

# Communities Putting Prevention to Work



## SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA 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.**

“THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT ACTIVELY SUPPORTS SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS BECAUSE THEY ALIGN WITH MANY OF OUR KEY COMMUNITY INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, PREVENT OBESITY, REDUCE TRAFFIC-RELATED INJURIES, AND PROMOTE HEALTHIER AND SAFER ENVIRONMENTS.”

— *Marty Fenstersheib, MD, MPH, Health Officer for Santa Clara County*

### Community Overview

Santa Clara County, California, is tackling obesity and tobacco use throughout the community, which is home to more than 1.7 million residents. The county is an ethnically diverse community that includes the city of San José and the Silicon Valley. Approximately 21% of adults in Santa Clara County are obese, and 25% of middle and high school students in the community are overweight or obese. The smoking rate for adults is 7.7%, and 9% of high school students reported smoking in the past 30 days.



Certain ethnic and racial populations and low-income adults in Santa Clara County bear a disproportionate burden of obesity and tobacco use. For example, Hispanic adults in the community have the highest rate of overweight and obesity at 68%; and 68% of adults with annual household incomes less than \$20,000 are overweight or obese compared to 49% of those with annual household incomes of \$70,000 or more. Further, 19% of adults with annual household incomes less than \$20,000 are current smokers compared to 9% of adults with annual household incomes of \$75,000 or more. While smoking rates for adults and youth in the community are below national rates, disparities exist among the county's ethnic communities. The smoking rate in Santa Clara County is higher among black (12%) and Hispanic (12%) middle and high school students compared to their white peers (9%). In addition to obesity and tobacco use prevention efforts aimed at the county's entire population, certain initiatives target these high-risk populations.

### Community Successes

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

To decrease the prevalence of obesity, Santa Clara County:

- Engaged the county and all cities in the *Let's Move!* initiative to increase physical activity among all Santa Clara County residents.
- Launched the Healthy Apple Award, encouraging afterschool programs to implement changes that increase physical activity levels and healthy food options for children. To assist more than 139 sites serving 11,600 children implement changes that make them eligible for the award, CPPW is conducting quarterly trainings on ways to make afterschool programs healthier.
- Began accepting Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) at the City of Mountain View Farmers' Market, one of the top five markets in the state, and promoted the initiative using flyers developed in English, Spanish, and Russian. More than 2,700 people are eligible for EBT benefits in Mountain View alone.



## Community Successes *(continued)*

- Expanded healthy options for homeless, disabled, and elderly populations by recruiting restaurants to apply for the Restaurant Meals Program that allows them to accept EBT for meals served. Five restaurants have enrolled, and another 22 are in the process of enrolling.

To decrease tobacco use, Santa Clara County:

- Adopted a comprehensive multi-unit housing policy, restricting smoking in all units, entryways, and outdoor common areas. Additionally, the county implemented an outdoor smoke-free policy, providing smoke-free protection in parks, trails, outdoor shopping malls, outdoor dining, and inside tobacco retail stores. Approximately 117,800 Santa Clara County residents benefit from these policies.
- Adopted a tobacco retailer licensing policy placing restrictions on establishing new retail outlets. The policy prohibits new tobacco retailers from selling tobacco within 500 feet of a location occupied by an authorized tobacco retailer or within 1,000 feet of a school. Approximately 117,800 Santa Clara County residents benefit from this policy.
- Established policies that prohibit tobacco use in public places such as parks, walking paths, and swimming pools in Cupertino and Saratoga, protecting approximately 58,000 and 30,000 residents, respectively, from secondhand smoke.
- Developed the INSPIRE Cessation Network, a coalition of more than 50 clinics, hospitals, and community-based organizations that offer nicotine-replacement therapy to approximately 15,000 county residents.

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

## Santa Clara County Encourages Residents to “Be Sugar Savvy”

Santa Clara County is encouraging residents to avoid sugar-sweetened beverages and choose healthy drink options through two complementary initiatives entitled *ReThink Your Drink* and *Be Sugar Savvy*. Through these initiatives, the county held an event at which they distributed more than 150,000 copies of *Potter the Otter*, a book that teaches children about the amount of sugar present in popular children’s drinks. Additionally, the public health department conducted 35 *Be Sugar Savvy* trainings, reaching more than 500 students, teachers, and health care and childcare providers to encourage them to eliminate excessive sugar from their diets. Other efforts have included radio, television, and print advertising and the distribution of more than 25,000 informational cards and 250 posters.

## Public Education Initiative Raises Awareness of Secondhand Smoke Dangers

Santa Clara County launched a public education initiative in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese to remind smokers of the dangers of secondhand smoke, using the message “When You Smoke They Smoke.” The initiative promotes a website available in all three languages ([www.yousmoketheysmoke.org](http://www.yousmoketheysmoke.org)), a Facebook page, and a commercial on YouTube. It is expected to reach nearly 1.8 million Santa Clara County residents, providing an important reminder of the impact of secondhand smoke on health.

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

- 1st ACT Silicon Valley
- Asian Americans for Community Involvement
- Assembly Member, 23rd District
- City of Mountain View
- City of San José
- Kaiser Permanente
- Sacred Heart Community Service
- San José Unified School District
- Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors
- Santa Clara County Public Health Department
- Santa Clara County Tobacco Free Coalition
- Santa Clara Family Health Foundation
- Silicon Valley Leadership Group
- South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council and Working Partnerships USA
- Stanford School of Medicine
- The Health Trust

## Additional Information

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

“I HAVE QUIT SMOKING FOR GOOD! THANK YOU SO MUCH! YOU CHANGED MY LIFE!”

— Calvin, Participant in Santa Clara County’s INSPIRE Tobacco Cessation Classes