

Creating a More Walkable Community for Low-Income Residents

SUCCESS STORIES 2007

CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Steps to a Healthier Clark County

increased trail usage by creating a walking guide for community residents.

CONTACT

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What is the public health problem?

- In 2005, 23% of adults in Washington reported that they were obese.
- According to 2005 Steps Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data, 25% of Clark County adults reported they were obese, compared with 16% in 1996.
- In 2005, only 55% of Clark County adults met the recommendations for moderate physical activity.

How is Steps responding?

- The Steps Program in Clark County created the Steps Active Community Environment work group that revised the Clark County Trails & Bikeway Plan by gathering community input on the need for trails and bikeways.
- The work group and community partners created *The Clark County Walkaround Guide: 10 Great Walks in Our Community*, a portable, user-friendly publication that provides detailed information on 25 different walking routes in the Clark County area along with health information, activity logs, maps, and personal success stories.
- The Walkaround Guide is distributed to Step community members at work-site wellness programs, primary care visits, health education group visits, and community-organized activities. A public media campaign was also launched to give Clark County residences information about the walking trails available to them in the area and encouraged them to use the trails to become more physically active.

What is the health impact?

- The Steps Program in Clark County was able to influence the Clark County Trails & Bikeway Plan to include expansion of trails and bikeways over the next 20 years. With the approved plan, a Clark County Commissioner was able to secure significant funding to begin the construction of the Chelatchie Prairie trail.
- Long-term sustainability was established for building and maintaining trails and bikeways for all residents of Clark County.
- Usage of the riverfront trail has increased 36% since residents received the Walkaround Guide, and users report they have gone on 3 to 5 additional trail walks.

Why is this program working?

- According to *The Guide to Community Preventive Services*, people will become more physically active if they are given health information along with access to new or improved places where they can be physically active. By establishing healthy eating and physical activity habits early in life, children are more likely to carry these habits into adulthood.

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