

# The Anishinaabe Steps Program in Michigan

Funding Period: 2003–2008

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

The Anishinaabe Steps Program is building healthier tribal communities in a large intervention area, covering 38 of the 83 counties in Michigan, by working with schools, health care providers, work sites, and community leaders. This area is part of the 4-state Indian Health Services region known as the Bemidji Area. According to 2000 U.S. Census data, there are more than 42,000 American Indians living in the intervention area. The Steps Program reaches 8 of the 12 federally recognized tribal communities in Michigan: Bay Mills Indian Community, Grand Traverse Bands of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, Hannahville Indian Community, Huron Potawatomi Indian Community, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, and Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. Anishnaabe Steps efforts are focused on the significant health impact of chronic diseases and health disparities in these American Indian populations.

## Spotlight on Success

In 2005, the Anishinaabe Steps Program collaborated with the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, a consortium of the state's 12 federally recognized tribes, to conduct BRFSS surveys specifically tailored for American Indian adults (ages 18 years and older). The results of the surveys provided baseline data about health behaviors, including knowledge about disease prevention, in this population. For example, more than 80% of American Indian women older than age 40 reported having had a mammogram within the past 2 years; also, 13% of respondents said they had been diagnosed with diabetes and, of those, 57% said they had taken a class on managing the condition. The survey captured tribal-specific information, which never before existed in Michigan, that tribal leaders are using to design and implement chronic disease prevention activities and provide support for policy and environmental changes. Read this success story in *The Steps Program in Action*, available at [www.cdc.gov/steps/success\\_stories/pdf/michigan.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/steps/success_stories/pdf/michigan.pdf).

## Community Partnerships

The Tribal Community Partnerships are vital to the success of the Anishinaabe Steps Program. The partnerships consist of both traditional and nontraditional partners, including related health care departments within the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan and each of the eight Steps tribes. Other partners include representatives from the State of Michigan, cooperative extension services, Boys and Girls Clubs, academic institutions, national health networks, and Indian Health Service-supported programs. These various organizations guide the implementation and direction of interventions in the Steps tribal communities.

## Contact

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