventions that serve as components to many of the model programs discussed above.

- Before school PE program: Financed just like all other before and after school programs but with the additional requirement of a PE teacher on site (25). This program does not substitute for school day PE; it is in addition to it.
- The use of pedometers as an educational tool (how many steps do we take during the day?) They are low cost and can be used year after year. 1 classroom set would be enough if each class had them for 1 week.
- Use Physical Activity instead of food as a reward (25). Take “exercise snack breaks”. They wake students up just as well as snacks but don't cause that post-intake crash that sugar is known for.
- Extend recess by just 5 min a day while at the same time making sure that it is active.
- Lunch time PE program: The average length of a student lunch is well over a half hour. If students were given the opportunity to eat quickly and play after, this would generate more physical activity throughout their day. This could even be considered as a pilot study with an “opt-out” function vs. “opt-in”

Implementation Tips:

For this intervention to become a reality certain resources are required. Below is a list of these resources with an explanation of why they are necessary and some information of how to acquire/utilize them appropriately.

Forge Partnerships

Principal or Superintendent (if the activity is going to be district wide) – They will need to be on board with any school wide initiative. If the administration shows an interest in physical activity it is more likely the students will become engaged.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) – May help generate donations or at least volunteers

Local BOCES- BOCES services are created when two or more school districts decide they have similar needs that can be met by a shared program. BOCES helps school districts save money by providing opportunities to pool resources and share costs. Since Get Moving! Is a regional project, there may be some opportunities here.

Steps to a successful comprehensive program

- 1) Secure Funding: through grants or budgetary changes if necessary
- 2) Establish any partnerships
- 3) Identify the program or component of a program to be used
- 4) Implementation of the program (pilot test)
- 5) Measure and evaluate the program and the outcomes you specifically are interested in
- 6) Advocate for change to help change federal and state policy.

Local Contact:

United Way
270 Genesee Street
Utica, New York 13502-4617
Phone: (315) 733-4691
Fax: (315) 733-4691
Email: info@unitedwaygu.org

Oneida/Herkimer/Madison BOCES
jpalmer@oneida-boces.org

Installation of Container Gardens



Category: Nutrition

Cause: Increase the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables in schools

Intervention: Install container gardens into schools

Resource Commitment: Minimal

Overview: Over the last 20 years, school gardening has become a national movement. As of 2005, in the state of New York, more than 200 schools, 100 teachers, and 11,000 students garden using the state curriculum (26). School gardens are a valuable learning tool that can provide fresh snacks for the students to eat, a beautiful landscape around the school, and education on plant biology and nutrition. However, in the Herkimer/Oneida Region of NY, the harsh winters do not provide optimal growing conditions for many of the most commonly requested fruits and vegetables. Additionally, much of prime growing season occurs during the summer months, when school is not in session. To address these two concerns, the Get Moving! Team recommends using container gardens indoors to promote year round growing in a comfortable environment (right in the classroom!)

Evidence: Today's children lack experience with natural ecosystem complexity (26). Gardening, specifically in schools, can provide that environmental connection a child needs and has been proven to be an effective way to change attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. In a 2009 experimental study, 115 students in an elementary school were randomized to one of three groups. These three groups included an education and gardening group, an education only group, and a control group. Follow up reports concluded that participants in the two treatment groups exhibited significantly greater improvements in nutrition knowledge and taste ratings than did participants in the control group. Additionally, the education and gardening group was more likely to choose and consume vegetables in a lunchroom setting

at post-assessment than either the education only group or the control. These findings suggest that school administrators, classroom teachers, and nutrition educators should implement school gardens as a way to positively influence dietary habits at an early age (27).

Model Programs Available:

- Sustainable Table: Checklist for starting a school garden (28)
http://www.eecom.net/mfsp/projects_school_garden.pdf
- Kidsgardening.org Fundraising (29)
<http://www.kidsgardening.org/fundraising.asp>
- <http://www.citysprouts.org/> (30)

Implementation Assistance:

Forge Partnerships

**If you are planning on creating a garden for a single classroom minimal partnerships are required. At a school wide level you will need to get the administration involved and may want to consider contacting your local organic farming supplies store.

Securing a grant:

<http://www.kidsgardening.org/grants.asp>

Things to consider:

- Use your fruits and vegetables as healthy choices for snack time
- Children have allergies, make sure you send home an informational flyer that will require the signature of a guardian

Next Steps:

-Develop community partnerships to facilitate the study of local natural resources for those students interested

Local Contact:

K G Garden Supply
4575 Commercial Drive, New Hartford, NY 13413-6208
(315) 768-7214
Kggardensupply.com

Farm to School Program



Category: Nutrition

Cause: Increase the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables in schools

Intervention: Implement a Farm-to-School program

Resource Commitment: Heavy

Overview: Activists and academics are increasingly advocating for public procurement of locally grown food as its benefits both the students and the farmers alike (32). Farm-to-School programs are among the many efforts across the country with the goal of improving the quality of school meals (33). In NYS farm-to-school legislation passed in 2002. The legislation charges the New York State Department of Education and Department of Agriculture & Markets with working together to facilitate the purchase of New York farm products by schools, universities, and other educational institutions. The legislation also formalized the establishment of a New York Harvest for New York Kids Week to promote New York farm products (34). The mission objective of most farm-to-school programs is to connect schools with local farms and food producers; strengthen local agriculture; improve student health; and promote regional food systems awareness (34). In Herkimer and Oneida County there already exists a substantial consortium of growers, community supported agriculture (CSE), and farmers markets interested in produce distribution operations. Additionally, evidence suggests that even a well-developed farm-to-school program can be implemented without posing a burden on the school food services budget (33). This is important because funding is seen as the main barrier throughout this region.

Currently, there is an estimated 110 farm-to-school programs in NYS and with your help the Get Moving! team would like to see that number increase over the coming years (34).

Evidence: Much of the research done on farm-to-school programs is qualitative, however, the intervention consistently receives outstanding feedback. In a research article published by Betty Izumi, the operations of 7 farm-to-school programs were explored to uncover how and why these programs are successful. Analysis of interview data showed that there are basically three motivations for participating in a farm-to-school program; the students like it, the cost of the produce is very reasonable, and it helps the local farmers (33). The main speed bump hindering school administrator buy-in is the assumption that additional food costs will be incurred. According to a 2009 research article, this does not have to be the case. The publication discusses the benefits of a shortened supply chain and references a price savings index for some commonly purchased school lunch items (35). All in all, if the opportunity is available, there is no reason a school should not attempt to bring fresh local produce into the lunchroom. It is a classically qualified win-win situation.

Model Programs

- Gold Standard for Farm-to-School Information
<http://www.farmtoschool.org/> (36)

Implementation Tips:

For this intervention to become a reality certain resources are required. Below is a list of these resources with an explanation of why they are necessary and some information of how to acquire/utilize them appropriately.

- *Farm to School Implementation Guidelines – Cornell Cooperative Extension* (37)
http://farmtoschool.cce.cornell.edu/files/all/finger_lakes_farm_to_cafeteria_guide_2009_1.pdf

Generate Interest

Prepare a presentation at a PTO meeting or district wide conference to start generating interest

Forge Partnerships

Create a Farm-to-School Network- Involve the teachers, students, parents, and local farmers that want to get involved.

Food Services Director- needs to support the initiative because they control the operations of the school cafeteria. You will need to make plans with them to purchase less produce the month you begin the farm-to-school program so that there is no wasted product and no wasted funds. This is especially important if the other management personnel are not necessarily on board.

Local Farmer- You will need to find at least 1 local farmer that can provide produce for your school. As time passes and your initiative builds, you will want to partner with as many farmers as possible.

Secure grant funding if available-

Although this is not a requirement it is helpful to have funding when starting from the bottom up to alleviate the stress of limited funding.

- Federal Funding Opportunities (38)
<http://www.farmtoschool.org/fundingopps.php>

Local Contacts:

Ron Bunce, Executive Director
Cornell Cooperative Extension:
315-736-3394
Mohawk Valley SHRM

Farm-To-School Upstate Contact (NYS)
Ann McMahon
(518) 485-7728
ann.mcmahon@agmkt.state.ny.us

Wholesale / Distribution (NYS)
Gary Domalewicz
518-457-7076
gary.domalewicz@agmkt.state.ny.us

Workplace Initiatives

Increased Employee Physical Activity Levels



Category: Physical Activity

Cause: Increase the daily physical activity levels of employees

Intervention: Simple flyers and alterations of protocol

Resource Commitment: Minimal

Overview: The attitude for decades in the United States was that physical activity had no place in the workplace. However, in an era of sky high health care spending, policymakers, insurers, and employers are all expressing greater interest in workplace wellness. The two interventions discussed in this section will be of little to no cost and may have a significant ROI (39). They are best suited for the smaller businesses in the Herkimer/Oneida region.

1) Walking the stairs. It is as simple as it sounds. The Get Moving! team recommends that you post flyers around all elevators in your office building that will encourage walking the stairs. We also recommend putting up flyers in and around the stairwells that discuss the benefits of taking the stairs over the elevator and the extra calories it may burn. Additionally, we believe that any sort of decoration in the stairway will illicit more traffic and make the journey more pleasurable.

- To take this intervention one-step further, Get Moving! recommends that one day every week your business should hold a “mock broken elevator day,” where everyone that is physically capable must take the stairs.

2) The alternative intervention, because we know some businesses are located on the first floor, is to generate an “exercise at your desk” pamphlet. The Get Moving! team recommends that you distribute a list of exercises to any desk-bound employee that can be performed during a 3-5 min free period throughout their day. To go along with this handout an announcement should be made to encourage the employees’ use of the exercises and make it clear that it is acceptable.

Evidence:

- 1) Simple, inexpensive interventions can increase physical activity. Supporting this statement are the results from an experimental study with over 17,000 participants at a local shopping center. The intervention was minimally invasive, signs promoting the health and weight-control benefits of stair use were placed beside escalators with adjacent stairs. Overall, stair use increased from 4.8% to 6.9% and 7.2% with the health and weight-control signs, respectively (40). Additionally, research shows that walking up the stairs can burn up to three times more calories than taking the elevator, which will have a direct impact on an employee's caloric balance (41).

- 2) Exercising at your desk can increase an individual's flexibility, strength, and ATTENTION SPAN (42). All of these things should then positively effect the bottom line of the business. Less sick days from employees and increased productivity are not uncommon (43). The benefits of resistance training are proven and not to be disputed in this handbook. However, you may find it interesting that employees state the number one reason for not exercising is a lack of time. This can easily be remedied by a desk exercise program and supportive staff (43).

Model Programs

- Take the Stairs Campaign (44)

<http://www.bphc.org/programs/cib/chronicdisease/heal/takethestairs/Pages/Home.aspx>

- StairWell to Better Health (45)

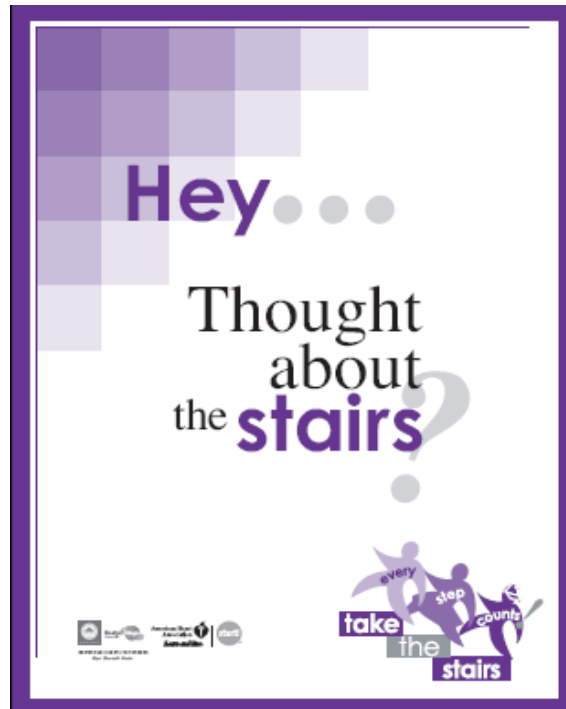
<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/stairwell/index.htm>

- Office Exercises (46)

<http://exercise.about.com/cs/exerciseworkouts/l/blofficeworkout.htm>

Examples:

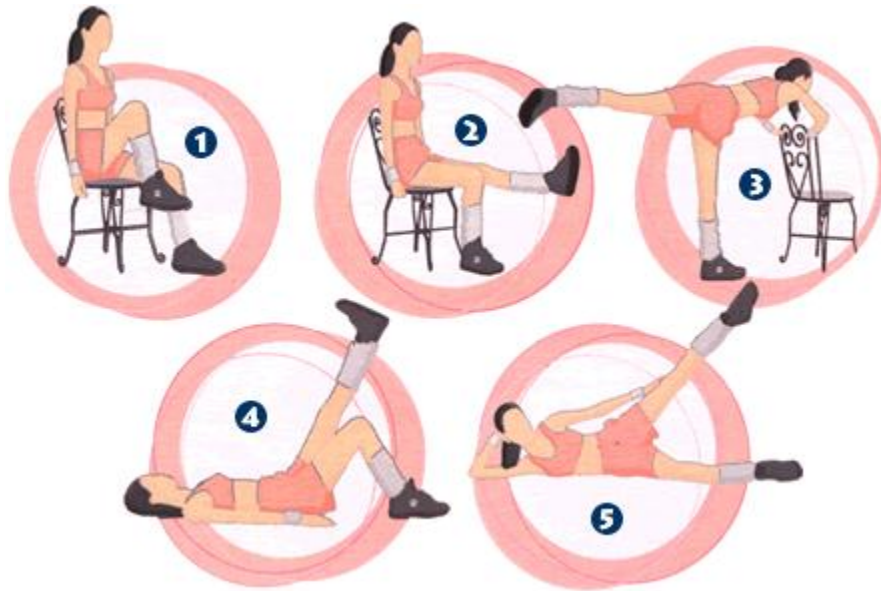
The following examples of handouts and exercises were taken from the model programs above.



Adopted From the Take the Stairs Campaign

Desk Exercises At Work

Your 5-Step Lower Body Workout



We at _____ encourage you to be active and remain comfortable throughout the day. Please feel free to utilize these exercises at your discretion.

Implementation Tips:

For this intervention to become a reality certain resources are required. Below is a list of these resources with an explanation of why they are necessary and some information of how to acquire/utilize them appropriately.

Forge Partnerships

Human Resources- Talk to human resources about the needs of your company and its employees. They may be able to assist your in your intervention or they may inform you that a program is already in place which can be built upon.

Upper Management- Must be on board! The boss is always the example. Get him to take the stairs or workout at his desk and you will succeed in generating interest throughout the rest of the workplace.

Print Flyers

Attempt to use a good color inkjet printer and quality paper when creating the handouts so that the message will be well received.

Local Contacts:

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Employer Sponsored Challenges



Category: Physical Activity

Cause: Offer employees opportunities to support the company and become more active

Intervention: Employer Sponsored Challenges

Resource Commitment: Heavy

Overview: Employer sponsored challenges are a great way to bring a company together and help its employees become more active. It is generally part of any complete worksite health program but is also successful on its own (43). Throughout Herkimer and Oneida County the Get Moving! team has already produced and distributed a Get Moving! Challenge that is modeled after the New York State Physical Activity Coalition's evidence based Move 4 life campaign (46). This challenge can easily be adopted into the workplace. Another local employer sponsored challenge is the Corporate Cup Boilermaker 15k. This event is attractive because it is well known and would feed back into the local economy. Lastly, Nerf Olympics is something fun and relaxing on a Friday afternoon that promotes movement, flexibility, stress reduction, and an element of teamwork (47). When planning such an event consider setting up “challenge” stations with various activities. This type of intervention is better suited for the medium/large-sized businesses in the Herkimer/Oneida region. The Get Moving! team urges you to start small and dream big. Look at developing a challenge or a pilot study before investing in a more developed well-rounded corporate wellness program.

Evidence: The focus of a workforce health promotion program can vary due to many factors, including type of organization, workforce diversity, resources, and leadership support (47). For this reason there is a lack of program specific outcomes research. There is however, a wealth of knowledge on the effectiveness of corporate wellness programs in general. In a recent case study publication by the Wellness Council of America, Ollis and Company CEO Richard Ollis is interviewed and discusses the success of his corporate wellness initiative for his medium sized company. He discusses the reduction in absenteeism and the increased productivity that his program has brought about. Ollis also talks specifically about a point system that is similar to the Get Moving! Challenge and how these types of

programs keep employees interested (48). In another article that focuses on the savings associated with worksite wellness, it was found that for every dollar invested into worksite wellness, the cost of absenteeism falls by about \$2.73 (39). Healthcare costs were also addressed but for this handbook we are not going to assume that all corporations provide health care to their workers. Lastly, in an article that discusses the creation of places for physical activity combined with outreach activities, challenges and games were said to be very successful at garnering participation. However, this article did not focus specifically on the workplace (49).

Model Programs:

- The Community Guide: Workplace (50)
<http://thecommunityguide.org/index.html>
(Provides a wealth of information on general corporate wellness)
- American Heart Association: MyStart (51)
<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3053103>
(Mystart! is program similar to the Get Moving! Challenge but not region specific and is more internet friendly)

Our Recommendations:

- See appendix for Get Moving! Challenge materials
- Boilermaker Corporate Cup Information (52)
<http://www.boilermaker.com/events/15k/corporate-cup.php>
- Purchase Nerf Toys at a local toy store. The cost should be no more than a few hundred dollars for an office set.

Implementation Tips:

For this intervention to become a reality certain resources are required. Below is a list of these resources with an explanation of why they are necessary and some information of how to acquire/utilize them appropriately.

Forge Partnerships:

Different challenges will require different partnerships but keep in mind that these relationships take time. If you are looking to get in contact with a race director do not wait until the last minute. If you are looking to start a program with all employees seek the assistance of human resources or, if you are a small corporation, seek the assistance of the more active employees.

Incentives, Incentives, Incentives!

As wonderful as exercise sounds not everyone will be itching to participate. Make sure that when you advertise your new employee sponsored challenge that you have something to offer the employees in return for their participation. Water bottles, hats, and t-shirts are nice but things like free lunches (of the healthy variety), early dismissal hours and alternative health care plans will work wonders (48).

Things to remember

Include everyone

Establish a person in charge

Tailor the activity to the needs of the employees (43)

Be creative with incentives

Have Fun

Nerf challenge

A nerf is a toy, created for safe indoor play, which either shoots or is made of foam-like material. Most of the toys are a variety of foam-based weaponry, but there were also several different types of Nerf toys, such as balls for sports like football, basketball, and others. The most notable of the toys are the dart guns (referred to by Hasbro as "blasters") that shoot ammunition made from Nerf foam (53). This was suggested as an intervention/challenge because most employees will be familiar with the toys from their own childhood or their children's interests. This work-based challenge was popularized when Google Inc. stated that it was a weekly activity on a television interview.

Healthy Vending Machines



Category: Nutrition

Cause: Provide employees with more healthy on-the-go food choices in the workplace

Intervention: Healthy vending machines

Resource Commitment: Minimal

Overview: The largest problems often have the simplest solutions. There is general agreement that measures that would reduce the fat content of the diet in the working population as a whole would be helpful in preventing or delaying the development of several chronic diseases (54). If your place of employment has a vending machine, the Get Moving! team recommends working to increase the machines nutritional content and sales by developing threshold criteria for all the food items sold. Guidelines for energy (calories), saturated fat, sugar, and sodium are readily available and can make a big difference in the overall diet of an employee. By limiting what goes into a vending machine, and even decreasing the prices of the healthiest options, you will be encouraging vending machine users to make a healthier choice.

Evidence: Healthy vending machines are an effective way to change your employee's daily nutritional habits. In a 2010 pilot study looking at the effectiveness of such an intervention, the results were very promising. The study included 14 hospitals that implemented healthier vending machine options and collected pre and post intervention data. The results of the study showed that 1 year post intervention

there was no change in the % of employees who used the machines and the healthier food options resulted in a substantial reduction in the amount of energy, fat, saturated fat and sugar per 100 gram product. Additionally, there was no change in sales volume and more employees stated being satisfied with the vending machine options (55). In another study that focused specifically on pricing strategies, 9 vending machines were studied for 7 weeks (4 wks baseline and 3 wks intervention) to determine the effect that lowering the price of low-fat food options 50% would have on sales. Results showed that the proportion of low-fat snacks purchased was 25.7%, 45.8%, and 22.8% over the three periods, respectively. Also, total snack purchases did not vary by period (56). This evidence supports the feasibility of selling more healthy foods in vending machines and doing so at a lower price.

Implementation Tips:

Inclusion Criteria- Try to include food items that are minimally processed and contain a high vitamin and mineral content. It is also important to make sure that the total fat, cholesterol, sodium, and calories all fall between the 5% of DV and 25% of DV on the food nutrition label. If you are working with fresh fruits, vegetables, or unpackaged foods it is safe to assume these criteria are met.

Contractual Agreements- This is a primary area of concern for many business owners. You cannot be afraid to use leverage to your advantage and contact your current vendor. Ask for healthier food choices and if the provider proves difficult tell them that sales will cease. Generally cooperation is not a problem as there is always a few healthy choices in a vending machine, just make it clear that you want to expand upon that. The trend in vending is towards a healthier, greener future and most companies are not resisting.

The worst-case scenario is that you may have to run through your contract if your request is denied. If this becomes your reality, you do not have to operate the machine. You can turn off the vending machine and offer fresh fruits, vegetables, and other healthy snacks on an adjacent table or basket. The provider will lose profit and you will still be providing a good service to your employees

Model Programs:

Both of the following companies are nationwide and provide a full vending service. They can also serve as consultants for food items if you already have a vending machine in place.

- <http://www.healthyuvending.com/index.html> (57)
- <http://www.vendnatural.com/> (58)

Local Contact: Your current vending provider.

Healthy Meetings



Category: Nutrition

Cause: Eliminate unhealthy eating habits during meetings

Intervention: Healthy meetings

Resource Commitment: Minimal

Overview: It should come as no surprise that one of the largest outlets for complimentary food distribution throughout the workplace is during meetings. Whether it is coffee and donuts in the morning or catered food at lunch, whatever the scenario there is always room for improvement. Just because co-workers are being offered free food does not mean they should have to ruin their diet. Currently, the trend of the strong-minded is to decline the unhealthy food, but is that really the appropriate message to be sending from an administrative standpoint? Offering healthy choices at meetings and other events can make it easier for people to eat healthy foods and be physically active. There may be some initial pushback but the results will be long lasting and once those who disagree with the decision to move towards healthy meetings become the minority, the complaints will cease.

Evidence: Although there has been a lack of studies focusing directly on healthy meetings outcomes, evidence still suggests that it is a successful intervention. There is evidence for the consumption of healthy foods, which has been proven in the literature and discussed in other portions of this handbook. There is also evidence against offering unhealthy foods, which we have not yet discussed. In a recent article published by the International Journal on Obesity a study was conducted to investigate if exposure to the sight and smell of comfort food can increase reported appetite, initiate the 'cephalic phase responses' and increase planned and actual consumption. Posttest data on the 104 participants concluded that comfort food-cue exposure increased rated hunger and desire to eat, increased prospective portion size of all savory foods, and increased salivation (59). This could be directly applied to

the workplace as bagels, donuts, and danishes often serve as comfort foods for stressful morning and mid-day meetings. Additionally the NYS department of health has declared healthy meetings a best practices intervention for reducing obesity in the workplace and has generated a report that outlines a potential healthy meeting scenario (60).

Implementation Tips:

Inclusion Criteria- Try to include food items that are minimally processed and contain a high vitamin and mineral content. It is also important to make sure that the total fat, cholesterol, sodium, and calories all fall between the 5% of DV and 25% of DV on the food nutrition label. If you are working with fresh fruits, vegetables, or unpackaged raw foods it is safe to assume this criteria is met.

Make “Light” of the Situation- Workers do not like change. Thus, when you first begin to push healthy meetings from an administration standpoint, make sure you explain the reasoning behind your actions and make your employees feel comfortable with the new operational procedures. In addition to the food changes we recommend serving both tea and coffee, as removing coffee can lead to an influx of complaints. We also recommend switching to low or non-fat creamer as a healthier alternative to full fat versions.

Place Food and Beverages Down the Hall- This will encourage physical activity and help reduce tardiness to your meetings.

Take a Poll- Just because there is going to be change doesn't mean it can't be for the better. Create a list of healthy food options and ask all employees to fill out a survey at the next meeting. Leave a blank space for suggestions. Try to serve the most requested foods so that the transition will be both pleasurable and healthy.

Model Programs:

- University of Minnesota School of Public Health: Guidelines for offering Healthy Food at Meeting, Seminar, and Catered Events (61)
http://www.sph.umn.edu/img/assets/9103/Nutrition_guide.pdf
- NYS Department Of Health: Guidelines for Healthy Meetings (60)
<http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/prevent/guidelines.htm>

Community Initiatives

Hiking and Walking Trail Network



Category: Physical Activity

Cause: Better utilization of the local environment

Intervention: Generate hiking and walking trail network

Resource Commitment: Heavy

Overview: The Institute of Medicine (IOM) once published a statement stressing that “It is unreasonable to expect that people will change their behavior easily when so many forces in the social, cultural, and physical environment conspire against such change.” This quotation could not be more accurate, which is why an intervention that will alter these negative forces should be used to induce more physical activity throughout the Herkimer/Oneida region. Creating a hiking and walking trail network would do just that. In an area as scenic and beautiful as Central New York, utilizing current trails, creating new trails, and generating accessible information about local trails for those individuals “not in the loop,” should be a priority. Counties all across NYS have made a push towards developing trail systems and close neighbor Cayuga County has a magnificent trail system that is one of the largest in the state. In the experience of local health departments, community activities, such as building a trail network, are the type of interventions that have the potential to generate long term change in behavior while at the same time bringing the community closer together.

It is important to note that the Get Moving! team is not suggesting more work be brought into the local parks and recreation departments. Rather, we are suggesting that individual and group efforts by motivated and concerned citizens should be able to make just as large an impact on their own. When a community is involved in a project like this the resources are endless and there is no time constraint.

Evidence: Communities across the state are developing trails to connect towns, villages, schools, and the workplace in an effort to revitalize their locality and foster healthy lifestyle choices (62). A great local case study is available through the Friends of Great Bear Recreation Area in Phoenix, NY. Friends of Great Bear is made up of residents of Oswego County interested in the conservation and protection of the Great Bear Recreation Area. This unique area is owned by the City of Fulton and the Town of Volney.

In cooperation with the City of Fulton, Town of Volney and private landowners, the Friends of Great Bear are advocates for the preservation and protection of this natural environment, so that the public may share and make use of the property wisely as a recreational resource. With help from local businesses, this past year alone they have built four new bridges and have created a trail mapping system that is both attractive and accurate (63). Through this effort the group has seen utilization of the Great Bear Park rise substantially since 2007.

Trail builders, like the Friends of Great Bear, can be strong allies in bringing active living to suburban and rural places (64). Forming an organization like this can become a central resource for information about local parks, trails, and outdoor recreation activities. Literature also suggests that messages promoting the social and entertainment benefits of physical activity by these groups were more successful than the generic promotion of health benefits when it comes to outdoor recreation (64). With that said, the existence of multiple, small trail organizations throughout Oneida and Herkimer could generate enough attention to foster an environment similar to that of the more physically active counties in NYS.

Model Programs:

- Herkimer County Trail Guide
- Great Bear Recreation Area (63)
<http://www.friendsofgreatbear.org/index.asp>
- Rails to Trails (65)
<http://www.railstotrails.org/index.html>

Implementation Tips:

For this intervention to become a reality certain resources are required. Below is a list of these resources with an explanation of why they are necessary and some information of how to acquire/utilize them appropriately.

Web Site- The Get Moving! team recommends that an open-source website should be created that would allow all users to input information into the site. A free host website with a forum would be one way this could be accomplished at little to no cost. This would allow all interested residents throughout Herkimer and Oneida County to post information about the current trails they are utilizing, trails they are working on, or even on when they plan to next meet as a group and do work or workout.

If the website does not seem like a feasible option, generating a booklet similar to the Herkimer County Trails guide can also be very effective.

Partnerships- Form partnerships with your friends, family or local businesses. Projects like this are easier with assistance. Whether you plan to make a website or pamphlet, help build new trails, or gather data on the current trails, there are jobs for everybody and it never hurts to have an extra pair of hands.

Trail Measurements- Use a reliable GPS system to measure the distance of all trails. Do so on a clear day so that clouds do not interfere with the readings.

Contribute however you can- This intervention is different, it relies not just on one individual but the collective efforts of the community. Whatever you have experience in can most likely be utilized in the creation of a trail network

Get out and use the trails! - Sometimes the best way to generate interest is to lead by example. So get out and explore what Herkimer and Oneida have to offer!

Local Contact:

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Limit Screen Time



Category: Physical Activity

Cause: Support community members becoming more physically active

Intervention: Limit screen time at home and in public service venues

Resource Commitment: Minimal

Overview: As you have probably noticed throughout this handbook the Get Moving! team has made many suggestions on what you can do to increase the physical activity and nutritional habits of yourself and those around you. However, for this intervention we are not actually recommending that you “do” anything. In fact, we are going to discuss potential restrictions.

Mechanisms linking extended screen viewing time and obesity include displacement of physical activity; a reduction in metabolic rate and excess energy intake; and increased consumption of food advertised on television as a result of exposure to marketing of high energy dense foods and beverages (1). For these reasons we are recommending a community wide effort to reduce the number of hours you and your family spend in front of a screen.

As of 2010, it was recommended that guardians limit their children's screen time (including TV) to no more than 2 hours a day by The American Academy of Pediatrics (66). Most families in Herkimer and Oneida County do not acquiesce to this request. Extended viewing usually occurs in the home, with a relatively small portion of television, computer, and video game use occurring in public service venues.

However, limiting their use across these public areas can have a large impact on total screen-time for you and your children.

The Get Moving! team believes that all members of the community are responsible for this trend of increased sedentary activity and therefore everyone needs to do their part in an effort to reduce the screen- time of all individuals across the region.

Evidence: Countless Long-term studies have demonstrated a positive and significant association between television viewing in childhood and body mass index levels in adulthood (1). In one specific case-control study, nearly 200 3rd and 4th grade students were randomized into one of two groups to assess the effects of reducing television, videotape, and video game use on changes in adiposity, physical activity, and dietary intake. The intervention was simply a change in curriculum (reducing sedentary activities). The results showed that compared with controls, children in the intervention group had statistically significant relative decreases in body mass index. This leads to the conclusion that reducing television, videotape, and video game use may be a promising, population-based, approach to prevent childhood obesity (67). Additionally, this data can be adopted to represent the broader goal of reduced screen-time throughout the whole community. If your children are watching less TV, it is a great opportunity for you to watch less TV as well.

Model Programs: There is no “model” for reducing screen viewing. However, the Get Moving! team has produced a list of helpful ways to reduce screen viewing below.

Implementation Tips:

For this intervention to become a reality certain resources are required. Below is a list of these resources with an explanation of why they are necessary and some information of how to acquire/utilize them appropriately.

Talk to Your Friends or Family- Explain to them the reasons behind the new set of guidelines and set a good example (68).

Log Screen Time vs. Active Time - Start tracking how much time you or your family spends in front of a screen. Include things like TV and movies, playing video games, and computer use for things other than school or work. Log and compare this data with collected data on how much physical activity they get. That way you’ll get a sense of what changes need to be made (68).

Be Active - Do something active while you are in front of the screen. Pushups, stretching and yoga are popular and you can even turn them into a competition. Also, if you have to compromise and allow video games, select active games like Dance Dance Revolution or other games that require some sort of physical interaction (68).

Set and Enforce Screen Time Limits- This can help an individual or a family view < 2hrs a day (68).

Don't put a TV or Computer in a Bedroom- People who have TVs in their rooms tend to watch about 1.5 hours more TV a day than those that don't. Plus, it keeps them in their room instead of spending time with the rest of the family (68).

Turn off the TV During Meals- If you are watching TV during meals you will have a tendency to over-eat (68).

Don't Use TV Time as Reward or Punishment for children- (If Applicable) you do not want to bring more attention to the negative activities than they already receive (68).

Cancel Cable Television- An option that will help EVERYONE in the household watch less TV.

Do Not Substitute Movies for other art form- In the class room or out, make children perform the musical, read the book, or act out the play before they watch the movie.

Remember, 3D TV's Don't Count As Exercise!!

Local Education Classes



Category: Nutrition

Cause: Increase awareness on how to choose/prepare/keep healthy foods.

Intervention: Local education classes

Resource Commitment: Minimal

Overview: Determinants of healthy eating stem from many Individual components including age, sex, education, physiological and health issues, psychological attributes, lifestyle practices, and knowledge attitudes, beliefs and behaviors, in addition to other universal dietary determinants such as income, social status and culture (69). A community education class focusing on healthy eating is one way to address nearly all these determinates and level the playing field. A community class can draw from each individual's unique determinants and use them to help develop the classes' structure and curriculum. Topics such as fresh food purchasing, nutrition label content, clean and safe preparation, canning/jarring, and even herbs/spice growing and preparation are common topics of interest. The Get Moving! team envisions this intervention being implemented at boy scout/girl scout meetings, Salvation Army Centers, churches, VFW's, and other community organizations.

Evidence: Community programs like this one are popping up all over the country and throughout Central, NY. A recent study out of Syracuse University focused on designing and pilot testing a church-based community program to reduce obesity. A 12-week timeframe was used and 6 nutrition-based clinics were implemented as part of the program. The nutrition education program emphasized dietary changes that would confer health benefits but be relatively easy to maintain. Post-analysis, it was concluded through participant feedback that attending the pilot program sessions generated beneficial changes in nutrition habits across the intervention group. Overall, the program was a considered a success (77). Additionally, a study with a related objective: to evaluate the feasibility of undertaking a food skills intervention in areas of social deprivation was completed over 6 months in 8 communities across Scotland. The intervention aimed at altering cooking confidence, food preparation methods and dietary

choices. The results from this study concluded that a food skills intervention is likely to have a small but positive effect on food choice and confidence in food preparation (78). Through the findings of these two qualitative studies it is clear that a community intervention of this magnitude has the potential to make a significant difference in the nutritional habits of the Herkimer/Oneida region.

Model Programs:

- [Cornell Cooperative Extension: Food and Nutrition Education in Communities \(72\)](http://www.fnec.cornell.edu/)
<http://www.fnec.cornell.edu/>

Implementation Tips:

For this intervention to become a reality certain resources are required. Below is a list of these resources with an explanation of why they are necessary and some information of how to acquire/utilize them appropriately.

Find a program sponsor- You are going to need a location, a base audience, and funding to get this project off the ground.

The location can be rented out or donated to you. If those options are not practical then holding a class in a large home may work well in the early stages of the initiatives development.

A base audience can be found through any of the community organizations discussed in the overview and could even be co-workers and neighbors. Do not be afraid to utilize social media like news channels and the local paper.

Funding is useful but if it proves difficult to generate then you can always have a bring your own supplies teaching session. For example if you were giving a demonstration on how to jar fruits and vegetables for the winter months you can have everyone bring their own jars and fruit of choice.

Get the children involved! - Have them attend the courses with you.

Teach what you know- You may not be interesting in forming a local nutrition education class but if one is already in place, or beginning to take shape, support the initiative by giving a lecture on your area of expertise.

The goal of any class should be to have each student prepare one clinic

Have Fun! - You may find that this project becomes a social outing. That is great! Keep the fun rolling and introduce as many new faces as possible.

Community Gardens



Category: Nutrition

Cause: Increase availability of fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the community

Intervention: Community gardens

Resource Commitment: Heavy

Overview: By definition, a community garden is a single piece of land gardened collectively by a group of people (73). These gardens provide access to fresh produce and plants as well as labor opportunities, neighborhood improvement, and a sense of community and connection to the environment (73). Gardens can vary in size, shape, structure and function. For example, many gardens are open to the public and have a single garden manager responsible for the upkeep. More commonly, members of the community garden will work in exchange for their produce. This closed gate model is successful because it fosters the sharing of food cultivation knowledge amongst members of the garden and ensures food security for those who are willing to work (74). Closed gate community gardens can even lead to other issues in the neighborhood being addressed; reportedly due to organizing facilitated through the gardening. The Get Moving! team recommends this closed gate model for implementation across Herkimer and Oneida County because of its diverse demographics and cultural underpinnings.

Evidence: Community gardens are a tangible way to demonstrate public health efforts through organized community-centered activities that link many disciplines (74). Locally, this has already become a reality. The For the Good Corporation of Utica, NY has been developing three community gardens across some of the most urban and impoverished areas of the city since 2008 (75). Their first garden was successful in feeding over 100 Utica residents located in and around Linwood place and project leader

Cassandra Harris-Lockwood stated that the garden was so successful because “It’s more dignified for people to grow their food rather than going to a soup kitchen, and it creates skills and strengthens their self-esteem.” This success is not uncommon, in fact, a similar study done down the California coastline reviewed the positive impact of community gardens in various locations across the state. Although each garden analyzed had unique attributes and different protocols the study concluded that nearly every community experienced improvements resulting from gardening efforts. These results ranged from knowledge and skill enhancement to behavioral and systems changes. These reports offer good qualitative support to the implementation of community gardens but little support on the quantitative nutritional implications they have on the community. A 2010 review article by the American Dietetic Association addresses these concerns. In all 4 of the articles reviewed there was a substantial increase in fruits and vegetables consumed by the “farming,” population. The article does stress that more research with control groups is necessary in the future (76).

Model Programs:

- [For the Good Inc.\(75\)](http://www.forthegoodinc.org/PressReleaseGardens.html)
<http://www.forthegoodinc.org/PressReleaseGardens.html>
- American Community Gardening Association (73)
<http://communitygarden.org/>

Implementation Tips:

Congratulations! Expressing interest is the first step in the creation of a community garden near your home. This project is an excellent opportunity and you should take comfort knowing that it can make a world of difference for everyone involved. However, it is also one of the largest and most resource dependent interventions discussed throughout the literature. With that said, this 2010 edition handbook is not specialized enough to develop a full action plan detailing every aspect of developing a community garden. What the Get Moving! team aims to do throughout this implementation section is provide the reader with some general information and connect you to the resources necessary to make this a reality.

Key Elements: commitment of local leadership and staffing, involvement of volunteers and community partners, and availability of skill-building opportunities for participants (74).

Funding Opportunities: Due to the complexity of this project and the machinery needed to create a functioning end product, do not be surprised if startup costs are estimated at \$15,000-\$20,000 for a large garden. Below is a link to some funding opportunities to help you get started

Community Garden Funding (77):

<http://communitygarden.org/learn/resources/funding-opportunities.php>

Location, Location, Location! - The majority of community garden members are usually residents located within a half mile radius around the garden. Keep this in mind when generating a needs assessment and searching for the best location.

Start Small, Dream Big: If it is impractical for you to get the assistance you need, start a small garden with your neighbors and expand from there. Three to Four houses can join together and utilize the backyard with the best soil or just create a large container garden on a porch or deck. If you have success with this venture then those who didn't offer resources before may have a change of heart.

Follow the 10 Steps to Success: Adopted from the American Community Garden Association Guidelines for launching a successful community garden in your neighborhood

1. ORGANIZE A MEETING OF INTERESTED PEOPLE

Determine whether a garden is really needed and wanted, what kind it should be (vegetable, flower, both, organic?), whom it will involve and who benefits. Invite neighbors, tenants, community organizations, gardening and horticultural societies, building superintendents (if it is at an apartment building)—in other words, anyone who is likely to be interested.

2. FORM A PLANNING COMMITTEE

This group can be comprised of people who feel committed to the creation of the garden and have the time to devote to the idea, at least at this initial stage. Choose well-organized persons as garden coordinators and form committees to tackle specific tasks such as: funding and partnerships, youth activities, construction and communication.

3. IDENTIFY ALL YOUR RESOURCES

Do a community asset assessment. What skills and resources already exist in the community that can aid in the garden's creation? Contact local municipal planners about possible sites, as well as horticultural societies and other local sources of information and assistance. Look within your community for people with experience in landscaping and gardening. In Toronto contact the Toronto Community Garden Network.

4. APPROACH A SPONSOR

Some gardens "self-support" through membership dues, but for many, a sponsor is essential for donations of tools, seeds or money. Churches, schools, private businesses or parks and recreation departments are all possible supporters. One garden raised money by selling "square inches" at \$5 each to hundreds of sponsors.

5. CHOOSE A SITE

Consider the amount of daily sunshine (vegetables need at least six hours a day), availability of water, and soil testing for possible pollutants. Find out who owns the land. Can the gardeners get a lease agreement for at least three years? Will public liability insurance be necessary?

6. PREPARE AND DEVELOP THE SITE

In most cases, the land will need considerable preparation for planting. Organize volunteer work crews to clean it, gather materials and decide on the design and plot arrangement.

7. ORGANIZE THE GARDEN

Members must decide how many plots are available and how they will be assigned. Allow space for storing tools, making compost, and don't forget to create walking pathways between plots! Also, think about planting flowers or shrubs around the garden's edges to promote good will with non-gardening neighbors, passersby and municipal authorities.

8. PLAN FOR CHILDREN

Consider creating a special garden just for kids--including them is essential. Children are not as interested in the size of the harvest but rather in the process of gardening. A separate area set aside for them allows them to explore the garden at their own speed.

9. DETERMINE RULES AND PUT THEM IN WRITING

The gardeners themselves devise the best ground rules. They are more willing to comply with rules that they have had a hand in creating. Ground rules help gardeners to know what is expected of them. Think of it as a code of behavior. Some examples of issues that are best dealt with by agreed upon rules are: fees and how the money will be used, how the plots are to be assigned, and head gardener issues regarding tool sharing, scheduled meetings, and basic maintenance.

10. HELP MEMBERS KEEP IN TOUCH WITH EACH OTHER

Good communication ensures a strong community garden with active participation by all. Some ways to do this are: form a telephone tree, create an email list; install a rainproof bulletin board in the garden; have regular celebrations. Community gardens are all about creating and strengthening communities.

Local Contact:

Cassandra Harris-Lockwood
For the Good Inc.
315-797-2417

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