



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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COUNTY RECEIVES \$16 MILLION FROM CDC *Grant Will Increase Healthy Eating and Physical Activity*

The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) has been awarded \$16 million from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to promote physical activity and healthy eating. Throughout the two-year *Communities Putting Prevention to Work* grant period, HHS will collaborate with numerous community partners to increase levels of physical activity, improve the accessibility of nutritious foods and reduce obesity and other chronic diseases.

San Diego County is among 44 communities in the country to be awarded funds through this federal competitive grant process.

"This is great news for San Diego County residents," said Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price of the County of San Diego Board of Supervisors. "These funds will be used in support of the County's vision of a healthy, safe, and thriving community for all children and families."

Examples of the grant projects include:

1. Increase consumption of healthy and locally grown food in schools, foster group homes, senior meal sites and other locations;
2. Increase the number of farmers markets that are participating with nutrition assistance programs;
3. Increase opportunities for physical activity in before/after school programs; and
4. Work with land use and transportation planners to increase opportunities for residents to be physically active and eat nutritious foods.

These strategies will drive changes in policy, systems, and environments, which will in turn influence changes in risk behaviors and, over the longer term, improve health. The 2009 San Diego Report Card on Children and Families revealed that nearly 30% of children in the 5th, 7th and 9th grades are overweight or obese. This is troubling because research has shown that obese children have a higher risk of becoming overweight or obese adults. In San Diego County, approximately 55 percent of adults (1.2 million people) are overweight or obese. Obesity can lead to type 2 diabetes, cancer, heart disease, stroke and other illnesses.

"This grant represents a unique opportunity for us to work on projects which support the County's ten-year health strategy agenda," said HHS Director Nick Macchione. "The overall return on investment is improved quality of life. Better health and less chronic diseases at the individual level leads to lower health care costs for the community as a whole."

Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced a total of \$372 million has been awarded to communities across the country to support public health efforts to reduce obesity, increase physical activity and improve nutrition. These funds were made possible through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

"It's important to remember that a poor diet, lack of physical activity and smoking are three behaviors which contribute to the four major chronic diseases that are responsible for more than 50 percent of deaths right here in our community," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. "Preventing disease is possible. Sometimes a few lifestyle changes will make the difference."

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