



## Newsletter from Eat Smart, Move More North Carolina

### Message from the Chair

Dear Eat Smart, Move More NC Partners

As the end of the year draws to a close, so does my term as Chair of the Eat Smart, Move More NC movement. Serving in this role has been an honor, as well as a source of growth and inspiration for me thanks to the commitment and support of the Executive Committee.

My term as Chair began shortly before the COVID-19 pandemic began. Despite the uncertainties and challenges that affected people personally and professionally, your Eat Smart, Move More NC Executive Committee rallied not only to continue to keep the movement alive but make it stronger. Highlights of the past two years include:



- **Established a subcommittee structure** that benefits the movement through diversity in input and decision-making, shared leadership, and promise for sustainability.
- **Seamlessly moved the Eat Smart, Move More NC partner's meetings to a virtual platform** in order to continue to offer this valuable learning and networking opportunity throughout the years.
- **Bolstered communications with partners and external audiences** through social media and the re-establishment of the Eat Smart, Move More NC Facebook page, as well as broader promotions about the movement.
- **Streamlined ways to enable people across our state to become partners** in the Eat Smart, Move More NC movement including clarifying partnership roles and benefits.
- **Engaged in strategic planning** which will continue into early 2022 to ensure that the movement stays relevant and best serves the needs of our partners.

These amazing accomplishments would not have been possible without the individual and collective support of your Eat Smart, Move More NC Executive Committee members. They stepped up to serve as subcommittee chairs, take on new roles in facilitating virtual meetings and social media postings, and came up with creative ways to best engage and serve our

partners. Please join me in thanking **Jenni Albright, Dawn Daily-Mack, Breyana Davis, Tekeela Green, Catherine Hill, Ashley Honeycutt, Jayne McBurney, Richard Rairigh, and Sherée Vodicka!** Special thanks to the Community and Clinical Connections for Prevention and Health Branch with the NC Department of Health and Human Services. **Tish Singletary, Branch Head, and her team including Xavier Christmas, Heather Bradley, and Essete Kebede** have provided critical ongoing resources and support to the Executive Committee and the movement.

There has never been a time during my 20-plus career in North Carolina when Eat Smart, Move More NC did not have a presence. Despite changes in titles or organizations, staying engaged with the movement has been a vital lifeline to credible and practical information and resources, and to others across the state who are doing things to help communities thrive. My thanks to YOU, our partners, who have stayed engaged, responded to our calls for input and support, and served as champions for Eat Smart, Move More NC in your communities!

Wishing you good health and happiness today and every day!

Joanne Lee, MPH, RD  
Chair of Eat Smart, Move More North Carolina  
Collaborative Learning Director with Healthy Places by Design

---

## Summary of our December Eat Smart, Move More NC Partners Meeting



The most recent Eat Smart, Move More NC [Partners Meeting](#) was held on December 2. We were very fortunate to hear from such an amazing panel of experts on their work as it relates to ***Creating Equitable Opportunities for Physical Activity.***

To read more about each panelist:

- **Dr. Deepti Adlakha and Dr. Nilda Cosco** with [Natural Learning Initiative](#)
- **Dr. Myron Floyd** with [NCSU Physical Activity Research Center](#)
- **Chris Mackey** with [National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability](#)
- **Chris Walker** with [NC Shape](#) and School Physical Education

After a great discussion about how different programs are addressing physical activity and equitable opportunities in NC, we asked our panelists if they had any words of advice for our partners. Here are just a few of those answers:

- Never make a decision for someone else without asking the person that will be receiving the benefit. Always involve the community and the beneficiary in the decisions.
- Be sure to bring all disciplines together to create a comprehensive approach to your work.
- Movement doesn't have a language barrier.
- The work being done in NC has set the example for counterparts across the US. The challenge is to always refresh and keep the focus. Emphasizing inclusion is an active process. Follow the social model of disability when making decisions. Does what you create model inclusion? Seek out partners with disabilities.
- When collaborating with researchers, choose them carefully. Be clear that your goals align.

Our panelists provided partners with some great resources during the meeting. We hope you find them helpful:

- **National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability (NCHPAD):** [www.nchpad.org](http://www.nchpad.org)
  - Commit to Inclusion [Campaign](#) to Promote Inclusion in public health programs
  - [9 Guidelines to Disability Inclusion](#)
  - NCHPAD's [YouTube Channel](#): National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability (NCHPAD)
  - [Lakeshore Foundation](#), (NCHPAD's home base in Birmingham AL)
  - [Community Health Inclusion Index](#)
- **NC State – Physical Activity Research Center:** [PARC](#)
  - <https://paresearchcenter.org/project-profiles/nc-state-project-profile/>
- **Natural Learning Initiative @ NCSU:** [Natural Learning Initiative](#)
  - NLI COVID Support [Resources](#): COVID Support
  - How we change culture through design [video](#)
  - Dr. Cosco's [Ted Talk](#)
  - Dr. Adlakha's [Ted Talk](#)
  - Journal [article](#) on physical activity and research to inform COVID practices and policies
  - More [resources](#) about Play and learning outdoors
- **Chris Walker's site:** [www.coachwalkerfitness.com](http://www.coachwalkerfitness.com)
- **NC SHAPE:** <https://www.ncaahperd-sm.org/>
- **Move and Thrive:** <https://move-and-thrive.org>

**The next Partner Meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 2022. Details to be shared in late January.**



---

## Getting Kids Moving Across Wilkes County

The Wilkes Community Partnership for Children has been part of several health initiatives over the years that encourage young children to move more during their day. When you take a look at a typical outdoor space at a school or child care center you may notice how many children are actually sedentary. Even though they are outside, they are surprisingly not moving as you may think. You may see children on swings or sitting in a sandbox, engaged, but not really exerting a ton of energy. Because of this, the Partnership for Children knew we had to do better for the children in Wilkes County.



Using [GO NAPSACC](#) as best practice guidelines, our county began to work on improving health outcomes for children birth to age 5. The Partnership began participating in any opportunity that came available such as [Be Active Kids](#), [Farm to ECE](#), [Natural Learning Initiative](#), Shape NC, and the most recent Physical Activity and Nutrition Grant. With the support of these programs, along with our community support (our local Health Foundation), we got to work. Technical Assistance staff began going into classrooms demonstrating new techniques, providing support to teachers, and making connections with families. To date, we have worked extensively in 18 out of our 24 licensed child care facilities.

Even though we have spent years implementing so many initiatives to make Wilkes County children healthier, we still have work to do. Changing lifestyles in a fast pace world is a never-ending job.



Submitted by: Stacy Daniels, MA - Child Development Specialist, Wilkes Community Partnership for Children

---

## National Walk to School Day Event in Wake County

On Wednesday, October 6th, schools, neighborhoods, and families came together from areas all across the country to celebrate National Walk to School Day and to promote the importance of being physically active. From its beginning in 1997, National Walk to School Day has been an important way to promote and improve the safety and accessibility of communities to increase their physical activity and address issues in the built environment in their local neighborhoods. In North Carolina, 124 organizations registered, committing to walk to school as a way to improve the health, safety, and wellbeing of the entire community. Steps to Health, “NC State University’s SNAP-Ed Program”, collaborated with three Wake County partners.



Salvation Army, Telamon Head Start Cary Parkway, and Telamon Head Start Knightdale to determine ways to participate in this event. Through this collaboration, the Salvation Army program participants walked from the Conn Magnet Elementary School to the Salvation Army Parking lot in Raleigh, NC. Telamon Head Start Cary Parkway students played games such as Freeze Tag, Red Light/Green Light, and Duck Duck Goose in the playground area to increase physical activity, while Telamon Head Start Knightdale students walked the perimeter of their parking lot. Steps to Health looks forward to partnering across the state for Walk to School Day next year. For more information about Steps to Health, visit <https://ncstepstohealth.org/>.

Submitted by: Breyana Davis, MPH, CHES, Food and Built Environments Extension Associate

---

## National Walk to School Day Event in Durham County

In [North Carolina’s Plan to Prevent Overweight and Obesity: Balance How We Eat, Drink, and Move](#), strategies to prevent obesity are organized by setting. For the School setting, one strategy is to “implement policies to enhance infrastructure that supports bicycling and walking to school.”



On a wet and overcast Friday in October (October 8, 2021), a group of about 30 students and parents from Hope Valley Elementary School in Durham, NC, gathered for a Walk to School event. A school PTA member had contacted a church located about 1/2 mile from the school and asked if families could park there on the morning of the event. Thanks to the church's support, the group gathered in the church parking lot and then mobilized for the 10-minute walk to the school. Thanks to Durham's efforts to support pedestrians, sidewalks were available all the way to the school.

As stated on the Walk & Bike to School website at <https://www.walkbiketoschool.org/>, the purpose of a Walk to School event is to lead to changes in policies or physical environments that support safe walking, biking, and wheeling every day, not just for special events. Perhaps hosting a Walk to School event can be a "first step" in creating advocates who will ask for policies and environments that support active living in the future.

Mark your calendar now for National Bike to School Day on May 4, 2022, and consider supporting an event in your community!

Submitted by Jenni Albright



---

## YMCA Engages Mayor & Housing Authority to Improve Walkability in Rocky Mount

Rocky Mount Mayor Sandy Roberson and Rocky Mount Housing Authority (RMHA) CEO Kelvin Macklin joined Harrison Family YMCA staff and walking club members on July 15 for a walk audit in the Housing Authority's Weeks Armstrong neighborhood. Their goal was to assess how safe it is to walk—or wheelchair roll—in the area and identify any barriers to active living in the community.



With grant funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through YMCA of the USA, the [NC Alliance of YMCAs](#) has funded walk audit training for Y staff and similar audits across NC.

Earlier this year, the Y partnered with the RMHA to create a walking club for Weeks Armstrong neighbors to help improve their health and improve walkability for residents to get to school work and local shopping. The audit was a celebration of the community's walking club and a tool to engage local leaders in identifying any barriers to walkability. Following the audit, the Y shared its Walk Audit Summary and Recommendations with local leaders and met with the RMHA and the city's director of Public Works.



“We are really excited about the changes already taking place as a result of our advocacy,” said Liz Lord, Senior Engagement Director at the Harrison Family YMCA. “A crosswalk has been painted at an intersection leading to the elementary school, a speed study is currently



being conducted, and streets and stormwater staff have been directed to identify and repair any damaged or uplifted sidewalks on city-maintained sidewalks,” Lord said. In addition, the city has reached out to the NC Department of Transportation about refreshing crosswalk pavement markings, extending the pedestrian crossing time, and investigating the construction of pedestrian refuge islands at a major intersection. The RMHA, which maintains many of the roads in the neighborhood as private roads, is investigating sharrows, adding an additional sidewalk to connect current sidewalks, and refreshing and adding crosswalks and signs to increase safety and walk/roll-ability.

The Y plans to continue its walking groups and advocacy work to engage community members outside the Y’s walls and help increase their physical activity.

Submitted by: Michele McKinley, NC Alliance of YMCAs

---

## Biker Girls Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence Awareness

During the 2020 pandemic, a group of ladies came together to ride bicycles as a form of exercise and to relieve the stress of the pandemic. Not knowing in a short amount of time that they would become a sisterhood with the desire and determination to improve their community. This organization is not concerned about popularity but about forming a bond with and for each other. We are here to celebrate one another and cheer each other on in life’s tough challenges. Sisters caring for Sisters.



In October 2020, the Biker Girls dressed in pink and wearing masks, took to the streets to promote breast cancer awareness. The ride started at the Courthouse Square in downtown Tarboro and ended at Vidant Cancer Center, where the bikers, along with supporters walked a remembrance lap and released balloons in memory of those who lost their fight, for those battling the disease and those who survived.



With the alarming statistics of domestic violence, the group held its first annual Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence Awareness Ceremony in November 2020 followed by the second annual event in November 2021. Both ceremonies were attended by members of the community, local law enforcement, and a representative from local agencies. Attendees were provided with resources to share with those who may be in a domestic situation.

The Biker Girls rode 20 miles in the We are One EHE Prostate Cancer Awareness Walk, Run, Ride. They also have participated in Ride the City in Goldsboro, a helmet giveaway, brunch in the park, Samaritan Purse, and various drive-by birthday and retirement celebrations.

For more information about the Biker Girls go to:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/925998194534991>

Submitted by: Teresa Bottoms



---

## Prayer/Faithful Walkers for our Health

The Prayer/Faithful Walkers group was established in Tarboro, NC (Edgecombe County) in 2012 coordinated by Derrick Haskins from Edgecombe County Health Department. The walkers started at the church each morning with a prayer. They divided themselves into various groups covering East Tarboro, Main Street, Vidant Edgecombe Hospital, and Rocky Mount. Eventually, the more active participants began to work out at home, at B&G Fitness Center and a few of the members started water aerobics. The main goal of course is to begin physical activities based on your own abilities and continue to move it, move it, move it!



Our congregation and the members of our community have many health issues including cancer, diabetes, hypertension, mental health, and several members are on dialysis. We are constantly learning that our eating habits and physical activities can have a tremendous effect on our health. Through various seminars and workshops, we have adopted better practices and better habits. We have utilized Health Lay Leaders as well as a dialysis support group to inform and encourage our members. We are becoming more aware of the saying “You are what you eat.”

We strive to help our congregation and the members of our community to be aware of all the resources that are available through Vidant Edgecombe Hospital, Eat Smart/Move More, DEPC Faithful Families, and Edgecombe County Health and Human Services. We frequently insert information in our church bulletins concerning healthy living from the previously mentioned organizations. So prayerfully, the health of our members and the members of the community will continue to improve.

For more, visit us on our Facebook page: [St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church in Tarboro, NC](#)

Submitted by: Sister Hilda Morris and Deaconess Barbara Vick

---

## Healthy Aging NC



[Healthy Aging NC \(HANC\)](#) is North Carolina’s statewide resource center for evidence-based community health programs. We connect people to the programs and agencies that improve community health, increase the capacity of providers to offer these programs, maintain a website with current program information and online registration systems, and collect and analyze data to report results.

**Healthy Aging NC’s primary goal is to embed evidence-based community health programs into an integrated, sustainable, statewide delivery system to improve the quality of life for *all* older adults in North Carolina.**

We currently offer support for the following evidenced-based programs along a “[continuum of care](#)” that acknowledges the relationship between fall risk, arthritis, and other chronic conditions:

- **A Matter of Balance:** Ideal for participants who need to address a fear of falling, identify solutions, build skills, and engage in gentle exercises
- **Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention:** Ideal for participants who need to improve mobility, balance, strength, flexibility, relaxation, and/or self-awareness
- **Walk With Ease:** Ideal for participants who are new to physical activity, experience pain while being active, and/or need support in safely increasing physical activity
- **Chronic Disease Self Education Programs:** Ideal for participants who need tools and support in managing their chronic health conditions
  - **Living Healthy with Chronic Disease Self-Management Program**
  - **Living Healthy with Diabetes Self-Management Program**
  - **Living Healthy with Chronic Pain Self-Management Program**

[Click here](#) to learn more about Healthy Aging NC’s menu of programs or refer yourself or someone in need to one of our programs [here](#)!

Submitted by: Ellen Ailey, Nadia Mazza, and Natasha Vos with The Healthy Aging NC Team