



Growing Healthy Communities

Arkansas Coalition for Obesity Prevention

FACT SHEET

Growing Healthy Communities (GHC) is a project developed by the Arkansas Coalition for Obesity Prevention (ArCOP) in 2009 to build capacity within local communities to reduce obesity by increasing physical activity, increasing access to healthy foods, and implementing environmental and policy changes that support healthy living.

The Growing Healthy Communities project is a collaborative effort funded by the Blue and You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas, the Arkansas Department of Health's CDC Cooperative Agreement, UAMS Partners for Inclusive Communities, UAMS College of Public Health, and the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute.

In the fall of 2009, the following Growing Healthy Communities sites were selected for funding: Batesville, Little Rock (Arkansas Baptist College neighborhood), Harrison, Helena/W. Helena, and Magnolia.

Each Growing Healthy Communities site is required to include local decision-makers, i.e. mayors and leaders from the ADH Hometown Health Improvement, in the planning process. Other local stakeholders serve on their GHC leadership team to drive policy changes that can be implemented in their communities.

Technical assistance is provided to GHC sites by members of the Arkansas Coalition for Obesity Prevention, which includes Hometown Health Improvement, and the ADH Chronic Disease and Lifestage Health Branches.

Growing Healthy Communities funded and non-funded sites (Mississippi, Faulkner, and Dallas Counties) participated in an Immersion Training on March 3 – 5, 2010, at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Mountain. Training focused on providing tools and resources necessary to implement their workplans. Opportunities were also provided to share and learn from local, state, and national partners. Approximately 85 individuals attended.

Healthy Living Summits were held in four of the five (5) GHC sites to increase community knowledge of the built environment, healthy foods, physical activity, worksite wellness and policy changes needed. Summits served as a call to community action.

With assistance from the local AARP, walkability assessments will be conducted and each GHC site will conduct food sustainability assessments, with support and technical assistance provided by the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance.