

Indiana Study Examines the Effects of Using a Community Workshop Model to Support Active Living Goals



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What is active living and active living design?

Active living is a way of life that integrates physical activity into everyday routines, such as walking to the store or bicycling to work¹. Active living design involves creating or enhancing physical environments to enable individuals to be more physically active.

What is a community workshop model?

The community workshop model uses a training format and follow-up support to help community members organize to promote policy, system, and environmental changes that lead to more active communities. The model also helps interested community members understand and address the challenges to live more active lives. The workshop activities include presentations, walk audits, and exercises to map suitable options and prioritize three active living issues in their communities.

What was the study?

The study examined the evaluation surveys, action plans, progress reports, and success stories of 10 communities that participated in an active living community workshop model.



What were the key components of this community workshop model?

- Provided paid staffing support to plan and facilitate workshops and support communities as they begin their activities.
- Included follow-up activities that encourage ongoing communication and documentation such as action plans and progress reports.
- Hosted a peer-learning exchange for communities to engage with other communities that have participated in the active living community workshops to share successes and challenges.
- Hosted a training to help communities that are not selected successfully apply to host an active living community workshops in the future.



What did the study find?

Communities that participated in the community workshop model and ongoing follow-up activities initiated changes to support active living in their communities within the following year. Changes included:



Established New Active Living Advisory Committees

Two of the communities established new active living advisory committees. Other communities strengthened their existing committees by including new partners.



Provided Community Active Living Events

Some communities hosted events such as a Walk-to-School day, a bike rodeo, and community bike rides. These events educate community members about active living and provide opportunities to try new ways of getting about the community.



Adopted New Policies and Projects

One community completed a Master Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and another community developed new shared use policies with local schools. Some communities installed bike racks and new signs.



Allocated Funding for Active Living Projects

Communities allocated additional funding for future active living projects and specific improvements such as sidewalks and trail development. One community obtained land for a river front project that will improve biking and walking opportunities and hired a full-time community coordinator.

Where can I find more information about the study?

The article "Using a Community Workshop Model to Initiate Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change That Support Active Living in Indiana, 2014–2015." is found in the *Preventing Chronic Disease* e-journal (2017;14:160503. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5888/pcd14.160503>).

References:

1. Evenson KR, Sallis JF, Handy SL, Bell R, Brennan LK. Evaluation of physical projects and policies from the active living by design partnerships. *Am J Prev Med.* 2012;43(5S4):S309–S319.