



## Preventing Obesity in Perry County

A Countywide Plan Engaging  
Communities, Schools, Individuals,  
and Worksites



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Healthy  **hio**  
The State of Living Well.

# The Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan

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### Envisioned State for a Healthy Ohio:

“Ohioans are achieving and maintaining optimal health through personal wellness management and a health care delivery system that focuses on the promotion of health and the prevention of disease. At each stage of life, every Ohioan has access to timely, patient-centered and efficient physical and behavioral health care choices. All Ohioans have access to primary and preventative services as well as education and opportunities for healthy lifestyles and the incidence of preventable diseases are at the lowest levels in the nation across all population groups. Services and care are coordinated through widespread use of health information technology, thereby improving health outcomes and delivering effective, efficient and culturally competent health care.”

Gov. Ted Strickland

### Background:

The obesity epidemic is threatening the health of our children, the productivity of our workers, the vitality of our communities, the affordability of our health care system and our overall quality of life. This epidemic is not only a national threat. Obesity is leaving a negative impact causing imminent public health and financial threats to the residents of Perry County.

The staggering rise of obesity is a primary contributor to the increase in chronic conditions such as heart disease, type II diabetes, asthma, osteoarthritis, and certain cancers. There are psychological consequences of obesity as well, including depression and self-esteem issues.

Ohio’s obesity rate is 17<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation, according to the 2008 F as in Fat report, with an obesity rate of 26.9%. Overweight is also a serious health concern for children and adolescents. According to the Institute of Medicine’s 2006 Report brief, Progress in Preventing Childhood Obesity: How Do We Measure Up?, one-third of children and youth in America are either obese or at risk of becoming obese.

Traditional public health approaches are not enough to reduce and prevent obesity. The causes of obesity are numerous and complex. Efforts to curb the obesity epidemic must be aggressive, timely, well-coordinated, and responsive. A multi-setting, multi-goal, multi-approach strategy is required to impact policy, programs, and individual behaviors.

### The Governor’s Directive:

On September 19, 2008, Governor Ted Strickland issued a directive to the Ohio Department of Health’s Office of Healthy Ohio to develop a comprehensive, multi-faceted obesity prevention plan for the state of Ohio. The directive states the plans should, “develop goals and recommendations to support and enhance specific actionable obesity prevention measures for the residents of this State, with particular attention to children and adolescents.

### Executive Summary:

In 2008 the Perry County Health Department was awarded a Healthy Ohio Community Obesity Prevention Grant to augment the work of the Perry County Wellness Coalition. The grant allowed for the Coalition to provide healthful food options through the development of community gardens and farmers’ markets. Additionally, the grant accorded for the creation of a

walking trail and outdoor fitness stations offering new opportunities for Perry County residents to increase their physical activity.

In addition, Perry County has developed a county comprehensive obesity prevention plan to address the Governor's Directive. A study of obesity and prevention efforts in Perry County included the development of the Obesity Prevention Committee, a sub-committee of members from the Perry Wellness Coalition. This committee conducted interviews with key stakeholders, and survey completion by County residents to provide information to help develop the Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan. An array of objectives and activities were laid out to set the Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan in motion. A comprehensive plan and evaluation plan were developed and included: forming a broad-based community coalition with representation from appropriate constituencies; identifying existing resources related to healthy eating and physical activity in Perry County; identifying subgroups with highest needs and barriers engaging in healthy eating and physical activity behaviors; and identifying priorities and implementation strategies to change nutritional and physical activity behavior patterns of Perry County residents.

As a result of the community coalition work, the Obesity Prevention Committee conducted in-depth interviews with key stakeholders from Perry County. They also arranged for surveys to be distributed and completed by more than 135 Perry County residents. The data collected from the interviews and surveys was analyzed and used to help formulate the Obesity Prevention Plan for Perry County. The Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan should:

- Address specific areas including, but not limited to, creating school and employer strategies to improve student and employee health by reducing obesity, supporting communities that encourage more active lifestyles, improving the availability and consumption of healthy foods, and increasing physical activity levels of Perry County residents;
- Formulate strategies and goals on policy and system changes that will encourage long-term sustainability and address high risk populations;
- Develop policy or administrative recommendations that can be implemented by the community to prevent and reduce the obesity.
- Identify individual and organizational responsibility for implementing specific action steps that are included in the plan.

### Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan

#### Plan Overview:

The Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan is a guide to address obesity prevention across multiple faucets. The plan outlines goals and objectives on how our county agencies and businesses can collaboratively work together to take a more active role in promoting obesity prevention through supporting policy and environmental change. The plan has been developed by identifying the lack of resources and the need in Perry County through research statistics, interviews, and community surveys and determining how we plan to address the barriers to healthy eating and physical activity throughout Perry County. It is the hopes of the members of the Perry Wellness Coalition and the Perry County Health Department that the obesity prevention efforts will continue to evolve and that new research and best practices will emerge

from the plan's implementation. In addition, the plan is open for revision as the need arises to address current issues facing the obesity epidemic in Perry County

#### Plan Rationale:

The Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan was developed to address the barriers to physical activity and lack of nutrition, while recognizing and capitalizing on the opportunities for improvement. Due to the significant consequential impact obesity has had on Perry County considerable attention to the problem has been given and has aided in the plan's development. The preceding and ongoing work has enabled the plan to begin with several assumptions including:

- Poor nutrition and inadequate physical activity are the leading causes of overweight and obesity. Improvements in physical activity and nutrition beginning with the installation of walking trails and outdoor fitness station, as well as involvement in the community gardens and farmers markets, will lead to the improved health of the residents of Perry County.
- Community members believe that obesity became a problem after the mining and farming jobs disappeared, causing a reduction in cash flow and fewer manual labor jobs, and creating obstacles that prohibit physical activity and healthy eating. By identifying these barriers multiple stakeholders can work together to promote inexpensive means to increase physical activity and healthy eating throughout the county.
- Several obstacles to physical activity exist in Perry County including; lack of bicycling or jogging trails, lack of fitness centers and fitness programs, high transportation costs and gym membership rates, conflicting work schedules, and safety factors. In addition, several obstacles exist in Perry County that prevent healthy eating such as; people do not have time to cook a healthy meal, they have fewer healthy options when they eat out, lack of education regarding how to eat healthy, inability to read food labels, cultural issues making it difficult to eat healthy, and high costs of healthful food. By identifying these barriers short-term and long-term goals can be identified to address these barriers and measure progress towards the plan's goals.
- The community needs leaders to promote and role model healthy behavioral choices to encourage community involvement.
- The plan should be reviewed and updated as needed to reflect experiences and current circumstances.

#### Vision Statement:

The Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan seeks to promote an environment that supports opportunities for all Perry County residents to make healthy food choices and to be physically active in order to achieve or maintain a healthy weight

#### Focus Areas

Findings from the interviews and community surveys were quite consistent relative to both healthful eating and exercise. Members of the Obesity Prevention Committee were asked to identify local individuals with an above average knowledge about the people and issues within their community. Based on these instructions, the committee selected an assortment of people who work/live in different areas of Perry County and have regular contact with diverse populations. Once identified, these individuals were interviewed by committee members

regarding their viewpoint on the issue of obesity in Perry County. In addition, about 135 community surveys were completed by a convenience sample of community members across the county. The most prominent and overarching themes presented from both community surveys and interviews are the need for education, and the desire for a recreation center and walking/biking trails. Themes that emerged include education; programming; availability; and accessibility.

**Primary Findings:**

- Participants cited a need for educational programming emphasizing exercise, healthful eating, and how to engage in both;
- Barriers such as cost and transportation prevent some participants from engaging in exercise and healthy eating;
- Another principle barrier is the perceived lack of available healthful food choices in restaurants and exercise venues;
- Many participants feel that the community needs programs or initiatives, like walking groups, to foster exercise and healthy eating.

**Primary Recommendations**

- Local culture and a lack of education are cited as the chief obstacles to healthful eating. Publicity or public awareness campaigns could help address both of these obstacles;
- Many participants would like to see a fitness center or recreation facility in their communities;
- Access to inexpensive fresh fruits and vegetables like: those available from a community garden and farmers’ markets would be an ideal way to encourage healthy eating. This is also a good way for residents to save money and raise their own food;
- Those interviewed stressed an interest in having physicians, teachers, WIC staff, and clinics play a more prominent role in encouraging healthful living;
- Thirty-five community survey respondents requested walking/jogging/biking trails as venues that would facilitate exercise.

Goals:

To measure the progress towards seeking an environment that supports opportunities for all Perry County residents to make healthy food choices and to be physically active in order to achieve and maintain a healthy weight, two goals have been established.

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| Goal #1<br>Improve physical activity options and opportunities for the residents of Perry County |
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| Goal #2<br>Encourage the residents of Perry County to eat healthier and improve the access to healthy food choices |
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### Settings:

The plan is divided into settings where objectives related to each goal should be targeted and specific strategies developed as follows:

- Schools
- Communities and the Built Environment
- Individuals and Settings
- Worksite

### Implementation Timeline:

The Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan will be completed by July 2009 and unveiled to the community and key stakeholders thereafter. The plan will include short-term and long-term objectives that support our goals. The time frames for action are merely a guide and do not limit planning ahead. Also the plan will be revised as needed to reflect available opportunities or changed circumstances which may ultimately change the time-line, objectives, or goals.

### Plan Summary:

The Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan includes objectives that provide specific actions that will be undertaken in the efforts to prevent obesity. The recommendations are categorized by immediate, short-term, and long-term objectives.

### **Immediate Objectives:**

Immediate objectives will be completed by October 2009. These are objectives that are currently underway and could be accomplished readily.

#### Schools

- By September 30, 2009, educate the local schools and the School Health Council Boards on the Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan
- By September 30, 2009, work with schools to address physical activity by incorporating the use of the walking trail and outdoor fitness stations into their curriculum.
- By September 30, 2009, encourage the schools to refrain from using or withholding of physical activity and/or food as punishment and/or reward.

#### Communities and the Built Environment

- By June 30, 2009, create a comprehensive obesity prevention plan to enhance physical activity opportunities as well as encourage healthier nutrition throughout the county.
- By August 31, 2009, unveil the Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan to the community and key stakeholders at the Perry Wellness Coalition meeting.
- By summer 2009, support efforts to provide education through presentations and/or demonstrations to the community about community gardening and healthy eating.
- By August 31, 2009, complete the installation of the outdoor fitness equipment.
- By September 30, 2009, educate the community about the availability of the outdoor fitness stations and walking trails, and encourage the residents to get physically active using the new equipment and trails.
- By September 30, 2009, create and implement a county-wide marketing campaign that provides families with information and tools to help fight the obesity epidemic.

- By September 30, 2009, encourage the formation of family and/or neighborhood walk groups.
- By September 30, 2009, evaluate the utilization of the new walking trail
- By September 30, 2009, produce a brochure which includes maps and descriptions of all the walking trails and fitness stations located throughout the county
- By September 30, 2009, increase access to fresh and healthy food for residents by working with the community garden groups to harvest and sell the produce at the local farmers markets.
- By September 30, 2009, educate the community about community gardening, the farmers' markets, and the Perry County Farmers' Markets Cooperative.
- By fall 2009, collaborate with other county agencies to provide support for the local farmers markets, vendors, roadside markets, and greenhouses.

#### Worksites

- By September 30, 2009 increase community awareness about the new walking trail and fitness station by inviting businesses to the kick-off events.
- By September 30, 2009, contact local businesses to make them aware of the new walking trail and fitness stations and encourage them to promote worksite wellness using the new trail and fitness stations.
- By September 30, 2009, provide local businesses surrounding the new walking trail and fitness stations with example worksite wellness incentives and offer assistance to the businesses to help with initiatives to increase physical activity amongst their staff.
- By September 30, 2009 alert businesses that already have a wellness policy and/or program in place about the Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan and encourage them to incorporate the plan into their current policies and/or programs.
- By September 30, 2009 contact the local businesses surrounding the farmers markets and encourage them to promote healthful eating to their staff by supporting the local farmers markets.

#### **Short-term Objectives:**

Short-term objectives will be addressed by December 2011 or sooner. These may require redistribution of resources, significant expansion of existing efforts or new initiatives to achieve results.

#### Schools

- By summer 2010, create a plan to enhance physical activity opportunities as well as encourage healthier nutrition in the school environment.
- By summer 2011, provide the schools with resources and technical assistance to effectively assess the school's health policies and programs and work with the school to develop a plan for improvement.
- By December 2011, work with the school to help them strengthen their nutrition and physical activity policies.
- By December 2011, implement a high quality health promotion program for school staff utilizing the new walking trails and fitness equipment.

- By December 2011, encourage the schools to implement a high quality course of study in health education and physical education.
- By December 2011, work with the schools to increase opportunities for students to engage in physical activity.

#### Communities and the Built Environment

- By April 2010, begin advertising for the upcoming farmers markets and develop promotional material for the Perry County Farmers' Markets Cooperative.
- By May 2010, begin and expand marketing and promotional programs to encourage residents to get physically active using the walking trails and outdoor fitness stations in Perry County.
- By spring 2010, promote and continue to work with the USDA Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program to provide coupons for low-income seniors for the purchase of fruits and vegetables from farmers markets, roadside stands, and community-supported agricultural programs.
- By spring 2010, work with the USDA Farmer's Market Nutrition Program, this allows women, infants, and children (WIC) participants to use food stamps at farmers markets.
- By summer 2011, launch a healthy living challenge that will incorporate the existing marketing and promotional programs.
- By summer 2011, hold occasional cooking demonstrations and nutrition education programs at the farmers markets.
- By December 2011, partner with the Perry County Board of MR/DD to develop and help sustain their "Growing Green" project which uses their hydroponic greenhouse to grow produce year round for the farmers markets.
- By December 2011, provide farmers with a reliable market to distribute their produce year round.
- By December 2011, provide community training and nutrition education programs and opportunities in communities by a variety of agencies.
- By December 2011, identify or develop a specific evaluation tool to collect information on progress towards objectives.
- By December 2011, educate and promote behavior change by increased knowledge of the Food Guide Pyramid.
- By December 2011, identify additional funding sources for active living and/or healthy eating initiatives.

#### Worksites

- By summer 2010, partner with the Perry Wellness Coalition to recognize Perry County employers that have implemented practices, policies, and activities to improve employee health.
- By December 2011, work with interested businesses to develop an employee wellness committee that is responsible for plan creation and program implementation to improve staff health.
- By December 2011, encourage employee wellness committee members to join the Perry Wellness Coalition.

- By December 2011, encourage local businesses to develop walking programs, biggest loser competitions, and healthier snack options at their worksite.
- By December 2011, encourage local businesses to provide incentives such as prizes, deductible credit, and reimbursement programs to entice staff to participate in wellness initiatives.
- By December 2011, promote health fairs at worksites and encourage participation in health assessments, health coaching, chronic condition management, and worksite health screenings.

### **Long-term Objectives:**

Long-term objectives will be addressed by December 2014. These objectives build on previous objectives and therefore will take more time to develop and implement.

#### Schools

- By December 2014, develop a plan to involve students in an advisory role for implementing the Obesity Prevention Plan.
- By December 2014, develop an evaluation tool to assess and make recommendations to improve nutrition and physical activity policies in the local schools.
- By December 2014, establish a system to increase the dissemination of information to schools related to the benefits of physical activity and academic achievement, resources and evidence-based policies practices and physical education curricula.
- By December 2014, develop and implement a communication plan to increase awareness and knowledge about healthy eating practices within schools.
- By December 2014, develop and disseminate materials encouraging schools to provide opportunities for staff to participate in adult-focused staff wellness activities.

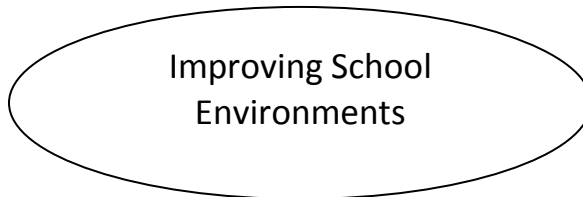
#### Communities and the Build Environment

- By December 2014, develop plans to make communities more accessible for active transportation such as walking and bicycling.
- By December 2014, develop plans to improve outdoor recreational activities for children such as playgrounds, parks, and pools.
- By December 2014, partner with multiple stakeholders to develop outreach programs that educate families on non-traditional ways to be physically active such as but not limited to; housework, gardening, bowling, archery, and etc.
- By December 2014, review participation rates in youth competitive sports, intramural activities, and other related sporting opportunities and make recommendations for improving opportunities.
- By December 2014, encourage community needs assessments to include identification of safe, accessible, and affordable opportunities for increased physical activity for at-risk populations.
- By December 2014, support active living land-use planning and development.
- By December 2014, publicize the availability of active living resources in the community.
- By December 2014, expand on the efforts to improve the access of healthy foods to the residents of Perry County.

- By December 2014, work with local grocery stores to promote healthy eating and provide cooking demonstrations for the shoppers.
- By December 2011, increase knowledge of selection and preparation of low-cost and nutritious foods.
- By December 2011, increase overall knowledge of food safety techniques.
- By December 2014, expand the marketing initiatives for the Perry County Farmers' Market Cooperative and provide incentive for the vendors at the local farmers markets.

#### Worksites

- By spring 2014, establish a community sports league where different businesses have staff members on a team and they compete against other local business teams.
- By spring 2014, encourage local businesses to plant an employee community garden and provide resources as needed.
- By summer of 2014, identify best practices and develop resources to improve physical activity and food options at worksites.
- By fall 2014, develop materials to encourage employee wellness programs to focus on the whole family.
- By December 2014, increase the number of employers in Perry County who provide environments that support wellness, healthy food choices, and physical activity.



#### Overview

Obesity is no longer a problem just for adults, it affects children as well. Childhood obesity is a serious medical condition that affects children and adolescents. Childhood obesity is particularly troubling because the extra pounds often start kids on the path to health problems that were once confined to adults such as: diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol. Preventing childhood overweight and obesity will lead to improved overall child health, avoidance of the health consequences of obesity, reduced risk of obesity in adulthood, and improved academic achievement. The Ohio Department of Health's Body Mass Index Survey of Third Grade Students provides support for the importance of focusing on childhood obesity in Perry County. The study found that 39.4% of the third grade students surveyed in Perry County were overweight and at risk of overweight. In addition, children living in Appalachian counties such as Perry County are more likely to be obese than children living in non-Appalachian counties.

Childhood obesity has been linked to poor academic achievement. According to "Health-Related Quality of Life of Severely Obese Children and Adolescents," *Journal of the American Medical Association* severely overweight children and adolescents are four times more likely than their healthy weight peers to report impaired school functioning. Overweight children are also more likely to have abnormal scores on the Child Behavior Checklist and are twice as likely to be placed in special education and remedial classes as children who are not overweight.

Nutrition clearly affects their academic performance. Poor nutritional status and hunger interfere with cognitive function and are associated with lower academic achievement. Additionally, social problems such as being teased, loneliness, or low self-esteem can also affect how well children do in school.

Therefore, schools are a key place for childhood obesity prevention initiatives. Children and adolescents spend a vast majority of their time in schools or in after school programs, thereby providing schools with an unique opportunity to influence students' health choices and behavioral patterns here in Perry County. Schools can promote good nutrition, physical activity, and healthy weights among children through healthful school meals and foods, physical education programs and recess, classroom health education, and school health services. School health services can play a central role in addressing obesity-related issues among students by providing screening, health information, and referrals to students.

### **Perry County Action to Date**

The schools in Perry County are currently working on initiatives to target the improvement of student health and overall well-being. The initiatives are as follows:

- The Perry County Health Department has worked with the schools to address physical activity and nutrition through a coordinated school health program.
- The Perry County Health Department has provided guidance and technical assistance to county schools on establishing a school health council as an effective way to achieve an enduring focus on promoting physical activity and healthy eating.
- The county schools have been working with the Perry County Health Department to develop ways for the students to have the opportunity to engage in an increased level of physical activity while at school.
- The county schools have an active wellness council that strives to enhance the health and well-being of the students and staff.
- Three of the four county schools participate in "Healthy and Fit", a school wellness initiative which has enabled those schools to build a walking trail and install outdoor fitness stations.

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| <p>Goal #1</p> |
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| <p>Improve physical activity options and opportunities for the residents of Perry County</p> |
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### **Physical Activity Objectives**

Target area: Schools (Pre K-Grade 12)

**Objective:** By October 2009, educate the schools, School Health Council Boards, students, and parents about the Obesity Prevention Plan, walking trails, fitness stations, and teach them how to incorporate these new tools into their daily lives.

### **Strategies:**

- A. Meet with the administration of the local schools and the School Health Council Boards to discuss the new Obesity Prevention Plan and provide a copy for each school. If this is not possible mail a letter containing information about the Obesity Prevention Plan in addition to the Plan.
- B. Meet with the appropriate faculty and/or administration to discuss the possibilities and means to incorporate the walking trail and outdoor fitness stations into their curriculum.
- C. Provide training to the faculty on how to properly use the outdoor fitness stations and encourage them to educate the students so they can properly use and benefit from the equipment.
- D. Encourage the schools to provide and promote social, noncompetitive fitness and activity opportunities before, during, and after school for all children.

**Objective:** By December 2011, work with the county schools to access their current health policies and programs in order to develop a plan for their school which enhances physical activity opportunities and nutrition for their students and staff.

**Strategies:**

- A. Meet with the wellness council at each county school to review current wellness policies and programs and discuss what opportunities and resources could be added in the future and by what means could this be accomplished.
- B. After reviewing the current policies and programs, and determining what goals would like to be met in the future, provide assistance to the school wellness council to develop a plan to enhance physical activity opportunities.
- C. Work with the physical education teachers to encourage them to incorporate the walking trails and fitness stations into their curriculum on a regular basis while implementing a high quality course of study in physical education.
- D. Work with the school administration to encourage the schools to increase opportunities for students to engage in physical activity.

**Objective:** By December 2014, work with the schools to involve students in an advisory role to implement the obesity prevention plan in their schools, develop an evaluation tool to assess the current plans and polices, establish a system to increase the dissemination of information to schools related to the benefits of physical activity, and encourage schools to provide opportunities for staff to participate in adult-focused staff wellness activities.

**Strategies:**

- A. Encourage the staff to initiate the development of a student wellness council where those students would focus on implementing the Obesity Prevention Plan in the school and develop and promote after school activities for students who want to increase physical activity.
- B. Work with the School Wellness Councils to develop an evaluation tool to assess current physical activity policies, and work with the Student Wellness Councils to implement the new policies and programs which arise from the evaluation.
- C. Work with the school wellness councils to disseminate information and develop a communication plan related to the benefits of physical activity and academic

achievement, resources and evidence-based policy practices and physical education curricula.

- D. Work with the school wellness teams to encourage the staff to participate in adult-focused staff wellness activities by providing programs and incentives to the staff.

## **Nutrition Objectives**

Target area: Schools (Pre K – Grade 12)

**Objective:** By October 2009, educate the schools, School Health Council Boards, students, and parents about the Obesity Prevention Plan and the benefits of healthy eating habits.

### **Strategies:**

- A. Meet with the administration of the local schools and the School Health Council Boards to discuss the new Obesity Prevention Plan and provide a copy for each school. If this is not possible mail a letter containing information about the Obesity Prevention Plan in addition to the Plan.
- B. Meet with members of the school wellness teams and discuss the benefits of healthy eating and discuss methods to promote and develop healthy eating habits for the students.
- C. Encourage the school administration and staff to refrain from using food as a reward, but to use non-food rewards instead such as stickers, pencils, or increased recess time.
- D. Encourage the school staff to model healthy behavior by letting the students observe them eating nutritious foods and drinking healthy beverages, and only allowing healthy foods in the office area.
- E. Encourage the school wellness teams to devote a section of the school newsletter to nutrition information

**Objective:** By December 2011, work with the county schools to create a plan to encourage healthier nutrition in the school environment, assist the schools with program/policy review and aid them in strengthening their nutrition programs/policies, and help the schools implement a high quality course of study which promotes healthy eating habits.

### **Strategies:**

- A. Provide the schools with resources and technical assistance to affectively assess the schools' health policies and programs and work with the school to develop and implement a plan for improvement.
- B. Encourage the schools to create an environment that encourages students to develop lifelong healthful eating habits.
- C. Work with the school wellness teams to develop methods for the school staff to support and promote student participation in the school breakfast and lunch programs.
- D. Encourage the school administrators to ensure that all foods and beverages available in the school make a positive contribution to the overall health of the student.

- E. Work with the schools to integrate nutrition education in the core curriculum. Nutrition should be taught and supported in the classroom, cafeteria, and throughout the school. Post nutrition education materials in the classroom.
- F. Work with school administrators to establish professional development for faculty and cafeteria staff in the area of nutrition and nutrition education.

**Goal #2**

Encourage the residents of Perry County to eat healthier and improve the access to healthy food choices

**Objective:** By December 2014, work with the schools to involve students in an advisory role for implementing the Obesity Prevention Plan, assist the schools in developing an evaluation tool to assess and make recommendations to improve nutrition policies in the school, develop and implement a communication plan to increase awareness and knowledge about healthful eating practices within the schools, and encourage the school staff to participate in adult-focused staff wellness activities.

**Strategies:**

- A. Encourage the staff to initiate the development of a student wellness council where those students would focus on implementing the Obesity Prevention Plan in the school and develop and promote healthful eating initiatives for students.
- B. Provide the school wellness teams with resources and technical assistance to develop an evaluation tool to assess current nutrition policies/programs and support their efforts to update their current policies/programs.
- C. Work with the school wellness councils to disseminate information and develop a communication plan related to the benefits of healthful eating and academic achievement in order to increase the awareness about healthful eating practices within the school and to develop initiatives to encourage staff to participate in adult-focused staff wellness activities.
- D. Work with the food service staff to ensure they enforce policies in the cafeteria that comply with the goals of the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program.
- E. Encourage the School Wellness Teams and the Student Wellness Teams to work together along with the food service staff to coordinate school nutrition activities with school staff and students such as but not limited to; taste panels, National Nutrition Month, and 5 A Day.
- F. Encourage the School Wellness Teams to oversee the Student Wellness Teams and promote activities such as but not limited to; ensuring that school-based community sponsored programs (school parties, football games, dances, and etc.) include healthy foods for meals and snacks, or encouraging students to eat fruits, vegetables, and dairy products.

## Improving Communities and Built Environments

### Overview

Obesity results from a complex interaction between diet, physical activity, and the environment. The built environment encompasses a range of physical and social elements that make up a structure of a community, which impacts the physical activity levels and nutrition habits of the residents of that community. For instance, neighborhoods in Perry County lack places for people to exercise which creates a challenge for people to maintain a healthy weight and has contributed to the rise in obesity in Perry County. In addition, Perry County is considered a food desert since access to fresh produce and adequate nutritional foods is lacking. The increase of obesity can be correlated with the combination of inadequate resources and the local environment including;

- Perry County being a rural county which features long or unwalkable distances between homes, schools, jobs, and other destinations.
- The lack of safe and usable sidewalks in the communities throughout the county in addition to the unsafe roadways for bicycling and jogging.
- The lack of exercise facilities throughout the county.
- Some of the county schools are built on large campuses apart from community centers and far enough away that most children cannot walk or ride their bicycles to school.
- Perry County only has 2 centrally located grocery stores.
- Convenience stores and restaurants offer limited choices for healthy food.
- Poor lifestyle choices due to the lack of education regarding how to eat healthy, or an inability to make sense of food labels to see if the product is healthy.
- Many residents no longer plant gardens for personal consumption or to sell which results in the lack of healthy produce and physical activity.
- Local diets tend to include fast-food due to the cost of fresh and healthy foods in conjunction with a lack of time for preparation
- Obesity is becoming more accepted and there is a lack of community-level awareness about the obesity epidemic in Perry County
- Cultural factors make it difficult to eat healthy in Perry County.
- Affordability is a factor on how often Perry County residents can purchase healthful food options and pay to join an athletic facility.

The rise of obesity in Perry County has led to the emergence of county initiatives and collaborations with multiple stakeholders in an effort to combat the fight against obesity in Perry County. According to the Appalachian Rural Health Institute Health Needs Assessment Survey II conducted in 2006, 37.8% of residents in Perry County are classified as overweight while 30.6% of residents are classified as obese. Part of the rise in obesity for Perry County may be attributed to our surroundings. The design of a community contributes significantly to whether its members will be active and eat healthy. The more opportunities for physical activity and healthful eating a community has built into it, the more likely physical activity and healthful eating will occur. Perry County has limited physical activity opportunities and community members have voiced the need for walking trails and bicycle paths. Additionally, Perry County

is considered a “food desert” and residents have indicated the need for community garden plots and local farmers markets. Perry County is an Appalachian county with an unemployment rate of 7.4%, among the highest in state and per capita income of \$22,095, among the lowest according to the Ohio County Indicators, 2008. These demographic characteristics along with the lack of education and local cultural norms together increase the risk for obesity in Perry County.

Physical activity such as mining and farming, once the way of life for most Perry County residents, has largely disappeared, causing a reduction in cash flow and fewer manual labor jobs, and creating obstacles that prohibit physical activity and healthier eating. Additionally, since Perry County is a rural county the communities have significant geographic distances between homes, schools, shopping, and recreation centers resulting in transportation and cost barriers for residents in Perry County. Perry County, although a rural county also suffers from a lack of healthful foods due to minimal grocery stores and the proliferation of convenience stores selling high caloric foods. Additionally, the balance of work and family leave little time for food preparation in the home which leads to the reliance on inexpensive and convenient fast-foods. Lastly, it has been reported in our community surveys and interviews that the local culture may serve as a barrier to healthful eating and physical activity.

### **Perry County Action to Date**

Due to the high prevalence of obesity in Perry County, members of the Perry Wellness Coalition Obesity Prevention Committee are striving to educate the community regarding nutrition and physical activity, with the hopes to impact cultural, social, and economic patterns that contribute to food and fitness choices for the residents in Perry County. Walking trails and outdoor fitness stations are being constructed in the county to help address the lack of affordable physical activity options. Additionally, community gardens have been developed to encourage and educate the community on how to raise nutritious produce, training seminars have been provided to further educate the community, and four farmers markets have been established throughout the community to provide residents with an outlet to sell their produce or a means for community members to purchase wholesome fruits and vegetables. Through the creation of the Perry Wellness Coalition Obesity Prevention Committee strong partnerships have been formed and notable progress has been made throughout the county to increase physical activity levels and access to healthy nutrition which includes the following:

- The Perry County Health Department and members of the Perry Wellness Coalition developed the Obesity Prevention Plan for Perry County;
- The Osteopathic Heritage grant helped to fund the installation of the outdoor fitness stations and walking trails at New Lexington Schools, Crooksville Schools, and Southern Local Schools;
- The Obesity Prevention Grant and the Cardiovascular Grant funded the installation of a 1-mile walking trail on the Glenford Lions Club property;
- The Obesity Prevention Grant funded the installation of the outdoor fitness stations at the Thornville Park;
- The Cardiovascular grant and the Perry County Farm Bureau help to fund the formation of the Perry County Farmers’ Markets Cooperative;
- The Perry County Farmer’s Markets Cooperative supports and advertises for the New Lexington, Shawnee, Thornville, and Somerset Farmers Markets;

- School wellness teams have been developed;
- The Wise-N-Well...The Show-N-Tell for Wellness News From Your Perry County Health Department is distributed the Perry County Health Department staff on a regular basis and handed out at numerous health fairs;
- Perry County has qualified for the Senior Nutrition coupons which enables eligible seniors to purchase fresh produce from the Farmers Markets;
- The Perry County Health Department has partnered with the Sheridan FFA Chapter and the Perry County Historical Society to develop a community garden for the students and one for the residents of Somerset;
- Both community garden projects are supported by the Obesity Prevention Grant and serve as a vehicle to get people outside, provide exercise, and allow participants to share produce.

Goal #1  
 Improve physical activity options and opportunities for the residents of Perry County

**Physical Activity Objectives**

**Objective:** By October 2009, the Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan will be developed and unveiled to the community; the new walking trail and fitness stations will be installed and will be promoted throughout the county and the kick-off events will be completed; the utilization of the new walking trail will be determined; and the community will be educated on the resources available in Perry County for physical activity through the promotional campaigns.

Strategies:

- A. The members of the Perry Wellness Coalition Obesity Prevention Committee meet monthly to discuss and meet the Obesity Prevention Grant objectives, which includes the development of the Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan. The Obesity Prevention Plan which enhances physical activity opportunities and encourages healthier eating will be completed June 2009 and unveiled to the community thereafter.
- B. The Perry County Health Department has partnered with David Williams and Associates and the Village of Thornville to install the outdoor fitness stations at the Thornville Park.
- C. The Perry County Health Department has partnered with the Glenford Lions Club to install a 1-mile walking trail in Glenford.
- D. Partner with the Perry Wellness Coalition and the Glenford Lions Club to organize and hold a trail kick-off event to promote the new walking trail in Glenford.
- E. Collaborate with multiple stakeholders to encourage the formation of family and/or neighborhood walk groups.
- F. Partner with the Perry Wellness Coalition, Village of Thornville, and the Perry County Juvenile Court to organize and host a kick-off event for the outdoor fitness stations at the Thornville Park.
- G. Launch a media campaign to encourage the residents to get physically active using the walking trails and outdoor fitness stations.

- H. Partner with the Perry Wellness Coalition to evaluate the utilization on the Glenford walking trail.
- I. Promote physical activity at Health Fairs and at the Perry County Fair by setting up displays, organizing physical activities for patrons, and handing out flyers and brochures.

**Objective:** By December 2011, begin and expand marketing and promotional programs to encourage residents to get physically active using the walking trails and outdoor fitness stations in Perry County and identify additional funding sources for active living and/or healthy eating initiatives;

**Strategies:**

- A. Expand the “Walk Your Weigh to a Healthier You” Campaign that encourages children and parents to walk the trails throughout Perry County. The focus will be on forming walking clubs and promoting the benefits of outdoor exercise and socialization.
- B. Partner with recreational centers such as community pools and parks and develop incentives to encourage the community to get out and exercise.
- C. Include maps, descriptions, and photos of the walking trails and fitness stations on the Perry County Health Department website. Additionally include physical activity ideas and information on the website.
- D. Compose short articles promoting outdoor physical activity and tips, and send to churches and schools to be placed in their bulletins and newsletters.
- E. Partner with multiple stakeholders to seek additional funding for improvement projects which will increase physical activity opportunities for residents of Perry County.

**Objective:** By December 2014, develop plans to improve outdoor recreational activities for children and to make communities more accessible for active transportation, partner with multiple stakeholders to develop educational outreach programs on non-traditional physical activities, support active land-use planning and development, and publicize the availability of active living resources in the community.

**Strategies:**

- A. Establish collaboration among various agencies and village councils to improve outdoor recreational activities for children such as playgrounds, parks, and pools.
- B. Collaborate with key stakeholders to review participation rates in youth competitive sports, intramural activities, and other related sporting opportunities and make recommendations for improving opportunities.
- C. Encourage community needs assessments to include identification of safe, accessible, and affordable opportunities for increased physical activity for at-risk populations.
- D. Partner with the Perry Wellness Coalition and local government agencies to develop plans to make communities more accessible for active transportation such as walking and bicycling. Additionally, address safety concerns by working with police, parks and recreation, and/or community groups.
- E. Partner with multiple stakeholders to develop outreach programs and events that educate families on non-traditional ways to be physically active such as but not limited to; housework, gardening, bowling, archery, and etc. Additionally provide safety tips, motivational tips, and incentives to community members during the events.

- F. Support active living land-use planning and development by revising comprehensive plans and other planning practices to increase availability and accessibility of opportunities for physical activity in new developments.
- G. Recruit high profile community leaders to model healthy behavior habits and inform the residents about important initiatives, activities, and resources available in the community, while encouraging them to take advantage of these services.

Goal #2  
Encourage the residents of Perry County to eat healthier and improve the access to healthy food choices

### **Nutrition Objectives**

**Objective:** By October 2009, increase access to fresh and healthy food for residents by working with the community garden groups to harvest and sell the produce at the local farmers markets; collaborate with other county agencies to provide support for local farmers markets, vendors, roadside markets, and greenhouses; and educate the community about the community garden efforts, the farmers markets, and the Perry County Farmers’ Markets Cooperative.

#### **Strategies:**

- A. Encourage community garden groups to continue to take produce to the local farmers markets throughout the season and provide assistance in terms of resources and information as needed.
- B. Establish collaborations between the Perry County Farmers’ Markets Cooperative, local government agencies, community organizations and clubs to provide support and assistance to the markets to ensure their sustainability.
- C. Partner with the Perry County Farmer’s Markets Cooperative to advertise and promote the New Lexington, Shawnee, Somerset, and Thornville farmers markets while encouraging community gardening throughout the county.
- D. Set up displays at health fairs and community events encouraging residents to participate in community gardening while educating them on the benefits of eating healthy. Additionally, provide incentives for residents to promote community gardening and encourage them to shop at the local farmers markets for fresh, wholesome produce.
- E. Advertise the Perry County Farmers’ Markets Cooperative locally and encourage vendors to join and sell produce at the farmers markets.

**Objective:** By December 2011, advertise the Farmers’ Markets and develop promotional material for the Perry County Farmers’ Markets Cooperative, promote and continue to work with the USDA Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program, work with the USDA Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program, promote county efforts to sustain a year round farmers market, and identify additional funding sources for healthy eating initiatives.

**Strategies:**

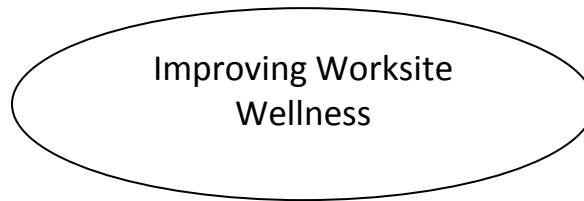
- A. Work cooperatively to establish and enhance marketing tools and promotional ideas for the Perry County Farmers' Markets Cooperative and the local farmers markets to ensure their sustainability and that the residents have access to fresh, wholesome produce.
- B. Promote and continue to work with the USDA Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, which provides coupons to low-income seniors for the purchase of fruits and vegetables from farmers markets, roadside stands, and community-supported agriculture programs.
- C. Work with the USDA Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, which allows Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) participants to use food stamps at farmers markets.
- D. Establish collaboration with the Perry County Board of MR/DD to develop and help sustain their "Growing Green" project which uses their hydroponic greenhouse to grow produce year round for the farmers markets.
- E. Partner with multiple stakeholders to develop a plan and incentives to entice vendors to attend a year-round farmers market in order to provide community members with a reliable market with fresh, wholesome produce year-round.
- F. Seek funding for programs that support at-home food production, such as delivering raised-bed backyard gardens to low-income families and providing training on planting and maintaining the garden.
- G. Collaborate with key stakeholders to develop and implement a plan to provide community training such as occasional cooking demonstrations and nutrition education programs at the farmers markets or events throughout the county.
- H. Partner with the Perry Wellness Coalition and other key stakeholders to identify or develop a specific evaluation tool to collect information on progress towards objectives.

**Objective:** By 2014, expand the efforts to improve the access of healthy foods to the residents of Perry County and build on the marketing initiatives to encourage healthful eating in Perry County while providing continual support to the community gardens and farmers markets.

**Strategies:**

- A. Establish collaborations with other agencies to provide a program that helps small farm owners create viable marketing and business plans.
- B. Seek funding to develop affordable, available food processing/kitchen space in economically distressed areas. Combined with marketing and distribution assistance, these facilities can support home or farm-based small businesses, such as farmers market vendors.
- C. Develop land-use policies and joint-use agreements that support the creation of community gardens in areas lacking supermarkets.
- D. Work with multiple partners to develop farm-to-school programs that provide a profitable market for local farms and nutritious ingredients for school lunches.
- E. Work with the local schools to encourage them to participate in school garden programs, which provide produce for the school cafeterias, allowing children to grow and eat their own foods and learn firsthand about nutrition.
- F. Expand the marketing initiatives for the Perry County Farmers' Markets Cooperative by encouraging them to get involved in community activities, host fundraisers, and educate the residents about community gardening and farmers markets.

- G. Collaborate with local grocery stores to develop techniques to promote healthy eating, smart shopping (shopping for low cost healthy foods), and food safety. Additionally, encourage the grocery stores to provide cooking demonstrations for the shoppers.



Improving Worksite  
Wellness

**Overview**

Escalating health care costs continue to remain an issue of great concern for many health professionals, employers, and insurance companies. Additionally, poor health habits and unnecessary medical care costs consume portions of our resources as well as the employee paycheck. The worksite is an ideal setting to encourage healthier lifestyles for employees and their families through health education, health promotion, and disease prevention programs. Encouraging healthful habits presents an opportunity to improve employees' well being, decrease health care costs, increase productivity and staff retention, and leads to better morale.

An employee wellness program can encourage employees with health risk factors to make lifestyle changes, improve their quality of life, and lower health care costs. Additionally, a wellness program can raise awareness so employees with fewer risk factors can be mindful of healthful habits and continue to participate in healthy lifestyle behaviors. Programs and policies focusing on improving physical activity and nutrition are a critical way for employers to participate in wellness efforts. Policy changes that promote healthy living such as consideration of work time utilization and flexible schedules can promote improved nutrition and physical activity. Additionally, worksites can promote wellness by offering incentives. According to Gordian Health Solutions, the effectiveness of wellness programs in improving health and reducing health care costs is directly linked to incentives: the more substantial the incentives, the higher the success rate. To encourage lunchtime walking the Perry County Health Department offers incentives to the employees resulting in more employees making commitments to walk during their lunch hour.

**Perry County Action to Date:**

Health related concerns are not only an issue for employees, but for employers too. According to the American Journal of Health Promotion, obesity in the work place has been estimated to cost employers \$13 billion per year nationally. Additionally, according to Trust for America's Health Fifth Annual Report, per capita, obesity costs Ohioans \$289 in health care costs on an annual basis, the 11<sup>th</sup> highest rate in the country. Therefore, offering employee wellness benefits and programs, large or small, represents an intersection between corporate social responsibility and responsibility to stakeholders. These benefits and programs provide opportunities for employees to improve their well-being, reduce the need for health care services, and help control costs. Perry County has realized the importance of prevention and wellness and is beginning to address physical activity and healthy eating habits by encouraging the following initiatives in the workplace:

- The Perry County Health Plan offers a Healthy Lifestyle/Disease Management program to employees and their eligible dependents that may have a chronic condition such as asthma, diabetes, coronary artery disease, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.
- Member of the Chamber of Commerce, including all county employees, receive discounted gym memberships at New Dimensions.
- The Perry County Health Plan also offers incentives such as discounted coupons and partial yearly reimbursements for county employees who are members of weight watchers.
- The Perry County Health Department offers incentives to encourage employees to walk 1-mile during their lunch break.
- All the county schools have wellness teams that work to address staff wellness.
- New Lexington School District offers a weight watchers program for staff.
- New Lexington Middle and High Schools are in the process of developing a wellness zone and arcade which will offer enhanced physical activity options to the students and staff.
- Southern Local School District offers a weight loss program for staff.
- Cooper Standard Automotive has created a wellness council and holds regular health fairs, inviting local agencies to promote health and wellness to their employees.

Goal #1  
 Improve physical activity options and opportunities for the residents of Perry County

**Physical Activity Objectives**

**Objective:** By October 2009, encourage local businesses to use the new walking trail and outdoor fitness stations to promote worksite wellness, provide those local businesses surrounding the new walking trail and fitness stations with example worksite wellness initiatives, and offer assistance to the businesses to help with initiatives to increase physical activity amongst their staff.

**Strategies:**

- A. Increase community awareness about the new walking trail and fitness stations by inviting the local businesses to the kick-off events.
- B. Contact the local businesses surrounding the new walking trail and outdoor fitness stations and make them aware of the advantages of incorporating the new physical activity opportunities into their daily routine and promoting worksite wellness.
- C. Provide local businesses surrounding the new walking trail and fitness stations with example worksite wellness incentives and offer assistance to the businesses to help with initiatives to increase physical activity amongst their staff.

**Objective:** By December 2011, recognize employers in Perry County who that have implemented policies and programs to improve physical activity options for staff, and strengthen

efforts to encourage local businesses to offer worksite wellness programs which focus on enhancing physical activity options for the employees and their families.

**Strategies:**

- A. Partner with the Perry Wellness Coalition to recognize Perry County employers that have implemented best practices, policies, and activities to encourage physical activity and improve employee health.
- B. Collaborate with interested businesses to develop an employee wellness committee that is responsible for plan creation and program implementation to increase physical activity options for the staff.
- C. Encourage employee wellness committee members to join the Perry Wellness Coalition.
- D. Encourage local businesses to develop physical activity opportunities for staff such as but not limited to, walking programs, sports leagues, onsite fitness classes, fitness days, and fitness challenges/competitions.
- E. Encourage local businesses to provide incentives such as: prizes, deductible credit, and reimbursement programs to entice staff to participate in wellness and physical activity initiatives.
- F. Promote health fairs at worksites and encourage participation in health assessments, health coaching, chronic condition management, and worksite health screenings.

**Objective:** By December 2014, increase physical activity options for local businesses, identify best practices and develop resources to improve physical activity at worksites, develop resources to encourage wellness programs which focus on physical activity for the whole family, and increase the number of employers in Perry County who provide environments that support wellness and physical activity.

**Strategies:**

- A. Establish a community sports league where different businesses have staff members on a team and they compete against other local business teams.
- B. Collaborate with the targeted business's management and wellness team to identify their best practices and aid them in developing resources to improve physical activity at the worksite.
- C. Work with the targeted business's wellness team to develop employee wellness programs which focuses on the entire family.
- D. Partner with the Perry Wellness Coalition to advertise the importance of worksite wellness and work to increase the number of employers in Perry County who provide environments that support wellness and physical activity options.

Goal #2  
Encourage the residents of Perry County to eat healthier and improve the access to healthy food choices

## Nutrition Objectives

**Objective:** By October 2009, encourage local businesses with existing wellness programs to adopt the Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan and request that local businesses promote healthful eating to staff by supporting the farmers markets

### Strategies:

- A. Notify businesses with current wellness policies and/or programs about the Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan and encourage them to incorporate the plan into their existing wellness polices and/or programs.
- B. Increase awareness about the local farmers markets by collaborating with local businesses to strengthen their worksite wellness programs and encouraging healthful eating to their staff by supporting the local farmers markets.
- C. Partner with and provide assistance to local businesses surrounding the farmers markets who are interested in developing worksite initiatives and incentives to increase healthful eating amongst their staff.

**Objective:** By December 2011, recognize employers in Perry County who that have implemented policies and programs to improve healthful eating options for staff, and strengthen efforts to encourage local businesses to offer worksite wellness programs that encourage improved nutrition for their employees.

### Strategies:

- A. Partner with the Perry Wellness Coalition to recognize Perry County employers that have implemented best practices, policies, and activities to encourage improved nutrition in the worksite.
- B. Collaborate with interested businesses to develop an employee wellness committee that is responsible for plan creation and program implementation to increase healthy food options at the worksite for the staff.
- C. Encourage the employee wellness committee members to join the Perry Wellness Coalition.
- D. Encourage local businesses to develop nutrition programs for staff such as but not limited to; providing educational materials or classes on proper nutrition by a registered dietician, offering onsite Weight Watchers meetings or other weight management programs, and providing nutritious and health conscience meal options in the cafeteria and vending machines.
- E. Encourage local businesses to draw attention to healthful eating habits by providing token incentives, such as pencils or ID holders, for achieving five fruit or vegetable servings a day for a week.

**Objective:** By December 2014, increase nutritious and health conscience meal options for local businesses, identify best practices and develop resources to improve nutrition at worksites, develop resources to encourage wellness programs which focus on healthful eating for the entire family, and increase the number of employers in Perry County who provide environments that support wellness and nutrition.

**Strategies:**

- A. Partner with the Perry Wellness Coalition to advertise the importance of worksite wellness and work to increase the number of employers in Perry County who provide environments that support wellness and nutrition programs.
- B. Collaborate with the targeted business's management and wellness team to identify their best practices and aid them in developing resources to improve nutrition at the worksite.
- C. Partner with interested businesses to encourage them to promote healthful eating by helping them to prepare and plant an employee community garden and encourage the company to offer the produce to the employees in the cafeteria or for take home for their families.
- D. Work with the targeted business's wellness team to develop employee wellness nutrition programs and resources which focus on the entire family.

**Conclusion:**

Obesity is quickly becoming a leading public health challenge in Perry County. Adults who are overweight and obese are putting themselves at risk for developing diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. Additionally, the obesity epidemic is putting our children at risk for an array of health problems at an earlier age. Nothing is more important to our future than our health and that is why it's important to move forward with a comprehensive effort to encourage and coordinate health education, nutrition, and physical activity programs throughout Perry County. The Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan provides a framework for increasing physical activity and improving nutrition across multiple areas including; schools, the community and the built environment, and worksites. Additionally, the plan calls for changes in policy to promote and support improved wellness throughout the county. This plan is closely aligned with the Ohio Obesity Prevention Plan. For more information about the Perry County Obesity Prevention Plan or the Ohio Obesity Prevention Plan please contact the Perry County Health Department.

**Plan Development Participants:**Perry County Obesity Prevention Committee

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**Definitions:**

Active Community Environment (ACE): As defined by the CDC, ACEs are places where people of all ages and abilities can easily enjoy walking, bicycling and other forms of recreation. ACEs support and promote physical activity; have sidewalks, on-street bicycle facilities, multi-use paths and trails, parks, open space and recreational facilities; promote mixed-use development and a connected grid of streets, allowing homes, work, schools and stores to be close together

and accessible by walking and bicycling. The availability of these characteristics can play a significant role in promoting or discouraging physical activity.

Active Transportation: Active transportation includes any method of travel that is human powered, but most commonly refers to walking and bicycling.

Appalachia: The Appalachian Region, as defined in the legislation from which the Appalachian Regional Commission derives its authority, is a 200,000-square-mile region that follows the spine of the Appalachian Mountains from southern New York to northern Mississippi. It includes all of West Virginia and parts of 12 other states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia. In Ohio, the Appalachian region is located in the Southeastern area of the state and the communities within the region have high poverty rates and low economic opportunities.

Body Mass Index: Body mass index (BMI) is a number calculated from a person's weight and height. BMI is a person's weight in kilograms (kg) divided by their height in meters (m) squared. Built Environment: References the man-made surroundings that provide the setting for human activity, from the largest-scale civic surroundings to the smallest personal place.

Cholesterol: A fatty substance (a lipid) that is an important part of the outer lining (membrane) of cells in the body of animals. Cholesterol is also found in the blood circulation of humans. The cholesterol in a person's blood originates from two major sources, dietary intake and liver production. Dietary cholesterol comes mainly from meat, poultry, fish, and dairy products.

Community Coalition: Local groups that maintain a coalition that includes representation from all local health departments and from all settings; members from populations and communities identified as high need as well as appropriate agencies, organizations and providers.

Comprehensive Plan: A written plan compiled by a diverse group of participants that contains strategies to address obesity related health concerns for a community.

Coronary Heart Disease: Also known as Coronary Artery Disease. It is caused by atherosclerosis ("hardening of the arteries"), the gradual buildup of fatty deposits in the arteries circling the heart, which provide the heart with the oxygen and nutrients it needs to pump blood throughout the body.

Diabetes: Refers to diabetes mellitus or less often, to diabetes insipidus. Diabetes mellitus and diabetes insipidus share the name diabetes because they are both conditions characterized by excessive urination (polyuria). When "diabetes" is used alone it refers to diabetes mellitus. The two main types of diabetes mellitus - insulin-requiring type 1 diabetes (also known as "juvenile-onset diabetes") and adult-onset type 2 diabetes-are distinct and different diseases in themselves. Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disease that generally has a genetic predisposition and occurs in childhood, adolescence or early adulthood (before age 30). Insulin injections are required in the treatment of type 1 diabetes along with diet and exercise.

Environmental Change: Refers to changes in both the social, cultural and political environment, as well as the physical environment, at the community level; a change in organizational practice or policy. For example, marked walking routes added in communities or at worksites.

Food Deserts: A geographic region that lacks the financial means or has no close access to healthy foods; generally the area is large and isolated.

Healthy Food/Healthy Eating: “Healthy” used in this Action Plan in conjunction with “food” or “food options” is used in general terms rather than in any specific regulatory sense, and applies to individuals throughout the lifespan. Healthy eating, for individuals age two and above:

- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products.
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts.
- Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.

Healthy Weight: Adults who have a body mass index (BMI) between 18.5-24.9.

High Blood Pressure: Also known as hypertension, high blood pressure is a repeatedly elevated blood pressure exceeding 140 over 90 mmHg. That is, a systolic pressure above 140 or a diastolic pressure above 90.

Obesity: Obesity is a BMI of 30 and above (a BMI of 30 is about 30 pounds overweight). The CDC now defines normal weight, overweight, and obesity according to the BMI rather than the traditional height/weight charts. Since the BMI describes the body weight relative to height, it correlates strongly (in adults) with the total body fat content.

Objectives: Specific, measurable, attainable and limited to a single result obtained through completion of planned activities. An objective must identify who or what will change, by what time line (date) the change will occur and how much it will change. The indicator in the objective must reflect a measurable outcome for which data are available. Measurable objectives have a completion date; i.e., a specific point in time when the objective is to be completed for evaluation.

Overweight: Overweight is defined as a BMI of 25% or more according to the CDC. Note, however, that some very muscular people may have a high BMI without undue health risks.

Policy Change: A shift in the formal operations of organizations and/or governmental institutions that allows new or different activities to occur and thrive. These shifts may arise from information sharing, community participation, professional input, compromise and consensus-building and are usually the result of effective advocacy.

Population-based: Population-based practice reflects the priorities of the community. Community priorities are determined through an assessment of the population’s health status and a prioritization process.

Risk: A way of expressing the chance that something will happen. It is a measure of the association between exposure to something and what happens (the outcome). Risk is the same as probability, but it usually is used to describe the probability of an adverse event.

Rural: According to official U.S. Census Bureau definitions, rural areas comprise open country and settlements with fewer than 2,500 residents.

Screening: Using tests or other methods of diagnosis to find out whether a person has a specific disease or condition before it causes any symptoms. For many diseases (for example, cancers), starting treatment earlier leads to better results. The purpose of screening is to find the disease so treatment can be started as early as possible.

Stakeholder: Person, group or organization that has direct or indirect stake in an organization because it can affect or be affected by the organization's actions, objectives, and policies.

Sustainability: Ensuring that an effort or change lasts.

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