

Promoting Weight Loss and Diabetes Control in the Community

SUCCESS STORIES 2007

BROOME COUNTY, NEW YORK



Steps to a Healthier NY–Broome County
increases the purchase of healthier options in school cafeterias through an innovative consolidated bid program.

CONTACT

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What is the public health problem?

- In 2005, the percentage of adults who reported they did not eat fruits and vegetables five or more times each day in New York State (NYS) was 74%.
- According to 2005 Steps Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data, 75% of adults in Broome County, New York, reported that they did not eat fruits and vegetables five or more times each day.
- According to 2005 Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance System (YRBSS) data, more than 80% of high school students reported that they did not eat fruits and vegetables five or more times each day.

How is Steps responding?

- Steps to a HealthierNY–Broome County partnered with the Broome–Tioga Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)—an educational institution established to help public schools control costs and provide quality programs—and other community organizations to help improve the school lunch menus in Broome and Tioga Counties.
- The partnership, which involved BOCES, regional school district food service directors, the American Cancer Association, American Heart Association, Cornell University, and local media, launched “Rock on Café,” which is an innovative initiative to implement a consolidated bid and menu system in schools.
- “Rock on Café” provided a standard regional lunch menu system that allows schools to purchase and sell fresh fruits and vegetables at affordable prices.

What is the health impact?

- The intergrated community program has forged system and environmental changes in Broome and Tioga County cafeterias and enabled them to leverage their purchasing power so they can purchase more fresh fruits and vegetables at a lower cost.
- All elementary schools in Broome and Tioga counties now offer the same healthier breakfast and lunch entrees.
- In 2006, survey results showed that the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables had increased by 14%.

Why is this program working?

- Evidence suggests that offering healthier items in school cafeterias and vending machines can lead to increased consumption of healthier foods in a student population. Healthy eating in childhood and adolescence is important for proper growth and development and can help prevent health problems such as obesity and diabetes.

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