

Fit Kids

2020

PLAN



Making Kane County

Fit for Kids

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Making Kane County *Fit for Kids*

Special Acknowledgment

Members of the Making Kane County Fit for Kids Funders' Consortium

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Fox River Valley**

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Executive Summary

Most communities in this nation are faced with the problem of childhood obesity; Kane County is no different. While there are many policies that can be changed on the national and state level, this plan is intended to guide our efforts here on the local level.

This plan was developed by Kane County Residents for Kane County Residents.

- The purpose of this document is to provide a strategic framework that will guide our actions so that we will reverse the toll of childhood obesity in our children by the year 2020.
- We have heard the alarming projections that children born today may live shorter, less healthy lives than

their parents and grandparents! How is this possible? Simply put, too many of our children are overweight and, without intervention, they will grow into overweight or obese adults. Across Kane County, 1 out of 5 kids is overweight. In some Kane communities that number is an even more alarming 1 out of 3! As these children get older they are more likely to be stricken with diabetes, bone and joint problems, heart disease, and other serious health problems.

- As you know, we have decided not to accept this future for our children and together we have created the Making Kane County Fit for Kids campaign. The strategies contained within this plan will guide our activities over the next decade.

Development of the Fit Kids 2020 Plan

The Making Kane County Fit for Kids (FFK) campaign was launched in 2008 with a Leadership Summit attended by more than 100 executive leaders from Kane County municipalities, school districts, park districts, businesses, the faith community, health care providers, health and social service agencies, as well as local and state elected officials. The Leadership Summit provided participants with an in-depth briefing on the childhood obesity epidemic and called for a sustained, county-wide mobilization through implementation of 4 strategic action principles that go to the heart of the systems, policy and environmental changes needed to reverse the epidemic:

- 1) Providing parents and children with reliable, up-to-date information in multiple settings regarding healthy physical activity and eating habits;**
- 2) Supporting a culture of wellness and health promotion in our workplaces, schools and other institutions;**
- 3) Develop land use, planning and other public policies that foster and support physical activity for all in our community;**
- 4) Assure that fresh fruits and vegetables are affordable and accessible to all families in our community.**

Following the Summit, a public-private partnership, the “FFK Funders’ Consortium”, was established with several county departments, the Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley and the United Way of Elgin. By combining forces, these partners believe they can most efficiently and effectively raise and disperse funds to support the comprehensive, coordinated, community-based initiatives needed to make Kane County Fit for Kids. As of January of 2011, the Funders’ Consortium

has raised over \$200,000 to support local efforts to reverse obesity rates in the community. These funds have been, and will continue to be, made available to community organizations and coalitions that implement strategies consistent with the FFK goals.

To support the Fit for Kids effort, Kane County applied for and received one of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities grants. This four-year \$360,000 grant has enhanced the campaign’s efforts. In February 2010, Kane County hosted a Future Search Conference focused on childhood obesity. This conference was called the Fit Kids 2020 Leadership Summit. Over a hundred leaders came together for a day and one-half and held focused conversations about the things that have led to the childhood obesity issue, the present state of the problem and what needs to happen in the future to reverse this trend. The goal was to capture the thoughts and ideas from many different arenas in the County so that the health of the Kane County community, both children and adults, can become a key factor in all phases of County planning and action. As a follow up to this summit, work began on the Fit Kids 2020 Plan. Nine sector-specific Fit Kids 2020 workgroups have worked to create this written set of policy level strategies and action steps. Each strategy will make improvements that create an environment of health for our children by the year 2020.

This document represents the work of over 80 community stakeholders, meeting over the past 6 months, contributing well over 1,000 hours of volunteer time to produce the Fit Kids 2020 Plan. Workgroups dedicated their time to researching, meeting and discussing potential strategies and action steps. This process shows the investment and dedication of the participants in the future of Kane County and its residents.

Below is a summary of common themes identified by the work groups

1) Community Gardens

Improving access to fresh fruits and vegetables through increased gardening was identified in several of the sectors' strategies. Efforts to support local and community gardens increase a sense of community, provide productive use for underused land and help children understand where their food comes from.

2) Healthy Food Policy

There are many facets to food policy that impact everything from where we obtain our food, to how much we pay for it, where and what food we make available and who has access to it. Special attention must be given to the underserved and food-insecure communities to assure that everyone has access to fresh, healthy food.

3) Walk to School Initiatives

Experts agree that physical activity that was a normal part of our daily lives in the past has been reduced dramatically due to our dependence on vehicles. Efforts to get children actively moving to and from school help develop healthier children and better learners. Several strategies in this plan call for an increase in walk-to-school initiatives.

4) Workplace Wellness

Containing healthcare costs and reducing preventable illness are excellent reasons to promote workplace wellness programs. An equally important reason is that our children learn from what they see and are exposed to at home. If parents are encouraged to practice healthy habits, they are more likely to create a healthy environment in the home for the child.

5) Formal Networks and Partnerships

The process of developing these strategies pointed out to the work groups the value of working together. Formal collaboration among groups is identified in many strategies as a way to leverage existing resources. Additionally, joint efforts to secure outside funding provide increased opportunity to support the Fit Kids 2020 goals.

6) Land-Use Policy

Decisions concerning how we use choose to use our land have a tremendous impact on the health and safety of our residents. They affect what food is available and where people are comfortable being physically active.

7) Support of Breastfeeding

Supporting a mother's ability to breastfeed a child has numerous positive effects on the health of both mother and child. Hospitals and workplaces that actively support breast feeding are doing a tremendous service to the health of our younger generations.

8) Locally Grown Foods

Encouraging local food production helps the local economy, reduces shipping costs and provides fresh healthy produce to citizens.

9) Assessment & Evaluation

There is a great deal more that needs to be learned about the food and physical activity systems within Kane County. The work groups acknowledged that continuing assessment and thoughtful evaluation of interventions must occur to assure success.










10) Child-friendly Trails & Maps

Creating safe environments where children are encouraged to actively move about is critical to having a healthy community. Several work groups included reference to formally promoting efforts to encourage kids to walk and ride bikes.

11) Marketing of Making Kane County Fit for Kids

Encouraging more and more stakeholders to get involved in this plan will require efforts to spread the word about the Fit Kids 2020 Plan. Organizations, families, and individuals that implement the strategies outlined in this plan should also promote the initiative to their peers. This will contribute to the cultural shift that is required to reverse obesity in Kane County.

Sector Specific Work Groups

-  **Built & Natural Environment**
-  **Economic Strength**
-  **Faith Community**
-  **Family, Culture & Community**
-  **Food Policy**
-  **Healthcare & Medicine**
-  **Mobility**
-  **Recreation & Lifestyle**
-  **Schools & Education**

Together, we will design and make our parks, streets, neighborhoods and schools Fit for Kids by making them safe and ready for kids to walk, bike and play. We will make meals and snacks Fit for Kids by increasing access to fresh, healthy fruits and vegetables for all families through school and child care programs, farmers' markets, gardens and neighborhood groceries. We will make our homes, faith communities, schools, recreation programs and workplaces "Fit for Kids" by shifting our culture to promote health and wellness every day, in ways both big and small.

Together, we will Make Kane County Fit for Kids

www.makingkanefitforkids.org

Key Sector Strategies Organized by

Workgroup	Provide parents & children with reliable, up-to-date information in multiple settings regarding healthy physical activity and eating habit	Support a culture of wellness and health promotion in our workplaces, schools and other institutions
 Schools & Education	Educate parents about healthy food choices and physical fitness	Strengthen school wellness policies
 Mobility	Implement Safe Routes to School programs in all schools in Kane County	Create /implement walking and bicycling incentive programs in schools and communities in the county
 Food Policy	Develop marketing material that promotes the benefits of local, fresh and seasonal products including a better culinary experience and higher nutritional value	Publically funded groups will adopt nationally accepted nutrition standards for foods served at meetings or food purchased with public money
 Faith Community	Create a network of faith based groups to promote healthy living	Adopt healthy food policies for food served at individual faith communities
 Economic Strength	Improve the economic strength of the family through education about nutrition health and fitness	Improve the economic strength of employers by encouraging the implementation of wellness plans for employees
 Family, Culture & Community	Promote the Fit for Kids Initiative through a non-traditional education campaign	Provide incentives for restaurants to offer a healthy children's menu
 Built & Natural Environment	Educate the community on walkability ratings	Conduct Health Impact Assessments that county and municipalities can use to objectively evaluate the potential health effects of a project or policy before it is built or implemented
 Healthcare & Medicine	Increase occurrences of counseling and education on physical activity and nutrition during office visits	Utilize the medical community to contribute to a system of measurement in the community that monitors health indicator and treatment opportunities
 Recreation & Lifestyle	Launch a marketing campaign to communicate the message of healthy living	Address safety issues in the community that may limit safe access and use of parks and recreation facilities

Strategic Action Principles

Assure that fresh fruits and vegetables are affordable and accessible to all families in our community	Develop land use, planning and other public policies that foster and support physical activity for all in our community
Provide healthier school meals	
	Implement complete streets throughout the county
All Kane County Farmers Markets will accept LINK/EBT	Develop a formula that measures food production loss, pounds of food loss, per acre of land converted to development as part of each development proposal reviewed by the county
Help make healthy food more accessible and affordable for the underserved in our communities by facilitating community gardens, food donation and distribution to the underserved members of our communities	
Increase the capacity and variety of produce offered at local farmers markets.	Provide education to local government about zoning changes that can benefit the local food system
Promote zoning and land use regulations and incentives that encourage urban agriculture	The county and its 30 municipalities should revise their zoning ordinances and update their land use plans in order to apply best management practices that facilitate walking, biking and unstructured active recreation
Encourage the medical community in activities that advocate for policy and environmental change in the community	
Make healthy affordable food available in public places	Provide easier access to parks and playgrounds in new and existing neighborhoods through building and maintaining parks, facilities and trails that are in close, safe walking distance of all residents



Schools & Education

The rate at which childhood obesity is growing makes it no surprise that it has become the number one health concern among parents in the United States. The fact that children spend a vast majority of their day in school makes school the perfect environment for children to learn how to make healthy decisions with food choices and physical activity. Schools are not only responsible for providing education, but also ensuring that children receive well-balanced meals and physical activity. Teachers and staff carry the responsibility of educating and supplying children with knowledge and healthy food during the school day and when school is over this responsibility is passed on to the parents/guardians.

Our Mission

To develop goals and strategies to enhance support for healthy eating and physical activity in the school environment. Key areas will be access to foods of high nutritional value, multiple opportunities for physical activity, and promoting health and wellness through education and practices in schools with connections to students' homes and community.

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KEY CHALLENGES

Each district in the county is different and faces different challenges. Even schools within the same district face different problems than other schools within the same district. Common challenges within schools are lack of funding and lack of support from school staff and parents. Schools in the county will have to find ways to incorporate more physical activity time into their daily schedule as well as make the food choices offered to students and staff during breakfast, lunch and in vending machines more healthy. School curriculum will have to be altered to include more health education in all subjects, not only health class. School officials will have to work year-by-year to make sure programs are actually benefiting the students and faculty and overall health is improving. Parents/guardians will have to get fully involved in the process so students will be surrounded by healthy decisions in school as well as around the home.

PROFILE

The Schools & Education work group included a wide cross-section of educators and administrators. Representatives included professionals from local Universities, the AmeriCorps program and staff from many of Kane County's schools. Areas of expertise included health promotion, physical activity, nutrition, communications and mental health. Members of the work group reached back into their schools and solicited input from many other stakeholders to create the strategies listed here.

STRATEGIES

Strategy #1

Increase opportunities for physical activity during the day

This strategy will identify opportunities for students to be physically active at school, including physical education class, the classroom, afterschool programs, and recess. This strategy also includes identifying activities for overweight students to participate in and increasing the number of students who walk to school.

- a) Research barriers to physical activity.
- b) Provide all students in kindergarten through grade 12 with daily physical education, with no substitutions allowed for participation in other courses or activities.
- c) Have students dress for PE everyday.
- d) Make PE classes more active by including non-traditional activities:
 - Example: Filmore Middle School in California includes skateboarding in PE
 - Example: The PE staff at Equestrian Trails Elementary School in Florida designed a yearly plan of instruction using physical activity and fitness components as the primary foundation for its curriculum. The curriculum teaches students the basic skills of several movement forms, including team, dual, and individual sports, and dance.
- e) Provide physical education instruction based on a sequential curriculum that is consistent with state physical education standards and the National Standards for Physical Education.
 - f) Hire physical education teachers with appropriate qualifications.
 - g) Establish and enforce policies and practices that enable students with disabilities and other special health care needs to participate fully and safely in physical education and other school physical activity programs.
 - h) Provide a variety of opportunities for physical activity in addition to physical education, that meet all students' needs and interests. Opportunities include daily recess, active play during after-school programs, access to school facilities outside of school hours, interscholastic sports, intramural programs, and physical activity clubs.
 - Example: East Aurora NJROTC PT team promotes exercise on weekend
 - i.) Implement an organized and active lunch recess
 - ii.) Offer a minimum of 20 minutes of recess daily
 - iii.) Implement a Play First Lunch
 - Example: Seymour Heights in British Columbia - "We experienced fewer accidents in the school yard and parents let us know that their children were able to wait for dinner and ate better at dinner."
 - Example: Blueridge in British Columbia - "The students are definitely eating better and there is less arguing over playground equipment and a better play attitude. We allowed children to take a small snack out with them to begin the lunch break in the playground because of hunger, especially with the intermediate students."

- i) Provide teacher-student ratios, for physical education and activity programs, that are comparable with other subjects. Activities that require close supervision to assure student safety should be staffed accordingly.
- j) Encourage parent involvement during PE classes
- k) Provide a sufficient amount of equipment and supplies to keep students active during most of the class.
- l) Establish and enforce policies for participation in outdoor activities to protect students and staff from health risks and hazards. This includes exposure to heat, cold, inclement weather, ultraviolet radiation, air pollution, traffic, unsafe surfaces, poor lighting, and poorly maintained equipment.
- m) Require a pre-participation sports physical examination conducted by the student's primary care provider within a year of participation, for students participating in interscholastic sports.
- n) Require written and specific health verification from the school nurse, a primary care provider, or other licensed health care provider to allow a student to be exempt from physical education and activity programs on the basis of health reasons. Require the same verification to resume physical activity.
- o) Educate students and staff about the dangers using physical activity for excessive weight control.
- p) Establish and enforce a plan that is designed to provide safe movement of motorized vehicles, non-motorized vehicles, and pedestrian traffic on school property. The plan should encourage walking and/or bicycling to school and include the establishment of safe routes to school.
- q) Implement a walking school bus program.
- r) Establish and enforce policies for the safe use of all non-motorized wheeled recreational devices (bicycles, skateboards, skates, scooters) on school property, including appropriate use of protective gear.
- s) Educate teachers on ways to implement physical activity into lessons.
 - Example: Take 10 is a physical activity program for elementary school students that integrates academic learning objectives with movement
- t) Create opportunities for students and staff to work together toward healthy goals.
 - Example: Participate in a "Walk Across America" earning miles and laps toward a "journey" across America or the world (perhaps during study halls). This is also a good opportunity to learn about different regions of the globe.
 - Example: Compete in monthly fitness challenges where the winning class gets a prize.
- u) Encourage 10,000 steps per day using pedometers to track steps.

Strategy #2

Increase opportunities for healthy eating

This strategy is to increase the availability of healthy foods for school lunches and breakfasts. This strategy includes increasing healthy foods available at sporting events and reduces the number of fundraisers which include selling candy and other unhealthy foods.

- a) Provide clean, well-lit, and safe food service facilities with adequate space, pleasant surroundings, and supervision that enable students to enjoy the social aspects of eating.
- b) Encourage students and staff eating together.
- c) Provide food service equipment that meets the safety and sanitary standards of Underwriter's Laboratories (UL) and NSF International, and use National Food Service Management Institute's guidelines to determine size requirements, specifications and hygienic precautions.
- d) Offer nutrition training for lunchroom supervisors.
- e) Coordinate food services with classroom health education lessons to reinforce messages on healthy eating.
- f) Offer a range of meals and snacks at school that meet the nutritional needs of the student population. Examples include school breakfast, lunch, after-school snacks and summer food service programs.
 - Example: Highland Elementary offers healthy fruit snacks for all students from 9:30-10:30, students get to choose from a variety.
- g) Make families aware of food programs offered at school and keep meal programs financially accessible to families.
- h) Plan school meal and snack programs so they are appealing and meet the US Department of Agriculture's nutritional standards.
- i) Encourage proper portion control / institute smaller portion sizes.
- j) Provide healthier school meals (salad bars, whole grains, more vegetables/fruits, decrease fats/sugars/salt, limit milk to 1% or nonfat).
- k) Provide safe drinking water for students and encourage them to drink adequate amounts of water throughout the day.
- l) Allow adequate time for students to eat meals consumed at school and schedule lunch periods as near the middle of the day as possible.
- m) Restrict or limit the sale of foods and beverages outside of the school meal program in order to promote good dietary practices. Decisions about the sale of competitive foods on campus should be based upon nutritional considerations, not solely on potential for profit.

- n) Provide and promote nutritious foods and appealing food choices whenever and wherever food is offered at school, outside of school meal programs. Venues include cafeterias, on-campus stores, vending machines, sport events, and food offerings at fundraising projects.
- i. Remove vending machines / snack bar
 - ii. Raise snack bar / vending machine prices significantly to turn away students
 - iii. Offer healthier vending machine / snack bar options
 - iv. Remove high fat, high sugar options
 - Example: Vista Unified School District of California implemented a vending machine policy that eliminated less healthy food options and replaced them with healthier choices at a local high school. Chips and candy were replaced with foods such as fresh fruits, vegetables, and yogurt; sodas were eliminated in favor of water, juices, and sports drinks. Vending machine sales increased significantly after policy implementation from \$9,000 to \$41,000 annually.
- o) Discourage consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Example: In 2006, the New York City Board of Health adopted regulations that provide nutrition standards and limit the serving size for beverages served to children in licensed day care centers. Specifically, the New York City Health Code prohibits serving beverages with added sweeteners and limits the serving size of 100% fruit juice to 6 oz per day for children 8 months of age and older. When milk is served, children 2 years of age and older must receive low-fat 1% or nonfat milk and water must be made easily available to children throughout the day.
- p) Prohibit school practices that encourage students to make unhealthy dietary choices. Such practices include campus advertising; marketing of foods and beverages that are high in fat, sodium, or have added sugars; using low nutritive foods to reward students; or withholding food as punishment.
- q) Use school or community garden as a source of food
- Example: Blue Mountain Elementary School in Maple Ridge, British Columbia worked out an arrangement with the Alouette Corrections Centre for Women near the school. The prison sent out a 5-person crew twice a week to water, weed and look after the garden during the summer. They were able to enjoy some of the produce as a benefit. The women also built trellises, garden boxes, and a composting box in their woodworking shop with materials supplied by the school.

Strategy #3

Increase opportunities for health education

This strategy includes educating teachers about physical fitness and nutrition.

- a) Adopt policies and provide resources that institutionalize health education so that it is high-quality and provides sufficient time and materials for students to master essential knowledge and skills.
- b) Hire health education teachers for secondary schools who have appropriate qualifications for teaching health classes.
- c) At the elementary level and for anyone who is assigned to teach health but is not certified, require at least 6 hours of academic course work or 30 hours of in-service training on health content.
- d) Provide health education as a core academic subject in grades kindergarten through 12.
- e) Content should include physical and emotional health; prevention of substance abuse, diseases, injury, and violence; family life; human sexuality; media literacy; nutrition; and first-aid and basic emergency lifesaving skills.
- f) Embed healthy lifestyle education into all areas of curriculum (science, writing, math, etc.).
- g) Educate students, faculty, and staff about their bodies, healthy eating, stress management, and exercise.
 - Example: an East Aurora High science teacher speaks to his students about the importance of a good diet and the consequences of a poor diet.
- h) Provide opportunities in a variety of context-specific ways for students to model and practice social skills that are important for implementing healthy decisions. These include interpersonal communication, goal setting, anger management, and advocacy skills.
- i) Provide opportunities for students to analyze how family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors influence the development of their own attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviors.
- j) Use a variety of strategies to assess students' achievement in health education. Report students' progress in the same manner used to report progress in other core subjects.
- k) Plant a school garden that encourages active learning.
- l) Use a variety of communications methods for health education such as posters, newsletters, and in class activities.

Strategy #4

Increase employee wellness opportunities

This strategy addresses healthy staff, healthy school.

- a) Provide health, disability, long-term care, and life

Walk to School Day

By Jackie Forbes

When I heard about International Walk to School Day I knew it was something my daughter's school, Fabyan Elementary in Geneva, should participate in. I discussed the opportunity with the school's principal and my fellow PTO executive board members and we agreed it would be a fun way to promote exercise. The principal put up posters, mentioned it in her daily announcements, and promoted it anyway she could. The PTO advertised the day in the school's weekly newsletter, encouraged people to participate through word of mouth, and asked the yearbook committee to take pictures.

October 6th was a beautiful morning and after taking some pictures, our entire bus stop set off for our journey. There were many students walking and riding bikes that day and more joined in as we got closer to the school. The last part of our stroll was up a hill and everyone was smiling and happy. The parents were walking in groups, the children were running ahead with their friends and it was a wonderful show of community support. The area around the school was buzzing with activity;

parents were taking pictures of their children in front of the school's sign, students were finding their friends, and others were mingling in small groups catching up with each other. The principal was outside greeting all the students as they arrived and later told me she was overwhelmed by the response.

The walk took about 20 minutes and on the way back we agreed it was a great way to start the day. It was certainly successful as the buses were close to empty. This strong response has inspired me.

I will ask the principal if we can start "Walk to School Wednesdays" beginning this spring and continuing into the next school year. And, I would also like to complete a School Travel Plan as part of the Safe Routes to School Program so we can encourage children and parents to walk or bike to school more frequently and to find a way to link the paths around the school to the surrounding neighborhood.

Finally, I think our PTO should take an active role in promoting exercise and proper nutrition and I will propose adding a new committee dedicated to these issues. As the PTO Treasurer and parent of a first grader at Fabyan, I am excited to help students make choices that will improve their health now and in the future.

Jackie is a Health Planner at the Kane County Health Department, active in her children's school.



insurance to all employees. This includes coverage for health promotion programs, medical, dental and vision coverage, and coverage for their dependents.

- b) Provide employees with a work-site environment that encourages them to express their feelings, fears, and anxieties and to rehabilitate during times of personal crisis, personal loss, and school crisis.
- c) Provide employee assistance programs that help address crises as well as mental disorders
- d) Arrange for and encourage staff members to have opportunities to consult with and exchange information with other staff members across various disciplines.
- e) Arrange for peer mentoring.
- f) Offer nutrient dense food at meetings.
- g) Include health breaks during work day.
 - Example: UCLA Lift Off Program - 10 minute paid physical activity break
- h) Provide staff wellness and health promotion programs for school staff based on an assessment of their needs and interests. Possibilities include
 - i. Group fitness classes such as pilates, yoga, or zumba
 - ii. Athletic events against rival school staffs
 - Example: teachers from X Elementary vs. teachers from Y. Money raised can be used towards something health related for the school).
 - iii. Forming a team to join a community sports league (volleyball, floor hockey, etc).
 - iv. Offering pedometers to employees and include a specific goal.
 - Example: "In studies where a goal was given, such as 10,000 steps per day, the participants increased their steps by more than 2,000 -- or more than a mile -- above what they previously walked. In the studies that had no specific goal, there was no increase in steps per day walked."
 - v. A food log challenge

Strategy #5

Strengthen school wellness policies

This strategy concerns application of district wellness policies at local levels and how to engage all participants.

- a) Analyze current school wellness policies.
- b) Identify ways to improve wellness policies to make them comprehensive.
- c) Evaluate district and building policies regarding food/snacks/ classroom parties.
- d) Evaluate the allergy policy, consider expanding for a more holistic approach.

- e) Involve parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, the school board, and school administrators, and the public in developing the wellness policy.
- f) The wellness policy should include at a minimum:
 - i. Goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that are designed to promote student wellness in a manner that the local education agency determines is appropriate.
 - ii. Nutrition guidelines selected by the local educational agency for all foods available on each school campus under the local educational agency during the school day with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity.
 - iii. Assurances that guidelines for reimbursable school meals are not less restrictive than the regulations issued by the USDA.
 - iv. Ways of measuring how well the school wellness policy is being implemented, including designation of one or more persons at each school with operational responsibility for ensuring that the school is meeting the policy.

Strategy #6

Link with home and community

This strategy is to link the healthy messages and practices with where the child lives. The child's family needs to be engaged with the healthy lifestyle choices promoted at school.

- a) Involve parents, families, students, and community members in the decision-making process for the selection of health and safety messages, curricula, learning activities, and policies.
- b) Inform them of characteristics that make these programs/policies effective.
- c) Educate parents about healthy food choices and physical fitness.
- d) Implement and support consistent, timely, and meaningful communication among school, home, and students' community-based health professionals in order to effectively address any health or mental health matter that affects a student.
- e) Regularly inform students, families, and other community stakeholders about school programs, services, and outcome data that are related to health and mental health.
- f) Provide resources that help families on matters of: parenting, progression in school, knowledge of child developmental milestones, and communication with their child or adolescent about relationships, safety, tobacco, alcohol, illicit drugs, sexuality, violence, and diet.

- i. Consider parent newsletter articles related to health and wellness
- g) Provide families with information that encourages healthy and safe recreational and educational activities for the student and the family.
 - Example: pee-wee leagues, marching bands, YMCA
- h) Increase opportunities for extracurricular physical activity (open gym).
- i) Encourage children to take what they have learned at school and advocate it at home.
- j) Create recipe books where families contribute their favorite healthy recipes – sell books as a fundraiser.
- k) Offer family cooking classes.
- l) Plant a school garden as a hands on learning opportunity and have community members the watch garden over summer.
 - Example: At Ridgeway Elementary in North Vancouver, families volunteer to look after the garden one week at a time during the summer months.
- m) Coordinate and integrate services delivered at a school-based health center with those delivered by the community's health care providers.
- n) Encourage school-based health centers to teach students to be good consumers of community-based health care, recognizing that school sites will not always be available for health care.
- o) Develop policies and procedures that protect confidential student health information, yet allow for exchange of information between the school based health center and community health professionals, whenever information exchange is determined to be in a student's best interest.

Strategy #7

Partnership with higher education

Collaborate with higher education institutions for assistance with research, education, etc.

- a) Recruit athletes to speak with students about healthy habits and participate in exercises.
- b) Cooperate with college students in farm-to-school programs (service hours for students).
- c) Encourage college students work with high schools; high schools to work with elementary schools.
- d) Partner with college instructors in health related fields. Their students can help with development, implementation, and assessment of health promotion programs in schools as part of their coursework
 - Example: NIU Nutrition and Dietetics students have created health promotion handouts for Activate Elgin's Stall Street Journal.
 - Example: NIU Nutrition and Dietetics students

implement an annual family wellness night at Wright Elementary School in DeKalb County and visit classes at this school to present on nutrition related topics of interest to the students.

- e) Invite a chef to come teach a cooking class.

Strategy #8

Create a healthy environment

This strategy is to create a healthy environment – holistically. This includes consistency in messages and practices throughout the school environment and addressing the stigma of obesity, stress, and social/cultural factors. Also included in this strategy is dual use of facilities.

- a) Establish a safe, healthy social environment at school for students and staff.
- b) Each day provide each student with at least one meaningful and positive interaction with a staff person.
- c) Encourage staff to model healthy lifestyles.
- d) Encourage students and staff eating together.
- e) Have policies that are clearly understood by students, staff and families.
- f) Ensure that social services and mental health support are available to all students and staff in the school setting.
- g) Implement prevention programs that focus on recognition of stressful life situations and interventions to help students deal with these stresses.
- h) Teach and practice stress reduction / relaxation techniques school-wide.
- i) Actively prevent suicidal behavior by training staff and having programs that identify high-risk students and then link them to therapeutic and preventive community services.
- j) Provide rules prohibiting violent and disrespectful behaviors and protocols to deal with violent events.
- k) Establish and enforce policies that prohibit bullying, hazing, teasing, harassment, and discrimination.
- l) Utilize disciplinary actions that do not jeopardize students' physical health or safety, and that do not harm emotional well-being.
- m) Prohibit use of food as a reward or punishment.
- n) Don't use exercise or withhold recess as a punishment
- o) Consider starting a healthy lifestyles club for students that can work on learning fun activities and getting information out about healthy lifestyle habits to other students.
- p) Create health council with staff/parents.
 - Students Taking Charge at East Aurora High

- q) Consider using school uniforms to minimize discrimination based on clothing.

Strategy #9

Implement interventions

This includes screening, referral, and alternatives to extend to children with identified risk factors, as well as primary prevention interventions.

- a) Provide a multidisciplinary student assistance team individualized to assist each student experiencing problems.
- b) Provide daily access to an on-site school nurse.
- c) Hire, or contract with, a school physician to work with school nurses and others on the health and safety team.
- d) Have the capacity to identify students with, or at risk for, mental health problems, to refer them for assessment and interventions appropriate to their needs, and to monitor and manage their behavioral, mental health, and emotional needs at school.
- e) Collect and assess student health information that pertains to students' functioning and safety in school prior to school entry, every 1 to 2 years thereafter, and whenever a significant change in health status has occurred. Share information with staff members whose access to the health information is necessary for maintaining student health and safety. Obtain parents' informed, written consent to share information.
- f) Develop a system to identify, prior to school entry, those students who require assistance with a special health need. Re-assess these students' needs at least annually and modify individualized health care plans accordingly.
- g) Require a comprehensive health evaluation for students with frequent or extended absences from school.
- h) Assess students who are frequent users of health services, who are suspended or expelled, or who demonstrate other concerning behaviors. Use a school-based multidisciplinary assessment team to assess for potential learning, emotional, and physical health problems that often underlie such behaviors.
- i) Require health screenings (beginning, middle and end of school year) including fitness based screenings.
- j) Assess and refer students for a comprehensive evaluation who appear to have physical or mental health-related disorders such as sudden weight loss, eating disorders, obesity, fatigue, poor attention span, behavior change, and any recurring symptom.
- k) Write, review, monitor, and regularly update school health services policies, procedures, and protocols so that they include current evidence-based information that optimizes care.
- l) Base the selection of physical and mental health services in a school-based health center on needs of the student population and the community.
- m) Coordinate and integrate services delivered at a school-based health center with those delivered by the community's health care providers.
- n) Encourage school-based health centers to teach students to be good consumers of community-based health care, recognizing that school sites will not always be available for health care.
- o) Develop policies and procedures that protect confidential student health information, yet allow for exchange of information between the school-based health center and school staff, as well as between the school based health center and community health professionals, whenever information exchange is determined to be in a student's best interest.
- p) Develop a quality assurance program in school-based health centers that is in accordance with standards of national certifying bodies and appropriate state regulations.
- q) Organize wellness fairs to provide basic preventative medicine and screenings.
- r) Consider specific PE classes for those identified with risk factors.





Mobility

Today more than ever, there is a need to provide options that allow all children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle throughout the community. Many communities struggle with traffic congestion and motor vehicle emissions polluting the environment. At the same time, children in general engage in less physical activity, which contributes to the growing epidemic of obesity.

Our Mission

To examine how infrastructure, land use and community design, education and marketing tools, and innovative funding strategies can encourage children to safely walk and bicycle, recognizing increasing children's mobility improves mental and physical health through fitness and improved environmental quality.

Workgroup Co-Chairs

Greg Chismark
WBK Associates

Tom Armstrong
Citizen

Workgroup Members

Ron Rudd
City of Elgin

Jerry Culp
Forest Preserve District of Kane County

Krysta Kaus
Kane County Sheriff's Office

Noel Basquin
City of Batavia

Karen Young
City of Batavia

Workgroup Staff

Heidi Files
Kane County Division of Transportation

Mike Sullivan
Kane County Division of Transportation

Michael Isaacson
Kane County Health Department

Sean Glowacz
Kane County Development Department

Special Thanks

Ed Barsotti
League of Illinois Bicyclists

PROFILE

The Mobility Workgroup was comprised of a group of engineers, planners, public safety officials and community members that met five times throughout the process. The group sought to provide a set of strategies that could be used by individual neighborhoods, school and communities based on their specific strengths and challenges. Additional recommendations were provided to the Natural and Built Environment Workgroup in regards to addressing issues to infrastructure and land use.

KEY CHALLENGES

In terms of Childhood Mobility, each community starts from a unique situation and with different circumstances. Some communities have great places for walking and bicycling but few children are taking advantage of it. Other communities have children walking and bicycling in unsafe conditions or along poorly maintained routes, while some communities do not have children walking or bicycling to school at all. For many of these programs to be successful there must be involvement of the whole community. Parents, children, neighborhood groups, schools, law enforcement officers, community leaders and transportation and public health professionals need to work together to help identify the issues and solutions.

STRATEGIES

The following programs can improve safety not just for children, but for a community of pedestrians and bicyclists. They provide opportunities for people to become more physically active and to rely less on their cars. For communities concerned with unsafe walking conditions, physically inactive lifestyles and overall quality of life, mobility programs can be an effective starting point for tackling these issues.

Strategy #1 **Implement Safe Routes to School Programs in all schools throughout Kane County**

Safe Routes to School programs are a great way to allow each community to create a tailored set of solutions to their unique challenges to increasing the number of children who choose to walk and bicycle to school.

Strategy #2 **Create a County-wide Bicycle Recycling Program**

An ongoing program that takes used bikes and bike parts of all kinds, makes them ride-able, and then gives them to kids who need them. This could also include bike safety and repair demonstrations.

Strategy #3 **Create/implement walking and bicycling incentive programs in schools and communities in the County**

Walking/Bicycling incentive programs can be created as ongoing programs and as special events. They can be part of the larger Safe Routes to School program and build off of existing programs.



Strategy #4 **Create Child-Friendly Mobility Maps for communities**

Child-friendly maps can provide parents and children with attractive and easy to read maps that can also act as tools for educating about walking and biking safely.

Strategy #5 **Implement Complete Streets throughout the County**

Complete Streets Policies formalize a community's intent to plan, design, and maintain streets so they are safe for all users of all ages and abilities.

Strategy #6 **Address school policies that prohibit or discourage students from walking or biking to school**

Identify policies that present barriers to bicycling and walking to school, and aim to remove or convert the policy to a supportive or neutral policy.



THINKING BIG

Chris Prat and his team at Storm Elementary School in Batavia were not satisfied with participating in International Walk to School Day. Chris and his team created “Restore Walking to School” a weeklong event that included; walking to school, contests, banners and posters, obstacle course and prizes. There was a coloring contest for the Kindergarteners and a poster contest for the older children. Everyone who submitted an entry won a prize.

Students could earn punches on a punch card for physical activities like walking to school or participating in a lunchtime obstacle course. Students could turn in their punch card for a chance to win prizes. Prizes were donated by local businesses and big box retailers and included bike helmets, haircuts for students, and bike repair and tune-up certificates, mini-golf certificates just to name a few.

There was a lunchtime obstacle course that Chris set up and managed for the students. Each day at lunchtime, Chris was outside leading the kids and encouraging their participation.

Chris wanted to be sure that all the students had an opportunity to be more active and participate fully.

During the week, the Batavia Police department provided daily supervision of two challenging street crossings to assure student safety.

On International Walk to School Day, the Batavia Fire Department was on hand to escort kids to school as they paraded from a park a few blocks away. And the Fire Department Ladder truck visited at lunch time. Batavia Mayor, Jeffery Schielke stopped by to show his support for the school’s efforts to become more active.

School personnel were very supportive of Chris and his team’s efforts.

Chris and his team mobilized the community and the students at Storm Elementary School benefited from their efforts.







Food Policy

In May, 2010 report to the President of the United States, the Task Force to Reduce Childhood Obesity delivered a set of strategies to help to eliminate childhood obesity within a lifetime, and thereby reducing the incidence of several diseases including heart disease and diabetes. These strategies include several policies on Access to Healthy and Affordable Local Food. All of these strategies can be considered and implemented by both the public and private sectors at the local level.

Food is at the core of everything we do. It is essential for health and a part of daily living. It is also a very complex issue. Kane County has a rich agricultural heritage and a large proportion of land is still used for

farming today. However, the food we eat is no longer local and instead is a part of the global economy, from production to consumption. All parts of the system, from production to consumption can be influenced by food policy.

Our Mission

Lead a county wide initiative that informs the 2020 Fit for Kids Vision Plan and 2040 Plan to improve access to safe and healthy food for Kane County residents.

Workgroup Co-Chairs

Steve Arnold
Kane County Farm Bureau

H. Dennis Smith
Northern IL Food Bank

Workgroup Members

Kim Kirchherr
Supervalu

Joe White
JBW Farms

Larry Fullmer
Sodexo

John Parker
Prasino Restaurant

Bill Shoemaker
University of IL

Kelly Brasseur
Northern Illinois Food Bank

Workgroup Staff

Jane Maxwell
Kane County Health Department

Janice Hill
Kane County Development Department



KEY CHALLENGES

The major challenge facing the workgroup was the lack of data regarding local food at the county level. Much of the available information was assembled for the workgroup and various experts in the fields of farming, local foods, retail, wholesale, restaurant, and institutional delivery systems were interviewed.

The topic of local food policy is so broad and all encompassing that the workgroup soon realized that the topic could not be adequately captured during this process and set an early policy that the topic be further addressed in future work.

Further assessment is needed. Food policy encompasses local, regional, federal and even global components. To understand the food system in Kane County, members of government, business, academia, community members, farmers and gardeners, food banks, restaurants, retailers and faith communities would need to join together for assessment and analysis.

The resources, impacts and regulations around food are significant and need further understanding. Additionally, the availability and affordability of food and the consumer's role as a part of the food system needs to be explored.

Making changes in the food system in Kane County will require an integrated approach.

PROFILE

The Food Policy Workgroup was co-chaired by Steve Arnold, Executive Director of the Kane County Farm Bureau and H. Dennis Smith, CEO and Executive Director of the Northern Illinois Food Bank. Together the co-chairs bring executive level leadership experience in both growing and delivering food within and for Kane County citizens. The workgroup members – each of them executives in their fields of retail, farming, research, restaurant and food service captured the current conditions of the local food system and identified areas for improvement, expansion and development.



STRATEGIES

Strategy 1

Create an ongoing work group to further study and assess the Food System in Kane County including:

Create a Kane County Food Policy Committee (including representation from the departments of health, development and purchasing) to examine Kane County regulatory and purchasing policy in relation to the county's comprehensive food system policy

Improving access to healthier food and expanding opportunities to produce locally grown food, including community gardens, urban agriculture, and commercial production.

Compiling a list of food providers that grow, sell and serve food including but not limited to growers, distributors, processors and aggregators.

Identification of geographic areas within the county that are underserved, not having fresh fruits and vegetables available or accessible as a result of high prices and/or unreachable locations.

Determine the barriers to local food processing capability.

Develop a formula that measures food production loss, pounds of food loss, per acre of land converted for development as a part of each development proposal reviewed by the county

Examine ways to reduce food waste on farms, in schools, hospitals and other institutions, in retail and restaurants and in homes.

Develop and measure Kane County residents' level of food security based on measurements used by Homeland Security.

Strategy #2

Increase access to healthy, affordable food beyond traditional grocers and restaurants:

Support legislative and policy efforts at all levels of government that increase the volume of fruits, vegetables and local food donated to the Northern Illinois Food Bank and local pantry system.

All Kane County Farmer's Markets will use EBT/LINK,

Currently, none of the 13 Farmer's Markets in Kane County accept the LINK card or WIC coupons. That



means that low income residents do not have the capability to shop at Farmer's Markets using their food benefits. This may further limit the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables to low income residents.

In times of need, increase the volume of fruits and vegetables donated to the Northern Illinois Food Bank and local pantry system.

Publically funded groups will adopt nationally recognized and accepted nutrition standards for food served at meetings for food purchased with public money.

Expand resources to support technology and infrastructure for an extended commercial growing season.

Strategy #3

Market Kane County grown products

Investigate the feasibility of a certification program that promotes the benefits of locally grown products.

Develop marketing material that promotes the benefits of local, fresh and seasonal products including a better culinary experience and higher nutritional value, especially when delivered and served fresh.

Strategy #4

Determine barriers to expanding production of locally grown fruits and vegetables

Assess/measure what training and support the farm community needs to expand locally grown foods on including but not limited to the following locations: existing farmland, brownfields, and in greenhouses.

Assess/measure the beginning/new farmer programs serving Kane County to assess/measure what is needed to expand locally grown foods.

Assess/measure the USDA program Good Agricultural Practices to determine what training, audits and certification might help to expand and improve the production of Kane County grown food.

Strategy #5

Encourage the expansion of community gardens

Develop materials for a Fit for Kids Farm Day curriculum

kit that can be used in schools and other places that serve children to promote growing and eating local foods.

Support the establishment of an annual countywide Community Garden Day for all stakeholders in the gardening effort.

Work with municipalities, local units of government, churches and the County to increase land available for community gardens.

Increase the number of community garden plots available across the county.

Loosen restrictions on growing and selling fruits and vegetables in residential neighborhoods.

Strategy #6

Create and infrastructure to support direct sale growers

Identify 1 acre or larger parcels throughout the County that are available for potential fruit and vegetable production.

Initiate open dialogue between local producers and regional retail outlets, schools, wholesalers and restaurants to expand the market for locally grown products.

Support local producers' eligibility for federal matching funds.

Develop a county model procurement ordinance that supports local growers.

Request regional and local economic development funds to expand and support local growers' efforts.

Strategy #7

Promote food as an economic development opportunity

Support the establishment of community and commercial kitchen space for processing and preserving locally grown products.

Assist in developing a network of independent support labor for community and home gardens such as (small plot roto-tilling).

Identify food policy partners for Fit for Kids branding.

Reduce red tape for growing, processing and delivering locally grown food to local residents.

Work with Walgreens and/or CVS to offer fresh fruits and vegetables and accept electronic LINK benefits in their stores.

Strategy #8.

Support efforts to provide education for the growers, processors and consumers in Kane County.

Support efforts to offer food safety training such as the USDA Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) to growers and handlers of Kane County grown food.

Support the efforts of University of Illinois Extension to provide nutrition education.

Fit for Kids Champions

Elgin Community Garden Network

The Elgin Community Garden Network just keeps on planting. A passionate group of organic gardeners have been planting raised bed gardens throughout Elgin in 2010. And, most of the food that has been raised has been given to local food pantries or soup kitchens. The goal was to donate at least 200 pounds of food in 2010.

The ECGN started off with a few raised beds at Lord's Park and now has planted beds at the Universal Unitarian Church, Hawthorn Hills Nature Center, Tyler Creek, the Gail Borden Library, Clifford Court and Garfield School. Plans are already underway for 2011 to help get the Sherman Hospital Employee Garden off the ground and to plant a garden at McCarty School.

The Elgin Garden Network participated in the Elgin Green Expo, held community classes and events to teach gardening to the community, especially

children. The goal of the ECGN is to teach sustainable skills and feed the hungry.

How are they able to do so much? They have a passionate group of volunteers. There are many stories of dedication from the group of volunteers that head the ECGN.

One of those volunteers is Lt. Bob Bedard, an Elgin Firefighter. Bob is an active community member. Bob has a passion for organic gardening. Bob's wife Anne is a school teacher and they share the desire to create a healthy, sustainable community, especially for our children.

Through the Firefighters Union, Bob has secured funding and support for the ECGN gardening efforts. The Firefighters have funded the gardening effort, and also helped with constructing the raised beds, and participated in the grand openings of the gardens. Bringing a fire truck to a garden opening delights the children who are participating. Children are excited to water a newly planted garden bed with the water from a fire hose.

And, the firefighters stop by the garden sites periodically with their trucks and give out coloring pages and healthy snacks.





Faith Community plays a key role in all Kane County communities. There are over 240 active faith communities in the county representing many different faiths and belief systems. In Kane County about 56% of the population is affiliated with a religious community. Protestant, Mormon, Catholic, Jewish, Islam, Buddhists, and Baha'i faith communities are found in the county.

Each faith community is unique and has a unique membership base and reach as well as a unique set of beliefs. However, there are some common characteristics. Locally, faith communities play an active role in the

communities where many of Kane County's underserved populations live. Historically, the Faith Community has been active in bringing about community and individual transformation. They impact their membership and often focus on meeting the needs of community members that are outside of their membership, as well. In addition, faith communities provide a place to belong, providing and a social and relational network for community members that are fueled by shared beliefs and values.

Our Mission

The Faith Community will create a network of like minded communities to promote healthy eating and active living, recognizing the core value of caring for the body, mind and spirit, is shared by members of each Kane County Faith Community

Workgroup Co-Chairs

Ed Hunter

Provena-Northern Illinois

Toya Johnson

Fox Valley Christian Minister's Alliance

Workgroup Members

Mazher Ahmed

Islamic Faith

Trina Bowers

New Horizon Christian Fellowship

Evon Green

New Community Baptist Church

Jessica Grant

New Jerusalem Baptist Church

Christelle Jones

Macedonia Temple of God

Jolene Leroy

Provena Mercy Medical Center

Trisha Margulies

Pushing the Envelope Farm

Lora McGee

Progressive Baptist

Ivy Ramirez

Elgin Seventh Day Adventist Church

Nicole Taylor

Elgin Seventh Day Adventist Church

Rev. Vickie Thornton

Progressive Baptist Church

Latoya Williams

Main Baptist Church

Workgroup Staff

Janice Hill

Kane County Development Department

Jane Maxwell

Kane County Health Department

Food nourishes the body, but has much bigger applications in a faith community. Faith Communities often facilitate the feeding of the hungry and providing for the physical needs of the underserved. In Kane County there are faith based organizations supporting community gardens, growing food for the hungry, supporting food pantries and coordinating soup kitchens and feeding sites for local residents in need.

Food is also used within the membership to create a sense of belonging. And, food is a part of the rituals in the faith community and food is used to celebrate, to grieve and every place in between. In many faith communities shared food is a part of every gathering.

Faith communities help families and caregivers and their children navigate through the challenges of growing up. Teaching, modeling and helping children grow into responsible adults is often a high value in the faith community.

Kane County has existing partnerships between the health and faith community. Some of these include; local faith-health partnerships, 24 African American Churches in Aurora are a part of the Fox Valley Minister's Alliance,

working with parish nurses and volunteers to bring health and wellness into the faith community. Groups of faith leaders in Elgin, Aurora and the Tri-Cities area meet regularly and are willing to embrace health and wellness issues on behalf of their membership.

A 2010 Health and Wellness survey on 20 faith based groups in Kane County, conducted by Northern Illinois University graduate students show that information about health is provided in almost 60% of the faith communities who responded. And that donuts and pastries are served at church events. In most faith communities, members are responsible for preparing the food that is eaten. Fifty-three percent of those responding had sponsored health screenings. Expanding on what is being done will improve the health and wellness of individual faith organizations and the surrounding community.

The Let's Move initiative sees that the "leaders in faith communities have a unique and critical role to play in ending childhood obesity and hunger. These organizations are trusted in their communities and can motivate people to take action."



PROFILE

The Faith Community Workgroup was made up of primarily volunteer members of the local Faith Community. Christian, Muslim and Jewish Faith Communities were represented. Co-Chairs were Ed Hunter, VP of Mission Services for Provena-Northern Illinois Region and Toya Johnson, Faith Community Nurse for the Fox Valley Christian Ministers Alliance.

Leaders from the Faith Community were invited to participate in the Workgroup, but most sent delegates to the Workgroup, instead. Our workgroup process involved taking the strategies and mission of the Faith Community Workgroup to groups of religious leaders in Aurora and Elgin.

KEY CHALLENGES

The Faith Community faces many challenges. Resources are a significant challenge. There are always more needs than there are resources to meet those needs. Faith communities depend on the financial support of their membership. Faith Communities are run by passionate volunteers, with often limited paid staff. The reach of a particular Community is limited by the time, talents and financial resources of its membership.

A key challenge is getting the leadership of faith communities to put time and resources towards embracing health and helping members of each community overcome the barriers to living healthy lives.



STRATEGIES

Strategy #1 Kane County clergy and faith leaders become champions and advocates of healthy living.

Clergy and faith leaders have significant influence over their membership. Change and transformation is possible with support and encouragement of the faith community leadership.

Strategy #2 Create a culture of wellness and health promotion on our faith communities by:

- Adopting healthy food policies for food served at individual faith communities.
- Promoting breastfeeding in individual Faith Communities.

Working together to find funding and resources that will make promoting a healthy lifestyle sustainable in the Faith Community.

Faith Communities have the opportunity to create a culture of wellness in their individual organizations and have an impact on their membership. At the core of each

faith community is a desire to care for the body, mind and spirit. Encouraging healthy eating and active living is a part of carrying out that core value.

Strategy #3

Help make healthy food more accessible and affordable for the underserved in our local communities by facilitating community gardens, food donation and distribution to the underserved members in the community.

The Faith Community has historically been a significant partner in feeding and meeting the physical needs of those in need. Compassion to the less fortunate is a common value that characterizes the faith community at the individual and community level.

Strategy #4

Create a network of faith based groups to promote healthy living.

Transformational change is challenging. There are already some faith-health partnerships in Kane County.

Those partnerships need to expand to include the entire faith community. The goal is to share ideas and potential resources and to build on the stories and successes and work together to create synergy and energy for change.

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Bright Spots

Christelle Jones lives in Aurora, works for Alcatel-Lucent and attends Macedonia Temple.

She was asked by the leadership of her church to attend the Fit for Kids Faith Community Workgroup. Christelle

has a passion and a personal commitment to personal fitness and healthy eating. She was an enthusiastic and vocal participant at workgroup meetings.

She went back to the leadership of Macedonia Temple to report on the Workgroup. She asked them if they wanted her to continue to attend the Workgroup meetings. They said, of course. But, then she made her request known. If she continued to attend the Fit for Kids Workgroup, the church would begin to adopt healthy living policies. That began to raise some eyebrows.

They asked her what she meant, and she pointed out that serving donuts on a Sunday morning, isn't offering healthy choices. She wanted to serve healthy breakfast bars and fruit instead of donuts. Negotiations continued, and soon donuts, healthy breakfast bars and fruit were served on Sunday morning. But something very interesting happened. The breakfast bars and fruit disappeared first. Donuts were left behind. When given a choice, the church members made the healthier choice. Donuts are still offered but now healthy choices are

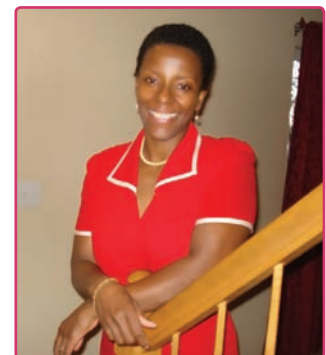
available and are selected by many. That was step one.

The church has since adopted a food policy about what can be served at church functions involving food. They now only serve one starch at catered events. The only exception is funerals, where anything can be served.

Additionally, Christelle is starting a low cost or free "Fit Club" for the community so people can come together and exercise together. Through the Fit for Kids Faith Community Workgroup, Christelle met Toya Johnson, our Co-Chair and parish nurse to the Fox Valley Minister's Alliance. Toya connected Christelle to St John AME church in Aurora and the "Fit Club" started January 22, 2011. It is open to anyone and is free.

Christelle has also launched her own fitness coaching business and is also working with individual clients.

Christelle's passion and desire to make a lasting difference in her own community makes her a Fit for Kids Champion.







The changes in our economy over the past few years have forced many of us to closely examine how we are earning and spending our money. The Economic Strength Workgroup has accepted the task to examine opportunities to achieve economic strength and sustainability through better health and healthy living. Supporting the culture of wellness can seem like a daunting task when faced with economic realities. However, implementation of the Making Kane County Fit for Kids initiative and the vision to make Kane County the healthiest county by confronting the threats of chronic diseases and obesity can help to lower healthcare costs for employers and families and strengthen the local food network.

Our Mission

To examine how families, employers and local farmers can support the economic strength and healthy living of families.

Workgroup Co-Chairs

Dan Barreiro

City of Aurora

Ellen Divita

City of Geneva

Workgroup Members

Lynn Creedon

City of St. Charles

Shannon McCall

Delnor Hospital

Mary Moy

Building a Healthier Chicago

Betty Watanabe

Feed the Soul

Paula Yensen

United Way of St. Charles

Workgroup Staff

Michael Isaacson

Kane County Health Department

Karen Ann Miller

Kane County Development Department

Tim Mescher

Kane County Development Department



KEY CHALLENGES

A healthy lifestyle begins with the role models in the child's home. A healthy lifestyle does not have to cost more and can in fact create savings for the family and for employers. The Economic Strength Workgroup examines different sectors of our community which have the best potential to impact the child's life. Parents and other family members have a big influence on a child, establishing healthy habits that can last a lifetime. Employers can provide the education and culture which supports the health of their employees and their families. Food producers can influence a child's eating habits by providing available and affordable food.

PROFILE

The Economic Strength Workgroup consists of members with a variety of experiences and community responsibilities; but they all have in common a caring, interest and enthusiasm for the health of Kane County's children. Each member contributed greatly to brainstorming and refining this final product.

STRATEGIES

The following strategies may improve the health of children in Kane County by increasing the economic strength of employers, families and local food providers.

Strategy #1

Improve the economic strength of employers by encouraging the implementation of wellness plans for employees

- Develop an awareness campaign for employers summarized in a brochure that includes best practices and success stories. Outcome will be measured by the number of brochures distributed throughout Kane County.
- Create a survey for employers to measure the quantity and quality of wellness plans. Outcome will be measured by the variety of metrics incorporated into each plan.
- Develop a model wellness plan for employers that provides step-by-step guidance to create customized wellness strategies from pre-planning to benchmarking progress. Outcome will be measured by the number of and participation in wellness programs in Kane County.
- Initiate a wellness awards program for employers to encourage participation and networking. Outcome will be measured through a database that documents progress and participation.

Strategy #2

Improve the economic strength of the family through education about nutrition, health and fitness

- Educate families about community and residential produce gardens and develop gardening tool lending programs to encourage residential gardening. Outcome



will be measured by the annual increase in the number of gardens.

- Employ the "Safe Routes to School Program" to increase the percentage of bikers and walkers to school and work. Outcome will be measured by the response to annual surveys.
- Increase the number of and participation in classes about healthy living offered in Kane County. Outcome will be measured by the number of classes offered and their participants.

Strategy #3

Increase the economic strength of local farmers through education about the value of growing produce and participation in the local food system

- Increase the capacity and variety of produce offered at local farmers markets. Outcome will be measured through annual surveys taken at the farmers markets.
- Encourage partnerships within the community to promote participation in the local food system. Outcome will be measured by the number of partnerships created between restaurants, grocery stores, community gardens, etc.
- Build upon the efforts of the “Bounty of Kane” marketing program to further promote the local food system. Outcome will be measured by the number of participants in the local food system.
- Create a network of farmers market managers to provide education and share best practices that will strengthen the local food system. Outcome will be measured by the number of participants.
- Create a farmer’s focus group to identify opportunities for standardization of farmer’s markets. Outcome will be measured by the increase in customers.
- Provide education to local government about zoning changes that can benefit the local food system. Outcome will be measured by the number of local governments with zoning that benefits the local food system.
- Identify strategies meant to strengthen the local food distribution chain (i.e.; internet, social media). Outcome will be measured through surveys completed by farmers, restaurants and market managers.



Kane County Employee Wellness Program Weight Loss Challenge

Health insurance costs continue to go up for employees and employers around Kane County. To gain greater control over these costs, Kane County implemented an employee wellness program to encourage healthy behavior. This program included a weight loss challenge in 2010 that was won by Carl Schoedel, the Director of the Division of Transportation. During the challenge, when weather permitted, Carl rode his bike the eight miles to work each day. Schoedel does not attribute his major weight loss to entirely to his commuting activity.

“It’s nothing magical. The secret is eating less,” Schoedel said.

The Weight Loss Challenge appealed to his competitive side. “The competition was the kick that got me started,” he said.

Schoedel lost a total of 45 pounds. He said that he counted calories and kept a journal of his meals to keep him on task.

He said he used to enjoy running, but now his bike riding takes the place of that activity. “I have more energy, better fitness. When I’m riding the bike I don’t tire as easily,” he said. The ride to and from KDOT on Burlington Road provides some down time and acts as a stress reliever. “You do have time to think, time to reflect.” Carl had the support of and provided support to many of his co-workers who were in the challenge together. It helped bring health more to the forefront in their workplace.







Family

A dynamic network of mutual commitment where there is some degree of emotional connection/bonding (National Institute of Mental Health, 2005; Briar-Lawson et al., 2001). Families can include any group of people related either biologically, emotionally, or legally (McDaniel et al, 2005). Family reaches beyond the household, and can for example extend to home daycare providers, work, and church.

Workgroup Co-Chairs

- Dr. David Stone**
Northern Illinois University
- Lulu Blacksmith**
Waubensee College

Workgroup Members

- Danata Andrews**
Quad County Urban League
- Marsha Conroy**
Aunt Martha's Youth Center
- Melissa Graham**
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Workgroup Staff

- Mike Isaacson**
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Culture

The Culture of Obesity in Kane County diagram (Figure 1), created by the workgroup, was modeled after the Ecological Model of Childhood Obesity, which focuses specifically on characteristics, such as dietary intake or physical activity, in relation to the multiple environments that need to be considered when seeking to change an individual child's behavior or weight status (DeMattia and Denney, 2008). The diagram describes the four cultures: obesity, poverty, ethnicity, and the local cultures of organizations. This workgroup has sought to intercede at each of these levels in order to modify habituated behaviors embedded within these cultures. By addressing these enabling cultures, we are then able to influence individual behaviors and begin to develop a new normal or culture of wellness in Kane County.

Community

Community is defined here as a group of people with diverse characteristics who are linked by social ties, share common perspectives, and engage in joint action in geographical locations or settings (MacQueen et al., 2001). Our workgroup recognizes that all of the workgroups have been established at the level community. Therefore, our workgroup sought to address the need to ensure that community level interventions foster a Sense of Community by offering expert input in the policies and interventions developed by the other workgroups.

CULTURE OF OBESITY IN KANE COUNTY

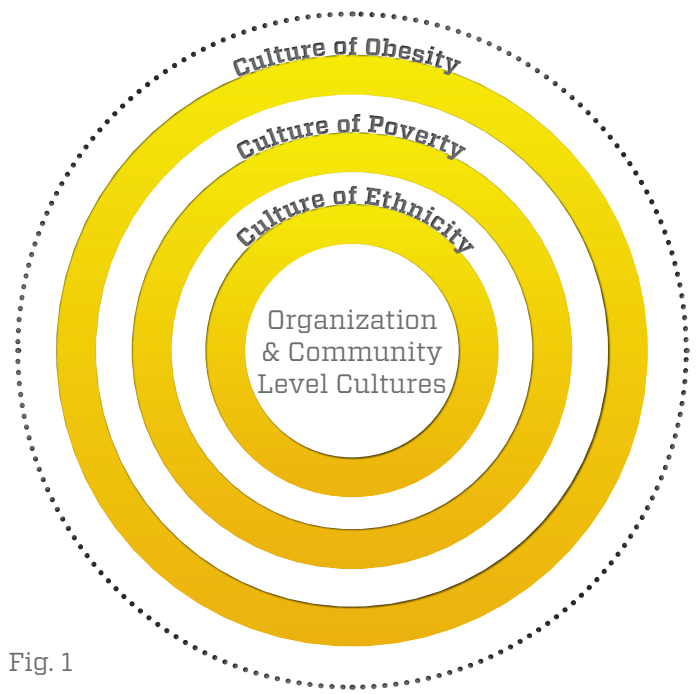


Fig. 1

INFLUENCES OF INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR

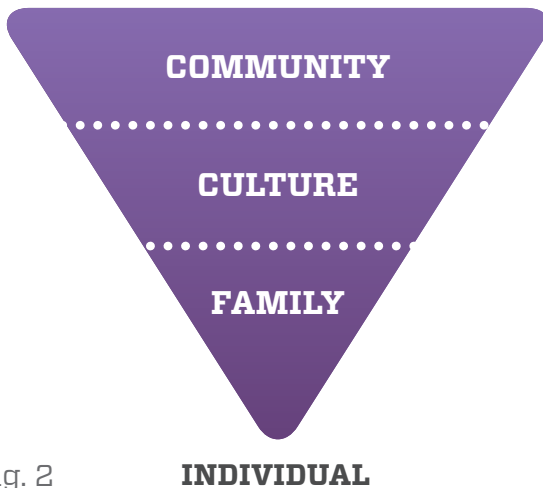


Fig. 2

What is a Sense of Community?

“There are many levels one can experience a sense of community (e.g. family, neighborhood, city, nation, or even globally). Research has shown that a sense of community can be experienced without sharing a specific place as well (e.g. ethnic, religions, virtual communities). A sense of community is one of those basic essential human experiences, a perception of one's connection with others, that we need for our well being.” (SenseOfCommunity.com, 2010).



PROFILE

The Family, Culture & Community workgroup included excellent thinkers from higher education and community organizations that work with diverse populations. The topic discussed in this group were expansive and the members utilized their skills and experiences from their careers and personal lives to keep working towards better and better strategies.



KEY CHALLENGES

The workgroup identified how forces affecting the family, and emanating from various cultures, and communities have, over the last 3 decades, led to kids being unfit. These challenges describe American culture today and how many of the choices we are making continue to foster a culture of obesity in Kane County. The key challenges identified by the workgroup include:

- Families less frequently sharing meals together
- Families preference for quick and processed foods
- Greater accessibility of quick and processed foods
- Preparing meals at home is often a low priority in our overscheduled lives
- Unhealthy and poor quality food served and sold in schools
- Culture of standardization, convenience, and the commodification of food
- Underserved communities having limited access to healthy food
- Technology creates an incentive for children to stay inactive and indoors
- Families' perceptions of the safety of their neighborhoods

STRATEGIES

The following family level strategies include systems, policy, and environmental changes that can directly influence family behavior so that families choose healthy eating/active living over unhealthy eating/sedentary behavior.

Strategy #1

Collaborate with local grocery stores, convenience stores, and gas stations to advertise, package, and provide healthy/affordable pre-packaged meals for a family of 4

Weekly selections of healthy meals, including fresh produce, should be pre-packaged with easy to follow recipes at an affordable price (Example: healthy meals under \$10 for a family of 4). The healthy/affordable meals will offer busy families an alternative to fast food chains, while offering the same conveniences of saving time and money. Low income areas or food desert areas in the county that do not have convenient access to healthy, affordable meals will especially benefit from this strategy. Increasing the number of healthy meals

prepared at home may increase the number of family meals eaten together at the table.

Strategy #2

Provide incentives for restaurants to offer a healthy children's menu

It's almost a standard for restaurants to offer a children's menu that is fried, refined, and processed, providing choices such as macaroni and cheese, chicken tenders, and French fries. The county could offer restaurants incentives to not replace, but offer healthy food options on their children's menu. Incentives could include a break in Health Department license fees.

Strategy #3

Coordinate with Park Districts to offer a special discounted rate for families

Special family rates would make it easier for families to get fit together. By exercising with their kids, rather than just dropping them off for classes/activities, parents can serve as role models for their kids. Discounted rates

would also allow a greater number of families to be able to afford Park District passes.

Strategy #4

Offer a Bike Odometer Rewards Program at schools, Park Districts, or gyms

Bikes are purchased or donated and equipped with odometers. Children are able to check out bikes and earn points by increasing the odometer reading on the bike. Prizes are earned after each milestone odometer reading is reached. Miles can be turned into vouchers for healthy prizes. The ultimate prize would be to earn a bike! Other prizes that can be earned include: vouchers for healthy food, healthy/affordable family meals (see strategy #1), jump ropes, basketball or soccer ball, pedometers, an experience/training with a local athlete mentor, etc. If schools participated in this program, it would be accessible to all - in particular targeted low income populations.

Strategy #5

Provide families with Lap Top Lunch recipe/photo cards as a resource to pack healthy school lunches

Provide families with a series of Lap Top Lunch recipe/photo cards on a seasonal basis in order to provide ideas for easy to prepare, healthy school lunches. The county could invite local chef's or local families to submit a photo (as shown on www.laptoplunches.com) and a simple recipe that follows guidelines prepared by the county. Submittals can be posted online where kids can vote for their favorite healthy lunch idea. The top winners would be included in the first series of Lap Top Lunch Cards. The cards can be financed by local healthy lifestyle sponsors. Ideally, the schools would distribute

them to classrooms. Winners of the contest can teach kids to prepare their winning recipe.

Strategy #6

Develop a process for identifying potential model families and use them as examples to the community of various home-grown strategies for leading healthy lifestyles

The intent is to offer inspiration to families countywide to make healthier lifestyle choices with the help of families already practicing an active and healthy lifestyle. Outreach should emphasize reaching out to the county's high risk populations.

Strategy #7

Work with school districts to adopt a healthy food policy on all fundraising activities the schools initiate

School fundraising often includes selling unhealthy food, such as candy bars or cookie dough. The county could provide incentives or work in partnership with schools to adopt a healthy food policy on all fundraising activities. In addition, extra incentives could be provided for schools that take on the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA), Healthier US School Challenge.

Strategy #8

Promote the Fit for Kids Initiative through a non-traditional education campaign

Print health educational material and the Fit For Kids logo on the backs of envelopes of all official mail that is distributed to county residents, such as: county mail, utility bills, Illinois Link card mail, etc.

In Kane County, the data gives cause for alarm.

The Illinois Youth Risk Behavior Survey (2007) indicates that one in six (16%) of all Kane children under 18 years of age and across all racial/ethnic groups are obese, but rates are much higher for low-income Hispanic and African-American children.

For example, 29.8% of children on WIC over age two years (more than 85% of Kane children receiving WIC are Hispanic or African American) in Kane are either obese or overweight according to the Illinois Department of Human Services.

Data collected by Activate Elgin found that in a predominantly low income, Hispanic and African American student body, 46% of the students were obese.

Data collected in 2004 through Head Start revealed that young children in Kane County's Head Start programs are dangerously overweight: rates for children ages 2-5

years ranged from 20.1 - 29% compared to the 13.9 % national average.

Kane County data shows that the trends toward obesity in many of our communities are higher than national averages.

Among health department clients, the rate of teenage overweight and obesity almost doubled between 1992 and 2006. The rates of overweight and obesity among Family Case Management clients in from 2006 - 2010 was over 50% in most parts of Kane County.

For a list of documents & tool kits utilized in the creation of the Fit Kids 2020 Plan please go to www.makingkanefitforkids.org. Most documents listed are annotated for easy use. For example:

The Walk Score website (www.walkscore.com) gives a walkability score on a scale of 1 to 100 from any address.

CULTURE STRATEGY

Organize focus groups, representing the high-risk populations in the county, prior to implementing strategies from all workgroups, to help ensure the needs of these populations are met

Focus Groups will help ensure implementation of the nine workgroups recommendations will be sensitive to the high-risk populations. Based on input from the focus groups, certain strategies may need to be tailored to be effective in high-risk communities.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY STRATEGY

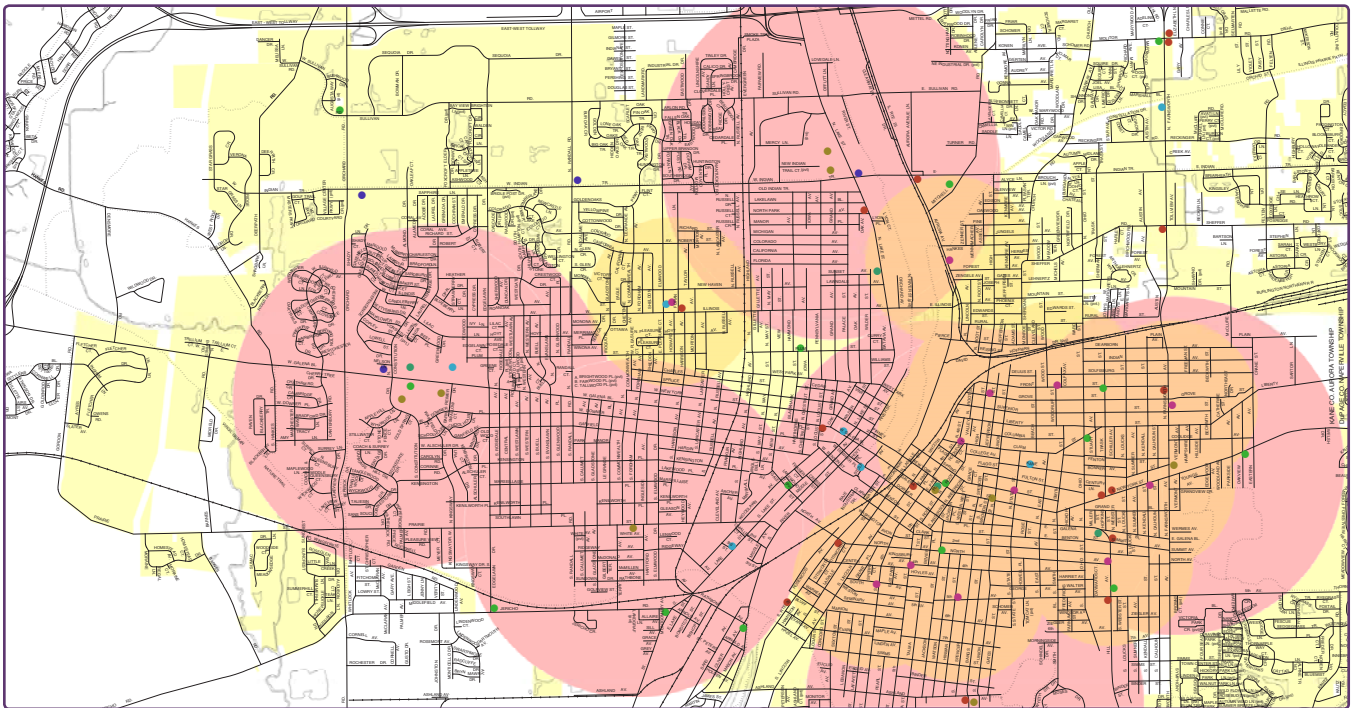
Identify and host a panel to focus on approaches or interventions that may have an opportunity to foster a “Sense of Community” around active living/ healthy eating

There may be opportunities to leverage a “Sense of Community” into the issues of well being, diet, education, and healthy lifestyle. The “Sense of Community” expert panel will review all of the Fit for Kids working groups’ intervention recommendations and provide input as to how those interventions could be best implemented to ensure that a sustainable sense of community is developed around them in order to maximize their likelihood of success.

Bright Spots

Members of the Healthy Living Council in Aurora are utilizing technology to explore the environment in which residents live. Aurora University, Aurora Township, the Fox Valley Park District, the Kane County Health Department and the City of Aurora have collaborated as members of the Council’s Resource Committee to collect data and generate GIS mapping of the healthy living and healthy eating resources within the City. The group has GIS maps that have been developed to that show: 1) location of parks and other

facilities where community residents can engage in healthful physical activity; 2) location of all schools in Districts 129 and 131; 3) location of all grocery outlets (by type) in the Aurora city limits; 4) location of all restaurants (by type: fast food – full service) in the Aurora city limits; 5) overlay map showing the location of schools and fast food outlets; 6) overlay map showing the location of grocery outlets by low income census tract areas. The Healthy Living Council is utilizing this data to prioritize which of the Fit Kids 2020 strategies should be addressed first.







Opportunities for children to be physically active while connecting with nature are plentiful in Kane County. Many environmentally diverse habitats, scenic vistas, and environmental corridors have been preserved for future generations. Years of strategic planning have resulted in an extensive regional bikeway network that makes Kane County an especially attractive place to recreate. Additionally, Kane County has made efforts to preserve agricultural land, encourage locally grown foods and venues for obtaining these foods. Kane County intends to build on these successes within the Built and Natural Environment and offer more opportunities for children to live a healthy and active lifestyle.

To better facilitate the process of creating a culture that is more focused on physical fitness and healthy eating within Kane County, it is necessary to look at a comprehensive approach toward transforming the built and natural environment.

The strategies recommended by the Built and Natural Environment Workgroup target three areas that need to be dealt with in order to truly create a healthier society: the physical environment, the regulatory structure of existing government entities, and the decision-making processes of individuals.

Addressing each of these areas is essential to creating an environment that will not only be better for the children of Kane County, but for all citizens of Kane County.

Our Mission

Within the built and natural environments, create opportunities for kids to live healthy and active lives by identifying and reducing barriers to physical activity by protecting and enhancing open spaces for casual and directed experiences, and by facilitating the means for obtaining access to healthy and locally-grown foods.

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Retired Naturalist

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KEY CHALLENGES

While there are many land use planning successes that have created opportunities for healthier and more active lifestyles, there are also challenges that need to be addressed to promote a culture of healthy eating and active living for children and families in Kane County. The key challenges identified by the workgroup, are:

- Outdated zoning regulations that mandate the separation of land uses, minimizing the feasibility of alternative transportation and decreasing pedestrian connections between uses.
- Proliferation of box stores and strip center commercial.
- The need for more intergovernmental coordination to link multi-jurisdictional trails and plan improvements.
- Heightened safety concerns that decrease recreational activity in county forest preserves, park district, neighborhoods, and trails.

Lack of planning for and the need to amend regulations that encourage Urban Agriculture.

PROFILE

The Built and Natural Environment Workgroup largely consists of municipal planning professionals and administrators, a consulting planning professional, a retired Naturalist, a retired Principal, and Park District and Forest Preserve managers. The workgroup began their discussions by identifying challenges and opportunities, followed by dynamic discussions in an effort to recommend strategies that will have the greatest impact in Kane County.



STRATEGIES

Strategy #1

The County and its 30 municipalities should revise their zoning ordinances and update their land use plans in order to apply best management practices that facilitate walking, biking, and unstructured active recreation.

Recommended Zoning Ordinance Revisions and/or Land Use Plan Updates:

- a) Incorporate and design developments to allow access by public transit and non-motorized modes of travel.
- b) Require sidewalks to be part of all new and renovated development, no less than 5 feet in width, and with all best practices applied. The following guidelines need to be continually revisited to stay current with best management practices:
 - Separated Bike Lanes
 - Sidewalks in residential and commercial areas should be a minimum of 5 feet wide with a planting strip of 2 feet on local streets and in residential and commercial areas.
 - Sidewalks in central business districts should be wide enough to meet level-of-service criteria.
 - Shared-use paths should be a minimum paved width of 3 meters—approximately 10 feet. (Source: American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Guide for Planning Design and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities).
- c) Require developers to install enhanced pedestrian crossing treatments adjacent to schools, parks, and facilities frequented by children.
- d) Require all developments that will result in major traffic generation to provide on-site bicycle parking and storage facilities to encourage intermodal travel (Source: AASHTO, 1999). Major traffic generation should be defined by the local transportation agencies but generally will include uses such as commercial, industrial, multi-residential, transit stations, and bus stops.
- e) Establish mixed-use overlay zones in areas identified as activity centers along transportation corridors.

The mixed use overlay zone should have a minimum residential density to provide the population needed to support pedestrian-oriented business and transit. Revise zoning maps to allow for neighborhood commercial in these zones. (Transit Density Requirements – source: Pushkarev and Zupan, 1977)
- f) Revise property maintenance codes and zoning ordinances to allow temporary uses on vacant lots.

Examples of permitted uses on vacant lots could include: community gardens, public art displays, and public fields (to promote free play).

- g) Encourage county and municipal governments to coordinate with school districts to help ensure that schools are planned within existing neighborhoods.

Strategy #2

Promote zoning and land use regulations and incentives that encourage Urban Agriculture.

What is Urban Agriculture? The growing of plants and the raising of animals within and around cities. The most striking feature of urban agriculture, which distinguishes it from rural agriculture, is that it is integrated into the urban economic and ecological system: urban agriculture is embedded in – and interacting with – the urban ecosystem.

Walgreen Fresh Food, Chicago

“Mayor Richard M. Daley today thanked Walgreens for expanding its food selection in 10 stores located in Chicago neighborhoods identified as, food deserts – areas with limited availability of the kinds of foods people need to maintain a healthy diet.”

Recommended Action Steps:

- a) Offer bonuses to redevelopment projects that incorporate community gardens.
- b) Develop model regulations to allow Urban Agriculture on residential lots.
Example: Bee Keeping; Chickens, etc.
- c) Provide economic development incentives for retailers to create access to healthy food in underserved neighborhoods throughout the county.
- d) Offer incentives to businesses that partner with one another to facilitate the availability of healthy, locally grown food.

“Community commercial kitchens serve as a platform for small food production businesses to succeed in their efforts. Kitchens may be rented by any member of the general public and are fully equipped and approved for commercial production.” - New Mexico Farmer’s Market

- e) Encourage economic development incentives for the adaptive reuse of existing buildings for agricultural and healthy food related businesses.
- f) Develop model regulations for agricultural businesses that support locally grown and processed food.

Agricultural businesses that support locally grown and processed food may include uses such as: a commercial kitchen that can be utilized by local farmers, a market that sells produce or processed foods from local farms, educational classes to learn about growing, processing, or cooking locally grown food, host events that promote or support local agriculture.

Example of the type of agricultural business to target: Heritage Prairie Farm (<http://www.hpmfarm.com/>)

- g) Develop guidelines to promote and regulate the use of compost bins and structures.
- h) Create a tool kit of land use regulations that can be used in local land use plans to promote Urban Agriculture practices.
- i) Permanently protect urban or urban edge farms using tax strategies, purchase of development rights, or other incentives to discourage or prevent its conversion to other uses.

Strategy #3

Plan infrastructure to facilitate bicycle/pedestrian transportation.

Recommended Action Steps:

- a) Work cooperatively countywide on grant applications for alternative transportation infrastructure projects.
- b) Enhance the pedestrian environment along designated paths, sidewalks, or downtowns in order to draw children to targeted areas within a municipality’s downtown, encourage kids to experience the bike paths, or encourage kids to walk to school.
- c) Develop a video/slideshow of hostile bike/pedestrian environments throughout the county to show to elected officials.
- d) The county should maintain a countywide inventory of bicycle plans and maps.
- e) Each local jurisdiction shall publish public and private trail maps.
- f) Provide local funding mechanisms to produce a multi-jurisdictional regional bikeways map that includes both private and public bike routes.

Strategy #4

Utilize marketing campaigns to emphasize the importance of healthy lifestyles for children.

Recommended Marketing Campaigns to Promote Physical Activity:

- a) Promote and educate the community on walkability ratings and encourage realtors to use walkability ratings on their websites.

“Walk Scores’ mission is to promote walkable neighborhoods.” Walk Score launched in 2007 and shows over 3 million Walk Scores every day and over 5,000 sites use Walk Score services.

- b) Promote Health Impact Assessments as a tool that the county and municipalities can use to objectively evaluate the potential health effects of a project or policy before it is built or implemented.
- c) Promote - Unplug Yourself Day! - to encourage children to turn off all electronics for the day, and to go outside for active and creative recreation.

d) Promote - Plug Yourself In Day! to encourage children to utilize modern technology in a manner that is both fun and physically active.

Examples include:

- Wii Fit Activity Day's - A celebration with the gaming system that embraces the active-play concept. Wii Fit combines fun and fitness as a way to help families exercise together.
- Dance Dance Revolution - A gaming system where two players compete in a dance competition. Players stand on a pressure-sensitive pad and hit colored arrows with their feet to musical and visual cues.
- Geocaching - Get families outdoors via a Geocaching adventure. Using a GPS device, locate containers or geocaches hidden in designated locations. Families can share their adventures online. This activity is for all age groups and is a way to promote a sense of community and appreciation of Kane County's natural

areas. (Example: Progressive Bike Trail Geocaching)

- Travel Bug Adventure - Purchase Travel Bugs and create a mission to actively promote the Fit for Kids' strategies. (Mission example: The Travel Bug's mission is to find its way to all locations within the county that in some way promotes local food.)
 - Bike-N-Seek: A spin off of the National Wildlife Federation's Hike and Seek program. This is a cross between a nature hike or bicycle ride and a scavenger hunt. Bike to destinations where there are things to find, questions to answer, and riddles to solve. Technology can be incorporated by using cell phones to text answers to riddles to a group coordinator. Replies can verify correct answers and provide future clues or riddles.
- e) Develop a countywide incentive to - Walk on Wednesdays - walk to school, to work, to shop, to have fun.

Bright Spots

The Fit Kids 2020 Plan and the 2040 Conceptual Land Use Strategy are integrated documents.

The overarching theme of the 2040 Plan is Healthy People and Healthy Communities. Reversing the epidemic of childhood obesity is the goal of the Fit Kids 2020 Plan.

This is the first Kane County long range plan to include a chapter on health. Health cannot be achieved in isolation and the integration of these plans recognizes the interdependence of health and the environment. To achieve this, the 2040 planning process includes stakeholders from the health sector.

The Regional Plan Commission's 2040 Conceptual Land Use Strategy report, adopted by the Kane County Board in August, 2010, addresses 12 recommendations including five of which are directly related to public health:

- The Making Kane County Fit for Kids project and the Strategic Action Principles are fundamental building blocks for the 2040 Plan. Additionally, the 2040 Plan will include recommendations that integrate land use, transportation, community design and economic development planning with public health planning to increase active transportation and other physical activities which can help prevent childhood obesity, as well as many chronic diseases such as heart disease and high blood pressure.

- Balanced municipal development patterns concentrated or adjacent to existing municipalities in the urban corridor shall be encouraged when they are carefully designed, mixed use developments, respectful of water resource management and open space goals.
- Agriculture must continue to be a desired and preferred land use. Premature conversion of farmland to other uses should be discouraged.
- The relationship between land use and transportation is of great importance and represents an opportunity to expand transit systems, improve walkability, reduce vehicle miles traveled, focus on maintain and improving the highway system and improve energy efficiency and conservation.
- The Smart Growth Principles continue to be valid for the 2040 Plan and shall be reinforced with the Livability Principles recommended by the Partnership for Sustainable Communities.





The dramatic increase in obesity among adults and children in the United States continues to strain the medical system. Healthcare professionals continue to allocate resources to treat chronic conditions that are largely preventable. A truly effective healthcare system will actively engage in preventive activities and take advantage of opportunities to encourage change in individuals and communities.

Our Mission

The mission of the Healthcare and Medicine workgroup engage the medical community to utilize its unique skills and expertise to promote optimal health and wellness for all citizens at every stage of life, mentally and physically, to document the healthiest citizens in Illinois by 2030.

Workgroup Co-Chair

Dr. Diane Homan
Rush Copley Medical Center

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- Maria Aurora Diaz**
Provena Mercy
- Mary Fremgen**
Local Dietician
- Ed Hunter**
Provena Health
- Dr. Natalie Lambajin-Drummond**
Dreyer Medical Center
- Franca Liburdi**
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- Michael Isaacson**
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- Janie Maxwell**
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KEY CHALLENGES

The medical community is well-positioned to provide critical guidance and treatment to young patients; however, the response of parents has been identified as a challenge. Frequently, parents do not feel that their child's excess weight is putting them at risk. Appropriate messaging to parents must be reinforced through a variety of channels to engage parents in creating a home environment that is conducive to healthy living. Another challenge can be the lack of resources available for children who need additional assistance in making lifestyle changes. Finally, it must be recognized that adults and children must be treated holistically. The medical community must account for both the mental and physical health of the child and advocate for changes in the environment in which the child lives.

PROFILE

The Healthcare & Medicine workgroup was made up of health and medical experts from around Kane County. Physicians, nurses, dietitians and public health professionals all contributed to the development of the strategies. Members were hospital-based, clinic-based, university-based and private practice-based. The diverse training and experiences lead to rich discussion with this group.

STRATEGIES

Strategy #1

Create an environment that supports and encourages breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is a proven way to improve the health of mother and baby and begins an infant's life with excellent nutrition. This should include an increase in breastfeeding education during the prenatal period as well as the creation of policies in hospital environments that promote breastfeeding within an hour of birth (2 hours if cesarean section), increasing support to mothers while in the hospital and minimize the use of supplemental formula during the first two days of life unless medically required.

Strategy #2

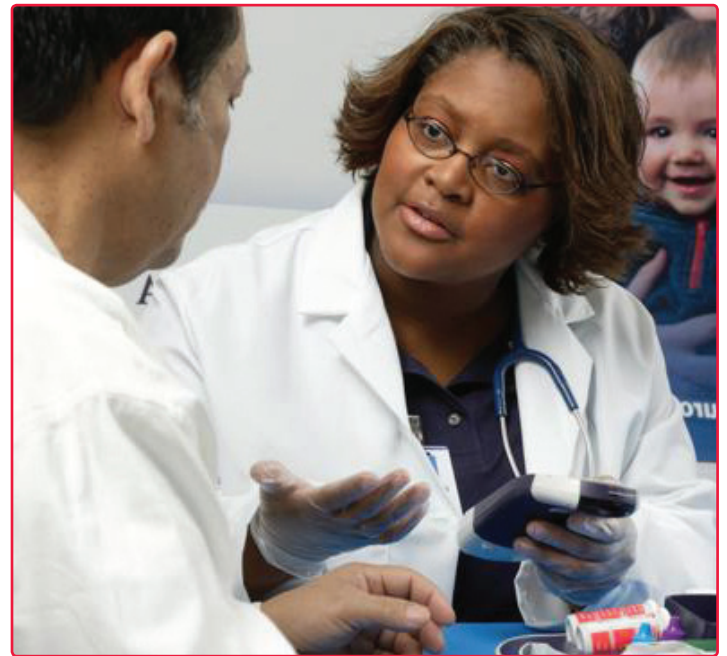
Increase occurrence of counseling and education on physical activity and nutrition during office visits

Time with a clinician provides a "teachable moment" for children and adults. Policies should be put into place to increase the proportion of office visits that include counseling and education related to age-appropriate nutrition and physical activity as contributors to health and a healthy body image.

Strategy #3

Utilize the medical community to contribute to system of measurement in the community that monitors health indicators and treatment opportunities

The medical community can contribute greatly to the collection of data in the community that can monitor the health status of the population. Nursing students, family medicine residents and other clinical students can provide tremendous capacity for conducting ongoing



data collection. This data can be utilized to inform the community. Additionally, a system can be developed that will allow clinicians view the various treatment resources available in the community for their patients.

Strategy #4

Assure holistic approach to the problem by increasing attention to mental health including depression screening and monitoring for disordered eating

Successful clinical interventions include taking the whole patient into account and must attend to the mental health of the child. Obesity and body image issues are

related to many adverse outcomes. The proportion of children screened for depression and eating disorders must be increased through the creation of a system that provides physician education and monitors resources for treatment.

Strategy #5

Increase access to preventive healthcare for children

The health of a child without a medical home will be at a disadvantage. It is critical that children can be monitored for healthy growth and development by a medical provider. These visits will also provide the critical opportunity for education on dietary habits, physical activity, the importance of sleep and time & stress management.

Strategy #6

Engage the medical community in activities that advocate for policy and environmental change in the community

Professionals in the medical community see firsthand the adverse health outcomes associated with obesity. They are uniquely qualified to serve as experts in educating policymakers within the community to initiate change. Thoughtful effort must be made to create a system that provides clinicians with the training and opportunity to share their expertise to make policy and environmental change happen.



Kane County Breastfeeding Coalition

The Kane County Breastfeeding Coalition mission : To improve the health of Kane County residents by working collaboratively to protect, promote, support, and celebrate breastfeeding.

The Kane County Breastfeeding Coalition meets monthly to increase the proportion of infants that are breastfed throughout the county. The Coalition has is made up of lactation consultants and obstetric and pediatric providers from community health centers, private practices, local hospitals, WIC programs, and breastfeeding support groups. The Kane County Health Department and the Kane County Fit for Kids Campaign are vital partners in the Coalition. Community members are welcome to join.

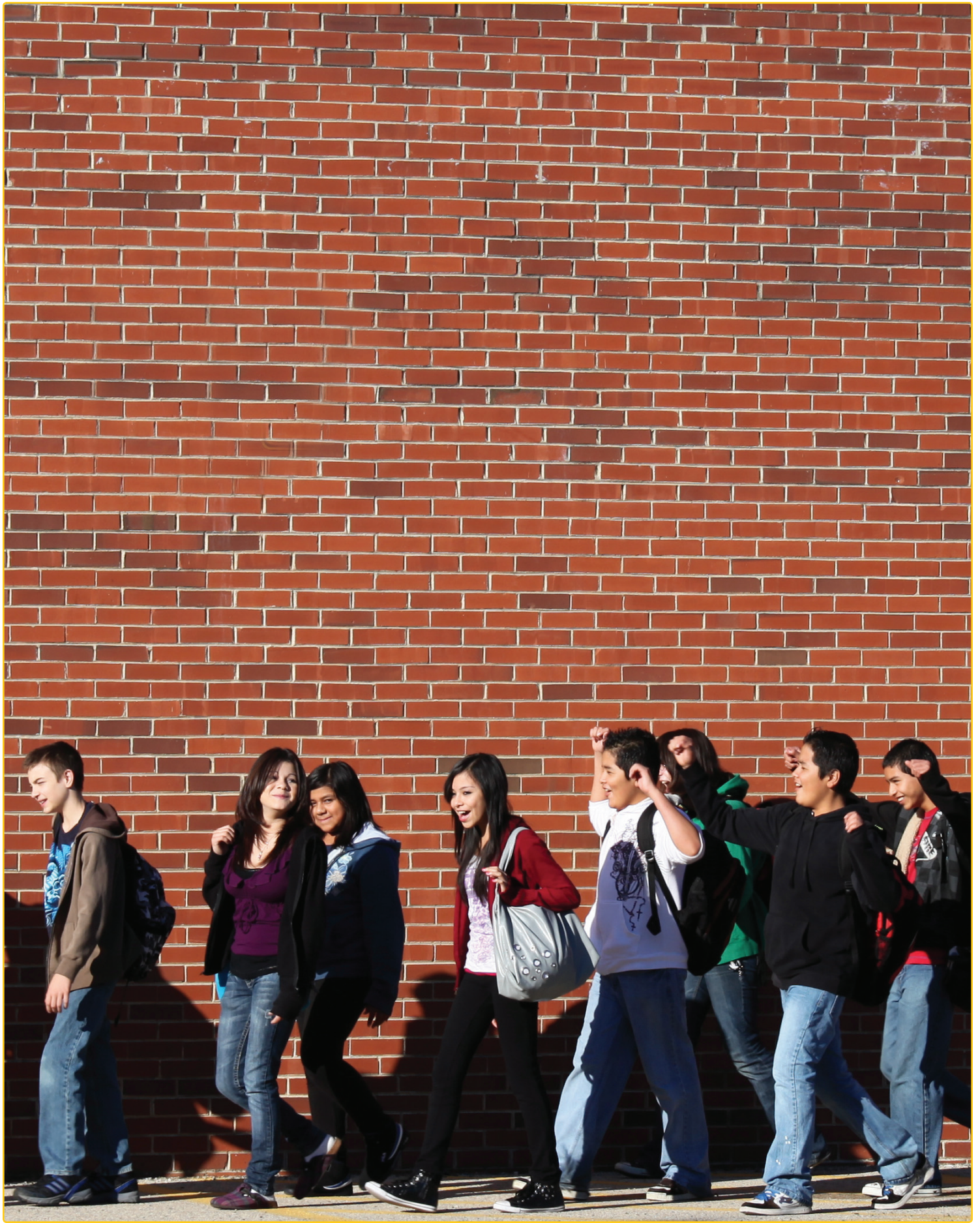
The United States Breastfeeding Committee notes that “research has identified breastfeeding as a potentially critical strategy in reducing the risk of obesity. All major medical organizations recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, followed by continued breastfeeding for the first year.”¹

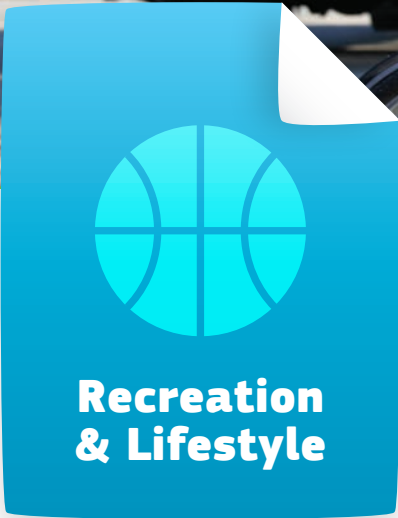
The goal is to support women to obtain information that helps them to make an informed choice about breastfeeding as early as possible during pregnancy. The Coalition also works to support and educate mothers who choose to breastfeed. The new Healthy People 2020 goals address maternity care and workplace accommodations, two common stumbling blocks for breastfeeding mothers.

In Kane County the Coalition is working actively to support the development of hospital, obstetric and pediatric breastfeeding friendly practices in the county. The Coalition hopes to soon offer more support for women in the workplace.

Coalition members bring their resources and expertise together to make a county-wide impact.

¹ United States Breastfeeding Committee. Statement on Breastfeeding as a Critical Strategy for Obesity Prevention. Washington, DC: United States Breastfeeding Committee, 2010.





Kane County has many recreational resources. There are 13 park and recreation districts or departments and the Kane County Forest Preserve manages over 50 forest preserves and parks that account for 18,000 acres across the county. These include expansive trails, land along the Fox River, forest preserves, parks and a variety of permanent recreational facilities; fitness centers, swimming pools, golf courses. Additionally there are private recreation centers throughout the county that provide residents with opportunities to be physically active.

How did we come to the point where children may live shorter and less healthy lives than their parents? At the Fit Kids Leadership Summit in February, 2010, leaders from Kane County identified many factors that have changed in the last 30 years contributing to the childhood obesity epidemic. Many of the factors identified point to inactivity. Children are

Our Mission

Lead a county-wide initiative to build a culture of wellness by providing easy and safe access to affordable physical activity where people live, work and play.

Workgroup Co-Chairs

- James Breen**
St. Charles Park District
- Eric Lee Wilson**
Fox Valley Park District

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Fox Valley Special Recreation Association
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South Elgin Park District
- Kim Wascher**
South Elgin Park District
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Stacey Caragher

- YMCA Aurora
- Jay Kelly**
Geneva Park District
- Bob Geikin**
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- Jane Maxwell**
Kane County Health Department

less active. There has been a cultural shift . Children spend time indoors in front of electronic devices rather than being involved in active play. Play is often more organized and done around sports or specific activities. In addition, there are fewer opportunities for activity as a part of everyday life. Fewer children walk or ride their bikes to school.

So, despite the abundance of opportunities to be active in Kane County, the culture of inactivity continues.

“Regular physical activity is associated with enhanced health and reduced risk for all-cause mortality. Beyond the effects on mortality, physical activity has multiple health benefits, including reducing the risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, selected cancers, and musculoskeletal conditions.”

How do we engage our community in living an active life? Encouraging everyday activity and healthy and active lifestyles are keys to reversing the childhood obesity epidemic.

KEY CHALLENGES

The key challenge is changing the culture of inactivity. Kane County reflects a national trend towards inactivity. There is more dependence on cars, less activity in schools; less unstructured play and more electronic distractions. There is no easy remedy.

There are already great facilities and opportunities to live an active life in Kane County, but many are underutilized.

Neighborhood safety is a concern. Even where statistics do not support fears about safety, perceptions continue to inhibit activity.

Recreation and lifestyle crosses schools, the faith community, local government, park and recreation agencies, neighborhoods, businesses and residents that are focused on recreation and active living. Many partners will need to work cooperatively to drive and sustain change.

Resources for recreation are shrinking. The housing bust and economic downturn have left recreation departments and organizations with less working capital as local governments and agencies must decide between providing essential services and recreational opportunities.

PROFILE

The Recreation and Lifestyle Work Group largely consists of Parks and Recreation professionals from around the County. The work group also included city and special recreation association staff, recreational soccer teams, the YMCA and community organizers. The work group participants represented a diverse cross section of Kane County residents. There were participants from private and public sectors, large and small communities, recreation providers and recreation participants, representing service to different geographic locations and population groups throughout the County.

The workgroup reviewed papers and policies on the role of recreation in reversing the childhood obesity epidemic. And through the process, the group expanded their view of how their community and organization can impact the obesity epidemic in Kane County.

This Workgroup has formed an energetic partnership that is determined to continue meeting so they can actively partner together to implement the strategies and action steps outlined in this report.

STRATEGIES

Strategy #1

Provide easier access to parks and playgrounds in new and existing neighborhoods through building and maintaining parks, facilities and trails that are in close, safe walking distance of all residents.

When parks and recreational facilities are in close, safe walking distance of residents they are used more frequently. Locations that need facilities that are in close proximity should be the priority.

Future trail improvements should include amenities such as water, mile markers, play parks, restrooms, etc

Amend the current recreation and bike and trail maps to show kid friendly paths for walking and biking, stroller

friendly paths, mile markers, play grounds, restrooms and water and food stations.

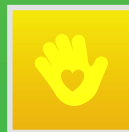
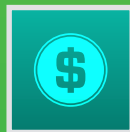
Strategy #2

Make healthy, affordable food available in public places.

Park and recreation facilities can be leaders in transforming the food choices at public venues. It is not necessary to provide high calorie, less nutritious choices in these venues. Providing healthy food options along with active recreation shows a consistent health message and can make a significant impact on local residents.



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Offer healthy alternatives with better prices than high calorie menu items.

Phase out high calorie foods from public places in non-contractual areas by 2012; contractual areas as soon as possible. Intermediate step is to limit portion sizes of high calorie foods. Phase in high nutritional value foods, foods that provide high nutritional value within low calories.

- Provide alternatives to high calorie beverages and food choices in vending, concessions, special events, birthday parties, general programs and with all affiliates.
- Add high nutritional value foods as options.
- Work with local growers to add locally grown food to menus.
- Encourage water consumption.

Strategy #3

Launch a marketing campaign to communicate the message of healthy living.

Market healthy as “the best you do for your children.” Spoil children with healthy eating and active living. Promoting healthy eating and active living for children and gaining the support of parents will be key to reversing this epidemic.

Create a marketing campaign emphasizing safe outdoor play options. Work with PTOs and schools to overcome unhealthy perceptions about outdoor play and activity.

Pursue co-branding opportunities with recreation partners.

Link together related websites and partners.

Use print media and social networking.

Collect county wide information and place on Fit for Kids Website:

- Healthy eating resources
- Healthy dining guide
- Map of fitness and health facilities
- Maps of potential physical activities
- Map of community gardens for rent
- Gardening guide
- Links to active living in Kane County

Strategy #4

Engage underserved populations in active living opportunities.

The desire is to specifically target underserved populations in the county with physical activity opportunities. This includes economically underserved and those with disabilities.

Market scholarship programs and availability of reduced fees.

Maximize reuse of uniforms and equipment.

Add raised beds to community garden plots to accommodate special needs.

Develop “Programs in a Box” for use in less resourced communities.

Include money in park and rec budgets to encourage unstructured, informal sports activities for kids and adults at neighborhood parks on a regular basis for free or at reduced cost.

Market directly to underserved groups through neighborhood networks and culturally appropriate marketing .

Pursue universally designed construction standards, ensuring that all facilities are accessible to special needs groups.

Strategy #5

Create community networks and partnerships that include schools, faith community, local government, park and recreation agencies, neighborhoods, businesses and residents that are focused on recreation and active living.

Create cooperative agreements with local churches, schools and park districts to facilitate low cost, local and culturally appropriate recreational opportunities.

Pursue appropriate funding opportunities as a community partnership. The energy and synergy that is present across agencies makes this a real possibility. As a network we can make a larger impact than as individual groups or organizations.

Park Districts

- Expose children to a variety of affordable physical activities that promote lifelong engagement such as walking, tennis, biking, camping, disc golf, swimming, exploring the natural environment, etc.
- Make more physical activity opportunities available for children that are not interesting in competitive team sports.
- Involve children in environmental recreation and education programs that involve outdoor activities. Tie these activities to Kane County Natural areas and Forest Preserves.
- Engage children in active indoor activity, limiting passive indoor activity.
- Create partnerships with schools to engage children in physical activity as often as possible.

Countywide

- Develop county-wide activities occurring on the same day and time focusing on Healthy Living and Healthy Eating. Engage partners from around the county.
- Organize free bike use programs in our cities and towns.
- Encourage the creation of community gardens.

- Add physical activity and healthy eating component to all children’s programming offered in the county.

Strategy #6

Create land use policies that preserve and protect land for active and passive recreation.

Preserving land for recreation is a high value for the future. Transforming brownfields into safe, recreation areas may also improve the availability of recreation and park facilities in the urban corridor of Kane County. Structuring our communities for improved walk ability is also a high value.

- Acquire vacant/strategic parcels in older, underserved neighborhoods to build new, small parks that are walkable for denser populations.
- Partner with schools and churches to build park amenities on their parcels in order to save land costs.
- Encourage future school construction sites be tied to sustainable, walkable locations.
- Keep land cash values current to insure park and recreational sites in new and expanding neighborhoods.
- Promote community facilities in transit friendly areas.
- Identify underutilized parcels that could be used for community gardens prioritizing areas without local gardens or foods

Strategy #7

Address safety issues in the community that may limit safe access and use of parks and recreation facilities.

Safety is a key issue. Whether the threat to safety is real or perceived it must be addressed before children are free to be outside. Parents in the most affluent neighborhoods, have fears about safety. Parents in gang riddled neighborhoods have fears about safety. Working together to put eyes on the streets and create safe communities is a high priority.

Conduct a sidewalk/bike route gap study in each town and set priorities to fill these gaps.

Adopt community policing and neighborhood involvement to improve safety and security. Explore creating affinity groups to use the parks and recreation facilities at the same time so that there are more eyes on the street and safety in groups.

Resources:

Whitehouse Task Force on Childhood Obesity, Report to the President; Solving the Problem of Childhood Obesity within a Generation.2005

Task Force on Community Preventive Services. Increasing Physical Activity; A Report on Recommendations of the Task Force on Community Preventive Services. Rep. Atlanta, GA: Center for Disease Control Department of Health and Human Services, 2001. Print.

Bright Spots

Oakhurst Forest Preserve Garden Plots

The Kane County Forest Preserve partnered with the Fox Valley Park District to create new community garden plots in the Oakhurst Forest Preserve.

The Fox Valley Park District already has over 500 community garden plots. Adding the site in the Oakhurst Forest Preserve gives the residents on the east side of Aurora access to garden plots.

The new garden has 250 new garden plots on 5 acres. The Fox Valley Park District coordinates registration with participants and oversees maintenance.



Call to Action

Fit Kids 2020 provides the framework to make the systems, environmental and policy changes needed to reverse childhood obesity in Kane County by 2020.

18 Ways To Make Kane County Fit for Kids

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- 1 Preserve green space and land for farming
- 2 Develop community plans to promote walking and biking
- 3 Build infrastructure, such as sidewalks and streets, to improve walkability and bikeability
- 4 Set aside space for community gardens

EMPLOYERS

- 5 Offer programs and health benefits to promote physical activity and better eating
- 6 Adopt healthy food policies for food served at meetings
- 7 Provide opportunities to be physically active during the work day

SCHOOLS

- 8 Achieve Gold Award Distinction for Healthier US School Challenge
- 9 Promote walking and biking to school
- 10 Build more physical activity into each student's day

FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS

- 11 Offer healthy foods at all community events
- 12 Plant or sponsor a garden
- 13 Take steps to make healthy food available to those in need
- 14 Create a health and wellness committee

FAMILIES

- 15 Plant a garden
- 16 Walk your child to school
- 17 Play outside with your children and grandchildren
- 18 Take action in your community to promote health

To achieve our goal of reversing childhood obesity by 2020, each of us must participate in implementing the strategies identified in this plan. Every organization, family and individual has a role and can contribute to the success of this initiative by endorsing this plan and enacting strategies detailed within it.

The Fit Kids 2020 plan is the culmination of well over one thousand hours of time invested by Kane County experts and professionals from many diverse fields. This plan was developed by parents, physicians, engineers, educators, planners, public health professionals, transportation experts, faith leaders, local policy makers and many, many more. They all dedicated their time to contribute to this important initiative because they see the value in multiple sectors working together to make substantial change. Fit Kids 2020 provides the framework to make the systems, environmental and policy changes needed to reverse childhood obesity in Kane County by 2020.

We know from decades of experience that providing health promotion programs for our children, even if are successful, are not enough to reverse childhood obesity in our community. We can't simply provide education and then send our children back into the same environment where making the healthy choice to eat right or be active is seldom supported. We must take action to change many facets of our community to create an environment where making the healthy choice is an easier choice. To do this we must make changes in our schools, our workplaces and our places of worship; we must change how we travel and how we design our neighborhoods, and we must change how we obtain our food and how we support our families.

This plan was put together to inform all decision makers in this community. Read this plan as a community member, a parent, a leader, a consumer and a worker and look for intersections between Fit for Kids and your reach in the community. Use this framework to be an advocate for change. This plan is meant to be adopted by organizations that are committed to the health of our children and our community. The decisions that you make about food policy, employee wellness, land use and the other areas covered in this plan have an impact on the health of our children. To achieve our goal of reversing childhood obesity by 2020, every community member needs to do their part. Policymakers and leaders should review the section of this plan that applies to their area of authority and take action. Everyone in Kane County will find that they have important influence over at least one of the sectors that have been identified in this plan. And, most will have important influence in many sectors. Use the adjacent table to help you identify actions in your sector(s) that are key to Making Kane County Fit For Kids.

WALK
TO SCHOOL

Healthy
FOOD
Policies

FUNDING

CHILD FRIENDLY
PARKS

NETWORKS

*Community
Gardens*

WELLNESS
CHAMPIONS

MARKETING
CAMPAIGN

URBAN
AGRICULTURE

ADVOCACY

Education

PARTNERSHIPS

Land Use Policy

Locally Grown
FOODS

Fit Kids 2020 Plan

★ ★ GOAL ★ ★

*Together, we will Make
Kane County Fit for Kids*

www.makingkanefitforkids.org