

# PREVENTING CHRONIC DISEASE

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## Policy and Environmental Change Strategies to Reduce Obesity: Action Packets

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Action packets were developed to help communities, schools, and work sites in Maine develop policies and produce changes in the environment that would lead to improved nutrition and increased physical activity.

The Maine Cardiovascular Health Program and the Maine Nutrition Network collaborated to develop policy and environmental change strategies with a focus on increasing physical activity and improving nutrition. Evidence-based findings and the social/ecological model were used in determining strategies. Strategies were presented to state- and community-level stakeholders. Action packets are being used to implement strategies.

A concept and framework development team, action packet workgroups, and potential users collaborated to produce action packets. Two action packets are *Promote Trail Development and Use of Safe Community Routes for Walking and Biking* and *Develop Policies that Support Healthy Eating at Group Events*. Two additional action packets in production are *Enhance Access to Places for Physical Activity* and *Develop Policies that Support Health Options in Vending Machines*. Action packets include case studies, action steps (including outcome evaluation), advocacy materials, Web resources, and references.

Regional action packet educational sessions were provided. An educational session evaluation report indicated that a majority of participants would incorporate strategies into their action plans. Hard copies of action packets have been distributed and are also available on-line. Ongoing process evaluation is being completed.

Policy and environmental change initiatives consume resources. Providing groups in multiple settings with needed resources in the form of action packets supports implementation of initiatives that address risk factors for obesity and other chronic diseases.

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