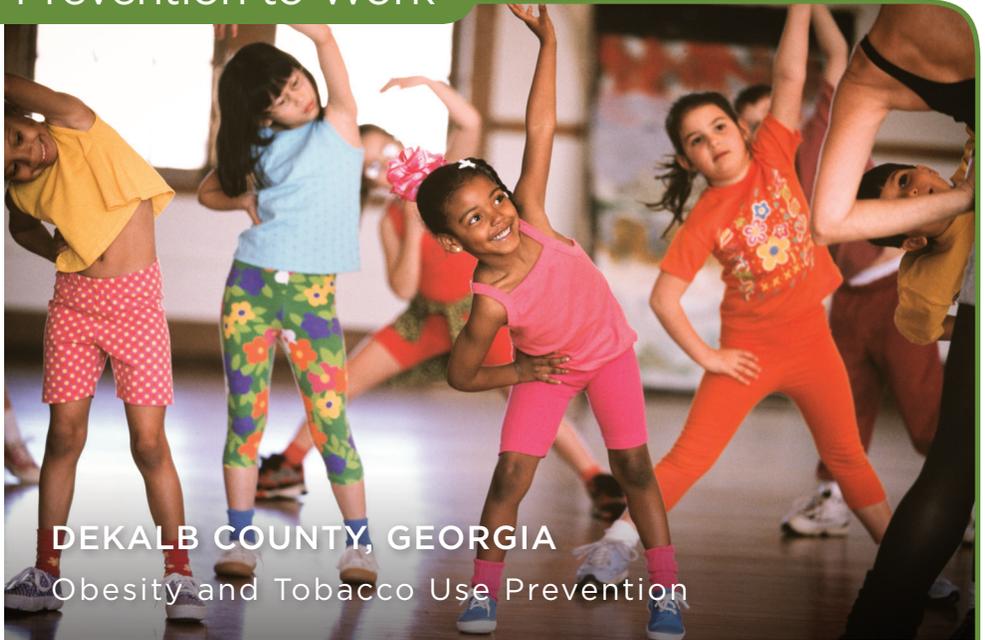


Communities Putting Prevention to Work



DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA
Obesity and Tobacco Use 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.

“COMMUNITIES PUTTING PREVENTION TO WORK WILL HELP US BUILD PUBLIC CONSENSUS AMONG STAKEHOLDERS, SUCH AS HEALTH ADVOCATES, BUSINESS LEADERS, AND HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERS, ON HOW WE CAN REDUCE THE BURDEN OF DISEASE, DEATH, AND HEALTH CARE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH CHRONIC DISEASES CAUSED BY TOBACCO USE AND OBESITY.”

— Burrell Ellis, Jr., Chief Executive Officer, DeKalb County Government

Community Overview

DeKalb County, Georgia, is tackling obesity and tobacco use throughout the community. Obesity is a major challenge in DeKalb County. Approximately 30% of adults and 13% of high school students in the county are obese. Further, 73.4% of adults and 79% of youth do not consume the recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables, and 18.9% of adults reported no physical activity in the last 30 days.

Tobacco use also is a health concern in DeKalb County—6.4% of adults are current smokers, with 50% of them smoking every day. Additionally, 14% of high school students reported some form of tobacco use in the last 30 days, and 8.5% of high school youth reported cigarette smoking in the last 30 days.

DeKalb County, which includes a portion of Atlanta, is home to 691,893 residents and is one of Georgia’s most ethnically diverse communities. In addition to obesity prevention efforts aimed at DeKalb County’s entire population, certain initiatives target high-risk populations such as low-income and certain ethnic and racial groups.

Community Successes

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

To decrease the prevalence of obesity, DeKalb County:

- Supported the DeKalb Urban Agriculture team to develop a white paper about the current local food system and provide recommendations on policies and strategies to promote fresh, locally grown food. The full report will be released this year.





“THANK YOU FOR IMPLEMENTING THE TOBACCO-FREE POLICY; I CAN’T WAIT FOR IT TO TAKE EFFECT. GOING TOBACCO-FREE IS A SIMPLE MATTER OF PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF THOSE WHO DO NOT CHOOSE TO SMOKE.”

—Emory University community member

Community Successes *(continued)*

- Encouraged the DeKalb Urban Agriculture team to establish itself as a Food Policy Council that monitors and advises on the growth of the sustainable food system in DeKalb County.

To decrease tobacco use, DeKalb County:

- Partnered with Oglethorpe and Emory Universities to create and maintain tobacco-free campuses. This initiative protects more than 40,000 students, faculty, and staff members from secondhand smoke exposure.
- Partnered with DeKalb County School System to launch a campaign to educate its student population of 99,000 on the risks of tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke.
- Launched a countywide public awareness initiative to educate residents on the risks associated with exposure to secondhand smoke and to promote the smoking cessation resources available such as the Georgia Tobacco Quitline. The initiative utilized television, radio, social networking, and community engagement efforts and reached the majority of DeKalb County citizens.

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

Partnership Raises Awareness of Tobacco Use Risks

DeKalb County is working closely with media partners to increase residents' awareness of the dangers of tobacco use. As part of this effort, the DeKalb County Board of Public Health—in partnership with Univision, Comcast, Radio Disney, and other local radio stations—aired public-service announcements (PSAs) to more than 300,000 residents on tobacco use prevention. The PSAs were aimed at the entire population, including youth, with a focus on groups with high incidences of chronic disease, including blacks and Hispanics. Additionally, partnerships with organizations that target lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, Pan Asian, and Hispanic/Latino communities were created to further increase awareness of the benefits of smoke-free environments among these high-risk populations.

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 DeKalb County's leadership team are key agents for change in their community. The leadership team includes representatives from the following organizations:

- Georgia House of Representatives
- Office of the Mayor, City of Clarkston
- Office of the Mayor, City of Lithonia
- American Cancer Society
- American Heart Association
- American Lung Association in Georgia
- DeKalb Chamber of Commerce
- DeKalb County Board of Commissioners
- DeKalb County Board of Health
- DeKalb County School System
- DeKalb Residents and Business Owners
- Institute of Public Health, Georgia State University
- Kaiser Permanente

Additional Information

For more information, please visit www.dekalbhealth.net/.