

WHAT LOCAL POLICIES CAN HELP IMPROVE THE COMMUNITY'S HEALTH?

Benefits of Health Related Policies:

Health related policies can touch everyone in the community. For example, a sidewalk may help someone lose weight, prevent weight gain, and save on gas-line expenses. All three different needs can be met with one policy.



The following are examples of areas where a policy can be implemented for positive health outcomes:

- Increase availability of healthier food venues
- Encourage production, distribution, or procurement of food from local farms in local jurisdiction (community garden, farmers' markets).
- Implement only healthy food and beverage sales and/or work site wellness programs in government facilities and encourage businesses to follow.
- Limit the number of fast food establishments within a certain distance of schools.
- Zone areas for mixed use that specifically combines residential land use with commercial, institutional, or other public land use.
- Provide breastfeeding accommodations.
- Provide private areas for expressing and storing breastmilk
- Increase Physical Activity opportunities.
- Develop agreements with local schools for use of recreational facilities.
- Require sidewalks and green space in all new construction areas.
- Develop and enhance infrastructures supporting "walkable and bikable" communities.
- Support locating schools within walking distance of residential areas or creating "walking school buses."

To read success stories from state and local leaders:

http://www.activeliving.org/files/HealthyCommunityDesign_ALL.pdf

STATE OBESITY TASK FORCE

MISSION: Working toward prevention and reduction of obesity for a healthier Alabama

RESOURCES FOR CREATING LOCAL HEALTH POLICIES

Community Preventive Services: The community guide showcases policy approaches that work to promote health within the community. - www.thecommunityguide.org/pa/environmental-policy/index.html

Prevention Institute: Prevention Institute is a non-profit national center dedicated to improving community health and well-being by building momentum for effective primary prevention. - www.preventioninstitute.org/sa/policies

Smart Growth America: Smart Growth America is a coalition of national, state, and local organizations working to improve the ways we plan and build the towns, cities, and metro areas we call home. One of the latest postings on the time sensitive website addresses 100 policies for implementation regarding smart growth. www.smartgrowth.org/pdf/gettosg.pdf

CDC Recommendations and Reports: The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports on recommended community strategies and measurements to prevent obesity in the United States. The recommended strategies presented in this document were developed as a result of a systematic process grounded in available evidence for each strategy, expert opinion, and detailed documentation of the project process and decision-making rationale. www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5807a1.htm

Action Communities for Health, Innovation, and Environment (ACHIEVE): ACHIEVE fosters collaborative partnerships between city and county health officials, city and county government, tribal programs, parks and recreation departments, local YMCAs, local health-related coalitions, and other representatives from the school, business, health, and community sectors to implement improvements. - www.achievecommunities.org

Action Strategies Toolkit: A local and state leader's guide to strengthening physical activity and healthy eating opportunities for youth is provided. The policy options and resources within the Leadership for Healthy Communities Action Strategies Toolkit represent a collection of current best approaches that have been identified, evaluated, and selected by Leadership for Healthy Communities and the 11 policy maker organizations participating in the program. www.leadershipforhealthycommunities.org/actionstrategies

Healthy States: A Council of State Governments (CSG) helps states increase efficiency by identifying the best new and creative approaches to significant state problems, developing information on practical policy solutions, and using experts in the states as consultants to other states. www.healthystates.csg.org

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT WORKSITE WELLNESS INITIATIVES

Scale Back Alabama: Scale Back Alabama is a statewide campaign held the first of each year to encourage Alabamians to get healthier by losing weight and exercising. It is a joint project of the Alabama Hospital Association (AlaHA) and the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), with generous underwriting from Barber's Dairies and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama. - www.scalebackalabama.com

A Workplace Obesity Prevention Program: LEAN Works! was developed in direct response to organizations asking the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for help in addressing the obesity epidemic. Specifically, they wanted to know, "What works?" CDC's response, grounded in science, identified interventions that work to prevent and control obesity. Also, because organizations do not usually publish information about their worksite programs in the scientific literature, CDC visited selected businesses to identify promising worksite obesity prevention and control practices. www.cdc.gov/leanworks

Wellness Council of America: As North America's premier resource for worksite wellness, the Wellness Council of America is dedicated to helping organizations of all kinds build and sustain results-oriented wellness programs. www.welcoa.org