

# Communities Putting Prevention to Work



PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA  
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.***

“WE ARE BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AT EVERY LEVEL TO TRANSFORM OUR COMMUNITY. OUR VISION IS A SAFER, HEALTHIER PINELLAS COUNTY WHERE NUTRITIOUS, FRESH FOOD OPTIONS AND WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS ARE WITHIN THE REACH OF ALL RESIDENTS.”

— Karen Williams Seel, Commissioner, Pinellas County

## Community Overview

Pinellas County, Florida, is tackling obesity throughout the community of 916,542 residents. More than 63% of Pinellas County adults are overweight or obese. It is estimated that approximately 29.5%-33.5% of children aged 2-4 and 25%-29.9% of high school students in Pinellas County are overweight or obese.

The disproportionate burden of obesity on certain ethnic and racial populations is also a concern. In the state of Florida, approximately 25% of white adults are obese, compared with about 43% of black adults and 29% of Hispanic adults. In addition to obesity-prevention efforts aimed at Pinellas County's entire population, certain initiatives target these high-risk groups.

## Community Successes

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

To decrease the prevalence of obesity, Pinellas County:

- Established a requirement to ensure that at least 80% of the beverage items sold in 18 high schools—which serve more than 30,000 students—will meet or exceed the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's School Beverage Guidelines during the 2011-2012 school year. In the 2012-2013 school year, this requirement will be expanded to include all beverage items. The guidelines provide criteria for the Healthy Schools Program and encourage the consumption of nutritious and low-calorie drinks.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



“BECAUSE OF SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL, WE’VE SEEN MORE KIDS WALKING THIS YEAR. IT’S STARTING TO GROW BECAUSE MORE PARENTS ARE GETTING OUT OF THEIR CARS AND SAYING, ‘WE LIVE CLOSE ENOUGH— WE CAN WALK.’”

– Anna, Pinellas County resident

### Community Successes *(continued)*

- Implemented walking school bus programs, which encourage groups of students to walk safely to school with an adult, in six elementary schools. Nearly 270 students participate in the program, and 22 parents assist as volunteers. CPPW resources also were supplied to increase participation in the Safe Routes to School program, which enables and encourages children to walk or bike to school. Both efforts encourage active transportation in a school district that serves more than 102,000 students.
- Implemented wellness, nutrition, and physical activity policies in eight faith-based wellness ministries benefitting more than 6,000 congregants.
- Increased access to information about healthy eating options and physical activity opportunities through the development of an interactive website, Facebook page, and mobile application. These digital tools promote healthy restaurants, farmers’ markets, and free recreational activities and resources to inspire residents to adopt healthy lifestyles.



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

### Pinellas Trail and Parks Now Safer Places for Physical Activity

Pinellas County is increasing physical activity and active transportation opportunities by providing safer access to the Pinellas Trail and county parks. Through the revitalization of a volunteer park ranger program, Pinellas County improved the security and the maintenance of the trail and of 23 county parks, which, together, receive approximately 15 million visits each year. This effort will ensure that users can safely enjoy their physical activity. Additionally, through a public awareness initiative that garnered an estimated 16.5 million impressions, Pinellas County encouraged residents to consider the trail networks and connections as a fun option for active transportation.

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

- Board of County Commissioners, Pinellas County
- Florida Department of Children and Families
- Health and Human Services Coordinating Council for Pinellas County
- Juvenile Welfare Board
- Local Businesses
- Pinellas County Department of Health and Human Services
- Pinellas County Health Department
- Pinellas County Mayor’s Council
- Pinellas County School Board

### Additional Information

For more information, please visit [www.pinellashealth.com](http://www.pinellashealth.com) or [www.findthefunnow.com](http://www.findthefunnow.com).