

ACHIEVE Healthy Communities in Mason County: Community Action Plan Results

Chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and lung disease are the leading causes of death in Washington State. Being physically active, eating healthy food and not using tobacco products reduces the likelihood of getting one of these diseases. Living in a healthy environment makes it easier for Washington residents to choose healthy behaviors.

In the Fall 2010, Mason County Public Health (MCPH) was awarded an ACHIEVE Healthy Communities grant from National Association of County and City Health Officials and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. MCPH assembled an 'ACHIEVE Team,' who was tasked with developing a community action plan to help people eat healthier, get more physical activity, and stop using tobacco. Unfortunately, the federal funds were eliminated prior to completing the final year of the grant. This report highlights what was accomplished in year one of the grant's implementation phase.

PROJECT GOAL 1.0

By September 2013, increase the number of capacity building technical assistance (assessment summary and policy recommendation reports to participating organizations) from 0 to 12.

Intended Impact:

The capacity building goal of providing technical assistance to participating organizations around policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) strategies to improve healthy eating, physical activity, and tobacco free environments will make it easier for people to choose healthy behaviors, thereby reducing the risk factors that cause chronic diseases.

Year 1 Results:

As of September 2012, 7 out of 12 assessment summary and recommendation reports were completed and presented to participating ACHIEVE sites. Some sites implemented PSE strategies based on these recommendations including:

- Pioneer Middle School implemented a peer-to-peer tobacco prevention curriculum to reduce tobacco initiation and use by youth.
- Hawkins Middle School implemented a policy to encourage 'non-food rewards and incentives at school' and offer 'healthier food options at school celebrations' to promote healthy eating habits.
- Oakland Bay Pediatrics is using the 'Let's Go 5210!' health messaging to provide routine obesity screenings, guidance, and resource referrals to families to help patients achieve a healthy weight. WSU Extension's Food Sense Program is also using 'Let's Go 5210' messaging during cooking demonstrations and nutrition education events at schools, Food Banks, and community service agencies.



PROJECT GOAL 2.0

By September 2013, increase the number of outdoor smoke-free environments in Mason County from 4 to 6.

Intended Impact:

In 2009, 18.9% of Mason County adults smoked cigarettes compared to 14.8% in Washington (BRFSS). Mason County has the 2nd highest lung cancer mortality rate in Washington State (2009). Mason County has the 2th highest coronary heart disease mortality out of 39 counties in the state (2009).

According to a 2006 report from the U.S. Surgeon General, “there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke” and the EPA has identified secondhand smoke as a Class A carcinogen, the most toxic class of chemicals which are known to cause cancer in humans. Reducing second-hand smoke exposure and cigarette use will improve health outcomes of residents utilizing recreation areas and reduce the amount of litter in such areas.



Year 1 Results:

As of September 2012, one additional smoke-free outdoor environment was established in Mason County. City of Shelton implemented an ordinance, on 5/14/2012, designating all Shelton parks smoke-free.

PROJECT GOAL 3.0

By September 2013, increase neighborhood venues that have affordable fresh produce from 12 to 15.

Intended Impact:

In 2007, only 22% of Mason County adults consumed 5 or more fruits or vegetables daily (BRFSS). In 2010, 77% of Mason County 10th grade students consumed less than 5 or more fruits and vegetables daily (HYS). In 2007-2008, 65% of Mason County adults were overweight or obese (BRFSS). In 2010, 32% of Mason County 10th grade students were overweight or obese (HYS). Mason County has the 9th highest diabetes prevalence rate in Washington State out of 39 counties (2003-2005 WA BRFSS data).

Limited access to healthy foods, such as fruits and vegetables, is a major barrier to healthy eating. Low-income, underserved communities are at the highest risk for obesity because they often lack neighborhood supermarkets; leaving convenience stores or fast-food chains as the main source of meals. Buying fruit and vegetables may be cost prohibitive for low-income families, especially if neighborhood stores do not accept SNAP/EBT food benefits. Community gardens provide residents of underserved communities the opportunity to grow their own fruit and vegetables, increasing access and affordability. By increasing neighborhood access to

affordable fresh produce, residents will have increased opportunities to eat healthier, thus reducing risk of obesity and chronic diseases.

Year 1 Results:

As of September 2012, one additional produce vendor became a SNAP/EBT provider and more neighborhood venues were identified as offering affordable, fresh produce in Mason County (23 total).

- Shelton Farmers Market implemented technology to become a SNAP/EBT benefit provider.
- Local grocery and convenience stores were assessed to determine who sells produce and who accepts SNAP/EBT benefits to identify gaps in access to fresh produce. 23 of 41 stores assessed sold 'some' or a 'full array' of produce, 86% of those stores accepted the SNAP/EBT benefits card.
- Plans were developed and a site was secured to start an edible park, called the Garden of Eatin', at the former St. Edwards Catholic Church property in downtown Shelton. Funds need to be acquired to complete this project.



PROJECT GOAL 4.0

By September 2013, increase the number of complete streets policies (to design roads for all types of users) from 0 to 2.

Intended Impact:

In 2007, 67% of Mason County adults met 30 minutes daily physical activity recommendations (BRFSS). In 2010, 50% of Mason County 10th grade students met 60 minutes daily physical activity recommendations (HYS). According to the CDC, physical activity reduces risks of cardiovascular disease and diabetes beyond that produced by weight reduction alone. Physical activity also helps to—

- Maintain weight.
- Reduce high blood pressure.
- Reduce risk for type 2 diabetes, heart attack, stroke, and several forms of cancer.
- Reduce arthritis pain and associated disability.
- Reduce risk for osteoporosis and falls.
- Reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Increasing safe walking and/or biking routes in Mason County will provide more opportunities for people to be physically active.

Year 1 Results:

As of September 2012, key department staff from both the city and county have been educated about complete street policies and have taken action to improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility in Mason County such as:

- Commencing a Safe Routes to School Committee with the Shelton School District- Committee members conducted audits of current walking conditions around 3 elementary schools to create school walk improvement plans. The Committee submitted a Washington State Department of Transportation grant proposal, based on the audit results, for pedestrian safety improvements around Evergreen School, including 5,120 linear feet of new sidewalks.
- Initiated an Active Transportation Committee to develop a complete streets policy for Mason County. Committee members have conducted audits of current walking conditions on county roads to create a Bike and Pedestrian Plan. The Committee is reviewing the draft Plan and current county codes to identify what will be needed to ensure county roads are designed for all users.



PROJECT GOAL 5.0

By September 2013, increase the number of county-owned shared-use trail miles from 1 to 5.

Intended Impact:

In 2007, 59% of Mason County adults met 30 minutes daily physical activity recommendations (BRFSS). In 2010, 50% of Mason County 10th grade students met 60 minutes daily physical activity recommendations (HYS). According to the CDC, physical activity reduces risks of cardiovascular disease and diabetes beyond that produced by weight reduction alone. Physical activity also helps to–

- Maintain weight.
- Reduce high blood pressure.
- Reduce risk for type 2 diabetes, heart attack, stroke, and several forms of cancer.
- Reduce arthritis pain and associated disability.
- Reduce risk for osteoporosis and falls.
- Reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Increasing safe walking and/or biking routes in Mason County will provide more opportunities for people to be physically active.



Year 1 Results:

As of September 2012, county-owned trail miles has increased to 3 miles due to the completion of Oakland Bay Park Trail; a 2-mile walking trail off of Agate Road in Shelton, WA.

ACHIEVE Participating Organizations

Schools:

Hawkins Middle School, Hood Canal School (K-8), Pioneer School (k-8)

Healthcare:

Mason General Hospital, Behavioral Health Resources, Oakland Bay Pediatrics

Worksites:

City of Shelton, Green Diamond Resource Company, Mason County

Community Organizations:

Shelton Valley Christian Child Development Center, Theler Center, Mason County Shelter

Community-At-Large:

Includes community-wide efforts that impact the social and built environments, such as food access, walkability or bikeability, tobacco-free policies, and personal safety.

ACHIEVE Team Members

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Jerry Lingle – Mason County Commission

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