

The Steps Program in Pueblo 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

Pueblo County, Colorado, has a population of about 153,000, and 38% are Hispanic or Latino. According to 2005 U.S. Census Bureau estimates, more than 18% of county residents were living below the federal poverty level, and the median household income was \$37,129. The Pueblo County Steps Program intervention area includes Colorado State University–Pueblo (CSU–Pueblo), where more than 25% of the approximately 4,000 students are Hispanic or Latino. About 68% of students in the Pueblo City Schools district (17,916 students) are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches.

Spotlight on Success

The Pueblo Steps Program, in collaboration with the Tackling Life's Choice program at the CSU–Pueblo campus, proposed a new comprehensive smoking policy that mandated no smoking in any building; no smoking within 20 feet of any entrance, window, or ventilation system; and no tobacco sales on campus. Among 193 students responding to a pre-implementation survey, more than 80% supported the smoke-free zones and 69% supported the tobacco sales ban. The faculty senate passed a motion to support the new policy and made a \$100 donation toward implementing it. The University President's Council then approved the policy effective July 1, 2006. Appropriate signage was placed on all entrances to every building on campus, and ash cans were moved at least 20 feet from each entrance. Newspaper articles, flyers, giveaways, e-mails, and thank-you cards were used to educate the students and faculty about the new policy throughout the 2006–2007 school year. Packs of gum were given to smokers who were seen complying with the policy.

Community Partnerships

Steps to a Healthier Pueblo has numerous partners who help plan and implement programs that focus on preventing obesity, diabetes, asthma, and tobacco use in the community. Steps partners include the City of Pueblo Planning Department, the Colorado State University Extension Office, Colorado State University–Pueblo, the Health and Human Services 2010 Task Force, Parkview Medical Center, the Pueblo City–County Health Department, the *Pueblo Chieftain*, Pueblo City Schools, Pueblo Community College, the Pueblo Community Diabetes Project, the Pueblo Community Health Center, the Pueblo Tobacco Education and Prevention Partnership, the Pueblo YMCA, the Recreation and Leisure 2010 Task Force, School District 70, the St. Mary–Corwin Medical Center, the Sangre De Cristo Arts & Conference Center, Buell Children's Museum, the Southeastern Colorado Area Health Education Center, and the Trane Corporation.

Contact

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