**COMMUNITY IN MOTION**

*A Community challenge encourages physical activity*

**Public Health Issue**

* Whitfield and Murray counties in rural northwest Georgia ranked low on physical activity (rates of ‘limited physical activity’ were 32% for Murray County, 28% for Whitfield County and 24% for the state of Georgia).
* Increased physical activity can improve health.
* Walking is a low cost but highly effective way of meeting physical activity guidelines, yet despite its accessibility regular walking for exercise is underutilized.

**Program**

* The Northwest Georgia Healthcare Partnership, a not-for-profit that brings together business, government, public health, providers and schools, developed a physical activity challenge for Whitfield and Murray counties in 2009.
* When the Partnership became an ACHIEVE (Action Communities for Health, Innovation and Environmental Change) community grant recipient, they used the CDC’s CHANGE tool to assess the counties for implementation of community-based improvements that address the root causes of chronic diseases, such as physical activity.
* The *Community in Motion* initiative challenged residents to get moving, provided a mechanism for logging physical activity and gave participants a method for converting other activities, such as swimming, into miles walked.
* Signboards with a large “Red Running Man” are placed throughout the two counties as reminders to stay active. A “thermometer” graphic on the signs highlights the total number of miles logged to show progress and add incentive.

**Impact**

* More than a thousand residents participated 2010 – 2012; logging four million miles in 2010, six million miles in 2011, and eight million miles in 2012.
* *Community in Motion* sustained this physical activity effort at very low cost.
* One of the leaders of *Community in Motion*, Ali Donahue, describes the initiative as “a movement -not a program.”

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