CONNECTICUT
Communities Putting Prevention to Work

STATE COORDINATED APPLICATION: CATEGORY A
Obesity, Physical Activity and Nutrition

ABSTRACT

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) will partner with two local health departments to conduct the State Coordinated Small City and Rural Communities component of the *Communities Putting Prevention To Work* grant. Both the Northeast District Department of Health (NDDH) and the City of New Haven Health Department (NHHD) will be implementing population-based approaches, including policy, systems, and environmental changes across five evidence-based MAPPS strategies and interventions in both communities and schools. DPH will actively participate in the grant activities through the coordination of the State-Community Management Team, the engagement of the Connecticut Food Policy Council and the provision of ongoing programmatic support and consultation for evaluation processes.

The NDDH will be working to reduce obesity through increased physical activity and affordable options for better nutrition. The District will institute a district-wide assessment of public spaces to facilitate increased physical activity, and develop safe activity trails throughout the 12 towns served. They will also promote and expand the successful school-wide walking program into other school systems, endorse healthier eating through increased access to fresh, nutritious and local foods in schools and worksites, improve food procurement strategies through the creation of a regional food co-op, enhance financial incentives so that the community can purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmer's markets, and implement a hospital-supported breastfeeding initiative.

The NHHD, under the leadership of the city administrator, will work with the Health Equity and Wellness Commission and the New Haven Food Policy Council to support critical high-impact community and school-based policy and environmental changes in alignment with previously established New Haven Wellness Policy Objectives, providing unprecedented leverage for long-term sustainability. The NHHD will endorse healthier eating through increased access to fresh, nutritious and local foods in schools, and financial incentives for more nutritional purchases in community supermarkets. The NHHD will institute city-wide environmental design changes that facilitate increased physical activity by providing safe routes to community spaces, including schools, parks and neighborhood retail centers. Additionally, the New Haven Public Schools will continue to implement the wellness policies contained in their District Wellness Plan and expand the network of school-based Physical Activity and Wellness (PAW) Committees that will empower teachers and staff to bring specific, evidence-based interventions to all students, staff and parents within 27 schools. These efforts will be enhanced by a collaborative and comprehensive media campaign designed to engage all of New Haven in this effort. The NHHD will be working to establish accountability measures for all partners, while advocating changes to systems and implementing best practices through meaningful policy.