



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Public Affairs

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Twenty Local Health Departments To Receive Funding For Physical Activity Projects Targeting Adolescents

RALEIGH — The N.C. Division of Public Health has announced the recipients of the *Eat Smart, Move More NC (ESMM NC)* Community Grants Program. Twenty health departments and their partner agencies will use a total of \$300,000 in funding to implement programs to get and keep at-risk adolescents ages 9-14 moving more and sitting less.

North Carolina ranks 14th in the nation in overweight and obese adolescents; the highest numbers are among African American girls and Hispanic boys. The percentage of children and adults who are overweight or obese rises each year.

“Despite advances in medicine, the current generation of children may be the first to live shorter lives than their parents,” said Dr. Jeff Engel, state health director. “We are committed to doing everything we can to reverse that trend.”

For the first time, the *ESMM NC* community grants are being awarded for a two-year cycle to study the impact the grants are having in the communities that receive them. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation awarded funding in the fall of 2009 to the DPH Physical Activity and Nutrition Branch to work with East Carolina University’s Department of Public Health in evaluating the program.

The *ESMM NC* Community Grants Program will consist of 20 separate community interventions (10 in 2010-11 and 10 more in 2011-2012) that target increasing physical activity and/or decreasing sedentary behaviors in disadvantaged youth. Funded projects will build upon existing effective programs or will try new approaches to get youth away from computers and television sets and into their neighborhoods or school yards to play. The projects receiving grants must be sustainable after the funding has ended.

The following county or district health departments were selected to receive the grants in 2010-2011: Appalachian Health District (Ashe County), Beaufort, Buncombe, Clay, Cleveland, New Hanover, Orange, Stokes, Surry and Yadkin.

In 2011-2012, funding will go to: Albemarle Health District (Currituck and Gates counties), Appalachian Health District (Alleghany County), Burke, Chatham, Gaston, Guilford, Henderson, Montgomery, Pitt and Sampson counties.

Programs range from engaging kids in fun after-school exercise programs in Ashe, Cleveland, and Orange counties, to building or refurbishing walking trails at or near schools in Beaufort, Henderson, Montgomery and Yadkin counties. Programs will engage students and staff in walking challenges or clubs in Currituck and Gates counties. Buncombe County will promote walking and biking to school and teach bicycle safety. And in Clay County, program planners are organizing a mountain biking skills training and exercise program.



Location: 101 Blair Drive • Adams Building • Raleigh, N.C. 27603

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Complete descriptions of each funded project can be found at www.EatSmartMoveMoreNC.com.

The *ESMM NC* community grants support the *Eat Smart, Move More NC* movement and *Eat Smart, Move More: North Carolina's Plan to Prevent Overweight, Obesity and Related Chronic Diseases*, the state's obesity prevention plan. This plan emphasizes strategies that make healthier eating and increased physical activity easier to achieve by, for example, adding walking paths in neighborhoods or around schools, or changing what foods a school can serve both at lunch and for after-school snacks. *Eat Smart, Move More North Carolina* strives to reverse this trend by making the healthy choice the easy choice.

"Making our schools and after-school programs, our neighborhoods, and our places of worship supportive of healthy eating and active lifestyles is important so that kids learn these habits early and carry them into adulthood," Engel said. "It also means each generation of kids gain the benefit of these more sustainable changes to our communities."

Eat Smart, Move More North Carolina is a statewide movement that promotes increased opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity wherever people live, learn, earn, play and pray. The movement is led by a coalition of more than 60 organizations. For more information on the *Eat Smart, Move More NC* movement or to find out how your community can promote healthful eating and physical activity, visit www.EatSmartMoveMoreNC.com on the Web.

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