

# Communities Putting Prevention to Work



**BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY, INDIANA**  
Obesity Prevention

*Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW)* is an initiative designed to make healthy living easier by promoting environmental changes at the local level. Through funding awarded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2010, a total of 50 communities are working to prevent obesity and tobacco use—the two leading preventable causes of death and disability.

“OUR COMMUNITY HAS REALLY EMBRACED THIS OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD ON PAST SUCCESSES TO CREATE A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO THE CHALLENGES THAT UNHEALTHY LIFESTYLES POSE TO OUR HEALTH AND ECONOMIC FUTURE.”

— Fred Armstrong, Mayor, Columbus, Indiana

## Community Overview

Bartholomew County, Indiana, is tackling obesity. The adult obesity rate in Bartholomew County is 30%. In Indiana, 13% of high school students are obese. Poor diet and physical inactivity are established risk factors for obesity. In Bartholomew County, a community of 76,794 residents, less than 20% of the adult population consumes the recommended daily intake of fruits and vegetables. Additionally, 23% of adults report that they have not engaged in physical activity in the past month.



## Community Successes

If healthy options are not available, then healthy living is not possible. With the support of the *CPPW* initiative, Bartholomew County has implemented a variety of changes throughout the community to make healthy living easier.

To decrease the prevalence of obesity, Bartholomew County:

- Passed a Thoroughfare Plan that incorporates Complete Streets program criteria, and provides equal consideration of pedestrians, bicyclists, and cars in future road improvements. Once implemented, an estimated 40,000 residents and visitors will benefit from more sidewalks and bike lanes and streets that accommodate all modes of transportation.



“MY CHILDREN HAVE REALLY ENJOYED THE CHANGES IN THE CAFETERIA. THEY WILL PICK THE FRESH FRUIT EVERY TIME—AND EAT IT! AND THE PRICE FOR THE HEALTHY LUNCH IS SO AFFORDABLE. IT IS CHEAPER THAN PREPACKAGED JUNK FOOD.”

— Julie, Bartholomew County resident

### Community Successes *(continued)*

- Established eight new community gardens at low-income housing sites, schools, and community centers to make healthy food more accessible and affordable for underserved populations.
- Developed the *5-2-1 Almost None* education initiative to raise awareness among children and caregivers of the recommendations that children should eat five fruits or vegetables a day, spend less than two hours a day on screen time, engage in daily physical activity for at least one hour, and limit consumption of sugary drinks. Toolkits for teachers and physicians have been developed to facilitate conversations with children and caregivers regarding these recommendations.
- Instituted work-site wellness programs, such as the *Holiday Hustle*, which provides employees with pedometers and encourages them to track their steps in a competition to win fitness-related prizes. More than 7,000 pedometers were distributed in the community. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of participants improved their weekly step count by 2,500 steps or more, and 87% of the surveyed walkers reported that participating in the challenge increased their physical activity.
- Decreased the prices of healthy vending machine options in hospitals, public buildings, and post-secondary institutions.



(The list above is a sample of all activities completed by the community.)

### School District Focuses on Nutrition and Physical Activity

The Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation revised its wellness policy to formalize and build upon successful and well-received programs districtwide. The updated policy addresses the types of foods served in the school environment, meal preparation improvements, and overall nutritional standards. It also identifies new physical activity opportunities for students and provides specific recommendations for events involving food such as classroom parties and school fundraisers. This improved and comprehensive wellness policy establishes clear roles for students, staff, and parents to create healthier lifestyles, and is currently the highest-scoring school wellness policy in the state of Indiana.

### Leadership Team

The leadership team includes high-level community leaders from multiple sectors, who have the combined resources and capacity to make healthy living easier. Members of Bartholomew County’s leadership team are key agents for change in their community. The leadership team includes representatives from the following organizations:

- Office of the Mayor, Columbus, Indiana
- Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation
- Bartholomew County Board of Health
- Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce
- Columbus Education Coalition
- Columbus Regional Hospital
- Flat Rock-Hawcreek School Corporation
- Hope Chamber of Commerce
- Southern Indiana Health Organization

### Additional Information

For more information, please visit [www.WhatsYourReach.org](http://www.WhatsYourReach.org).