

The Steps Program in Weld County, Colorado

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

Weld County has a population of about 229,000 and covers more than 4,000 square miles in northern Colorado. In 2005, nearly 12% of county residents lived below the federal poverty level, and the median household income was \$48,338 (2005 U.S. Census Bureau estimates). The county has more than 80,000 employees in all industries combined, with approximately 12 major employers that have more than 500 workers each. Weld County Steps Program activities primarily focus on the Hispanic and Latino residents that make up approximately 28% of the county's population.

Spotlight on Success

Using small-group educational conversations (pláticas), the Weld County Steps Program implemented a diabetes education program culturally and linguistically tailored to the Hispanic population. The pláticas are based on the *Small Changes Make a Big Difference* curriculum developed by the Colorado State University Cooperative Extension service and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. With Steps funding as leverage, the program was able to obtain in-kind donations of Spanish-language media messages. With a mobile medical van, this program also provided diabetes education to about 1,200 people in their residences and work sites, even to farm workers in fields. Participants reported an increase in knowledge about prevention and control of diabetes. They also reported eating more nutritious foods and increasing their physical activity. Read more about these successful activities in *The Steps Program in Action*, available at www.cdc.gov/steps/success_stories/pdf/weld.pdf.

Community Partnerships

The Weld County Steps Program has wide community support and involvement. More than nine active coalitions and task forces have been established, and many networks and partnerships have resulted. A wide variety of businesses, organizations, and health care entities are represented, including the Weld County Health Department, the Sunrise Community Health Center, the Greeley Chamber of Commerce, State Farm Insurance, the North Colorado Medical Center, the City of Greeley, Mayeda Family Chiropractic, the Colorado State University Extension service, New Frontier Bank, and Roche Constructors, Inc. The Steps Program also collaborates with the University of Northern Colorado, Aims Community College, and the Greeley and Carbon Valley Chambers of Commerce on education and training activities. Many of the partners have become program champions who lead efforts related to health promotion, physical activity, and nutrition in their places of worship, work sites, homes, community colleges, and many other places throughout the county.

Contact

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