TIPS FOR COMMUNITIES

High Five!
Children’s Health Collaborative
Powered by
Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health
START A COMMUNITY GARDEN
Community gardens create a place where residents can learn about gardening, socialize and gain access to nutritious food. Additionally, children who help tend gardens are more likely to eat fruit and vegetables. Get your community garden started today!

- Legal Toolkit for Community Gardens
- 10 Tips to Starting a Community Garden
- Tips for Gardening with Kids

START A LOCAL FARMER’S MARKET
Farmers Markets offer fresh foods from local farmers and gardeners and help support the local economy. They can be held indoor, outdoor, or be a mobile unit that visits different neighborhoods. They can range in size from a few booths to multiple city blocks. Farmers Markets bring communities together and create opportunities for residents to socialize and purchase fresh fruits and vegetables.

- How to Start a Farmers Market
- Guide to accepting SNAP/EBT
- Mobile market Model Ordinances
- Model Mobile Vending Policies

PROVIDE HEALTHY OPTIONS AT PUBLIC VENUES
Providing healthy options such as salads and chicken wraps are a great healthy alternative to traditional food options frequently served at public venues and community events.

Offering healthy options at public venues demonstrates a community’s commitment to addressing childhood obesity. For example, you can offer turkey sandwiches on whole-wheat bread at park concessions and public recreational facilities such as swimming pools.

Another step is to establish nutrition standards using the Dietary Guidelines for Americans for food and beverages sold in public venues, at community events and in public vending.

- Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- A Guide for Improving the Food Environment Through Nutrition Standards

CREATE A COMMUNITY TEAM
Creating a community team and conducting a needs assessment can be an impactful tool for gaining momentum to improve access to nutritious foods and reverse childhood

FOR COMMUNITIES
Research is finding that our zip codes determines our health more than our genetic codes. The environments in which we live and spend our days – our homes, schools, workplaces and communities – have a large impact on our overall health. By focusing our efforts on making those environments more supportive of healthy lifestyles, we can improve the health of all citizens and begin to reverse the trend of childhood obesity in Idaho.

Improved walking and biking paths, more parks and playgrounds, better access to fresh fruits and vegetables, healthier food options in public venues, and education and support for parents, teachers and childcare providers – these changes can have a real impact on the health of a community.
obesity in your community. Community teams could consist of representatives from the following sectors:

- Mayor
- City Council
- School
- Faith-Based Organization
- Hospital
- Health District
- Media

A needs assessment can give the community team insight into existing strengths that can be mobilized and opportunities for improvements, and can assist in making decisions about where to focus resources to improve nutrition in the community.

- Conduct a needs assessment

CREATE A BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PLAN

Adopting a bicycle and pedestrian plan is a great way to encourage walking and biking in a community. This plan provides guidelines and prioritizes work to improve access to walking and biking. Plans include goals and objectives for improving bicycling and walking, data outlining major destination areas (shopping, schools, parks, etc.), and outlining priority projects and programs that promote walking and biking.

You should also work with schools in your community to create a Safe Routes to School program that encourages children to walk and bike to school.

- Safe Routes to School Guide

HOST A COMMUNITY EVENT

Hosting a community event is a great way to increase awareness about childhood obesity and promote resources available in your community. There are many types of events you can host in your community, such as Screen-Free Week, Walk-with-the-Mayor program, Play Streets event and much more!

Screen-Free Week is a community-wide event that encourages families to turn off the television and get active. Communities can offer free or reduced-cost activities that promote the recreational resources available in their communities.

Walk-with-the-Mayor program encourages children, families and citizens to walk. Having a key champion within a community is an essential component to increasing awareness about obesity. Walking is a free activity that is easy to do and provides numerous health benefits. Mayors or other city officials can launch a walking challenge to schools in their community, as well as challenge families and citizens to walk more.

Play Streets is a community event in which a specific street in the community gets closed and children are invited to play. During this event, local Parks and Recreation Departments can offer fun activities for children. Play Streets encourages physical activity and can introduce children to the resources available in their communities.

- City of Boise’s Walk 150 program
- Message from Mayor Dave Bieter about Walk 150

ADOPT JOINT-USE AGREEMENTS

Joint-use agreements are written contracts between schools and other public agencies (e.g., Parks and Recreation Departments) or nonprofits that open up schools after hours for use by the community. Joint-use agreements create access to school fields, playground equipment, gyms and basketball courts.

Idaho Code 33-601 allows a school district’s board of trustees to rent out school property to others, authorizes the use of a school building as a community center for public purpose, and allows the board to enter into a contract with any city.

Examples of Joint-Use Agreements include:

- Opening outdoor school facilities for use during non-school hours
- Opening indoor school facilities, such as gyms, for use during non-school hours
- Opening school facilities for use during non-school hours and authorizing third parties such as youth sports leagues to operate programs
- Joint-use of school and city recreation facilities, where the school district and local government agree to open recreational facilities for community and school use and allow third parties to operate programs in the facilities.

- Guide to Creating Joint Use Agreements
- Checklist for developing a Joint Use Agreement
- Model Joint Use Agreements