

# The Steps Program in Minneapolis, Minnesota

Funding Period: 2004–2009

CDC's Steps Program funds states, cities, and tribal groups to implement community-based chronic disease prevention programs to reduce the burden of obesity, diabetes, and asthma by addressing three related risk factors: physical inactivity, poor nutrition, and tobacco use. Steps-funded programs are showing what can be done locally in schools, work sites, communities, and health care settings to promote healthier lifestyles and help people make long-lasting and sustainable changes that can reduce their risk for chronic diseases.

## Background

With a population of 382,618, Minneapolis is the largest city in Minnesota. The Minneapolis Public Schools system comprises 99 schools. Approximately one-third of its adult residents are members of racial/ethnic minority groups (34.9%), including non-Hispanic blacks, Hispanics or Latinos, and American Indians. Even higher diversity rates are seen among children (60% are from minority groups or are multiracial). The Minneapolis Steps Program focuses interventions on three geographic areas of the city: the Near North, Phillips, and Northeast Planning Districts, whose residents have high rates of obesity, diabetes, smoking, and asthma. These areas are also among the most racially diverse in the city.

## Spotlight on Success

- The Minneapolis Steps Program partnered with a local WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children) clinic to distribute 300 Fit WIC kits (in English and Spanish) that provide parents with ideas for integrating physical activity into children's daily lives. After 6 months, 91% of parents reported that their children became more physically active, 66% of children watched less television than before, and 89% of parents spent more time playing or interacting with their children.
- In Minneapolis public schools, Steps promotes physical activity and healthy nutrition via a mini-grant program, Safe Routes to School, and specific initiatives such as a pilot program to increase healthy food options in vending machines. Thirty-two elementary classrooms implemented Take 10!, an academics-based, 10-minute daily physical activity program. Based on its success—83% of teachers believed the program helped students focus on academics, and 92% of teachers said they will continue implementing it—Steps plans to replicate and disseminate the program district-wide.

## Community Partnerships

The Community Partnerships are made up of people who live and work in Steps target communities. They represent faith-based institutions, social service agencies, health insurance plans, community clinics, parks and recreation departments, and other organizations. The partnerships set the direction for community-based Steps activities and aid in their implementation, ensuring that the varying needs of different cultural groups are considered. Among other activities, partnership members help select recipients for the Steps grant program and partner in various ways with the Get Fit Twin Cities program.

## Contact

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