

ACTIVE LIVING PLAN



VICTORIA COUNTY ***2021***



Public Health
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Victoria County Public Health Dept.



Acknowledgements

The Victoria County Active Living Plan (ALP) was made possible because of community leadership engagement and partnerships.

Community Partners

We are grateful to have had representatives from a variety of sectors, including Business and Industry, Education, Faith-Based Settings, Healthcare, Mass Media, Not-For-Profit Organizations, Parks, Recreation & Fitness, Sports, Public Health, Military, and Transportation, Land Use, & Community Design.

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We are grateful for the community engagement dedicated to making the lives of Victoria County citizens healthier and more active.

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Executive Summary

Active living means engaging in physical activity in your everyday life.¹ Being physically active is one of the most important things a person can do to improve their health, yet most people do not meet recommended levels of physical activity.² Physical activity can extend and improve the quality of life. It may reduce the risk of developing health conditions, including obesity, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, heart attacks, strokes, diabetes, cancers, osteoporosis, and depression.²

Victoria County, a predominantly rural county in south Texas, has elevated rates of death from cancers and the morbidity and complications that arise from diabetes, compared to the state.³ The obesity rate is higher than the state benchmark.³ The rate of Victoria County adults who report no physical activity is higher than the state and national rate.⁴ Health consequences related to sedentary lifestyles pose serious health risks to the Victoria County population.

A group of key community stakeholders addressed this significant health threat by working collaboratively to develop an ALP. Engaging the community in improving its health and well-being is the approach used to create the plan. This method was adopted because it is consistent with the belief that the responsibility of being physically active falls as much on society and the environment as it does on the individual. City leaders from local government agencies, private sector institutions, community groups, and individuals worked together to identify gaps in community needs and propose initiatives to increase active living. The group learned about local, state, and national recommendations and identified evidence-based strategies that address environmental and policy-level change for increasing active lifestyles. The aim of the ALP is that Victoria County residents will implement healthy habits that improve health and wellness. The plan will be used to articulate a strategic vision and to educate the community about active living.

Introduction

Population Overview

Victoria County is located in rural south Texas. The area covers 882.5 square miles with an estimated population of 86,793.5. Races in the community include 46.8% Hispanic, 45.5% Anglo, and 6.2% African-American, and another 1.5% of residents represent 20 countries.³ The median age is 36.4 years, 48.8% of the population is male, and 51.2% female.³ The average per capita personal income is \$47,041.³ Approximately 14% of the residents live below the poverty level standard.³

State and National Physical Activity Data

The CDC estimates that nationally only 48% of adults meet the national guidelines for physical activity.⁶ Furthermore, less than 3 out of 10 high school students participate in 60 minutes of physical activity daily.⁶ Disparities exist between different populations and age groups. More non-Hispanic white adults meet the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for aerobic and muscle-strengthening activity than non-Hispanic black adults and Hispanic adults.⁶ Men are more likely than women to meet the guidelines for aerobic activity, and younger adults are more likely to meet the aerobic activity guidelines than older adults.⁶ Adults with more education are more likely than those with less education to meet the guidelines, and adults whose family income is above the poverty level are more likely to meet the guidelines than adults whose family income is at or below the federal poverty level.⁶

See Appendix A for age specific, 2008 physical activity guidelines.



Victoria County Public Health Data

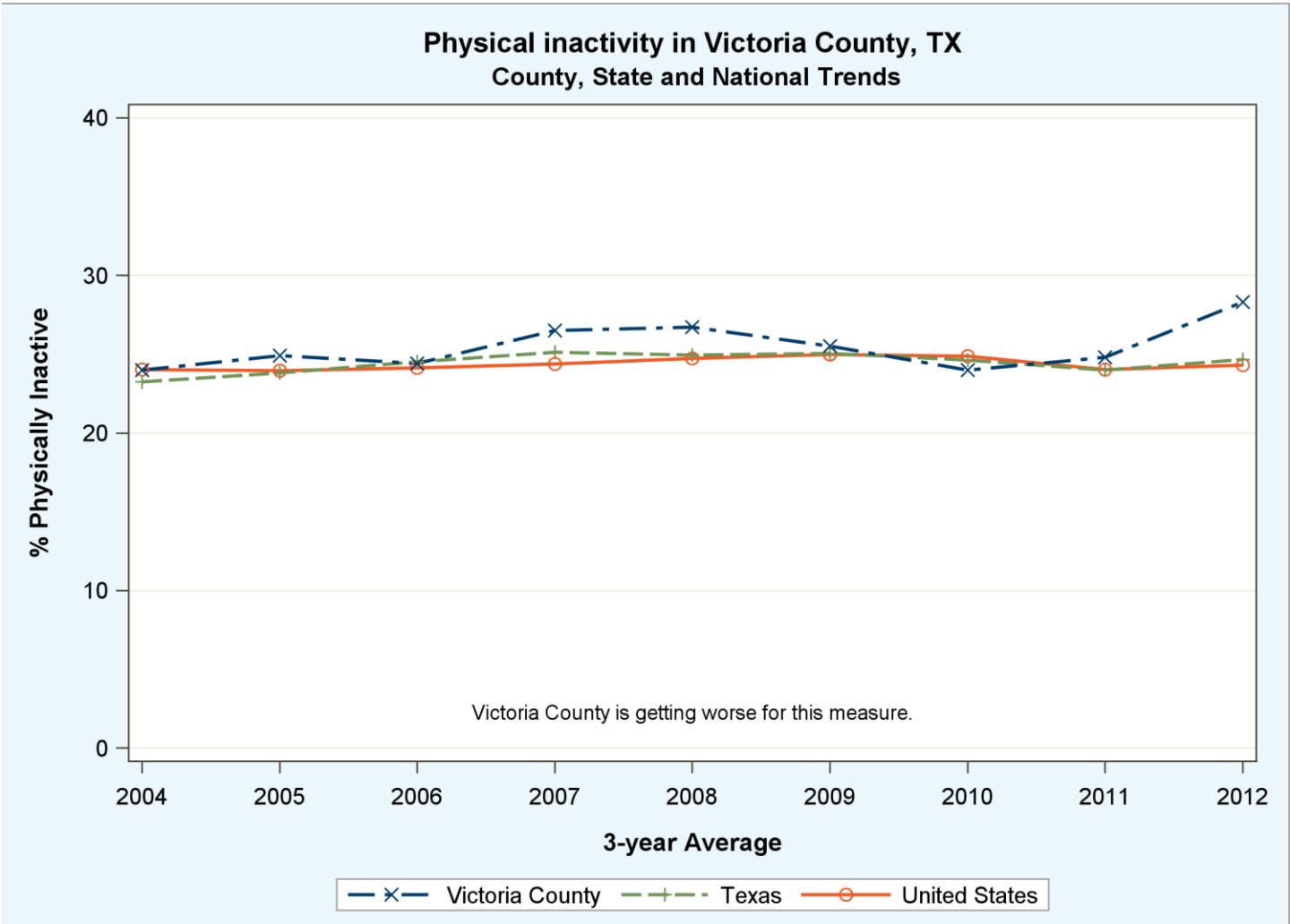
According to TSDHS data,³ the all cancer death rate of 173 per 100,000 was higher than the state rate of 156 per 100,000.³ The diabetes mortality rate for that same time frame was 36 per 100,000, well over the state rate of 22 per 100,000.³ The obesity rate in residents was 38%, compared to the state rate of 31%.⁴ The rate of Victoria County adults who reported no physical activity over a three-year average was 28%, higher than the state rate (24%) and the national rate (24%).⁴

Plan Development Approach

Development of the Victoria County ALP involved a multistep, collaborative process based on adoption of the National Physical Activity Plan (NPAP) which provides policy, program, and initiative resources for societal sectors:⁷

- Business and Industry
- Education
- Faith-Based Settings
- Health Care
- Mass Media
- Parks, Recreation, and Fitness
- Sports
- Public Health
- Transportation, Land Use, and Community Design

Each sector includes an overview and locally developed interventions to increase physical activity. Indicators for monitoring outcomes, the individual or organization(s) responsible, and the timeframe for their implementation and evaluation are also included.



Measures of Success

Population health and disease outcomes are monitored by the VCPHD through state health services reporting. Provider and community physical activity interventions can take years to impact public health. Therefore changes in outcomes such as obesity, diabetes, cancer and cardiac disease will be evaluated for improvement over time. Behavior changes as a result of community initiatives, events, and activities will be tracked as intermediate measures of success.

The following state reported measures will be monitored for positive changes as a result of increased physical activity implemented in the ALP. The numerator is the adult or adolescent population who meet specific criteria and the denominator is the adult or adolescent population of Victoria County.

1. Percent of adult population that are physically inactive: the percent of Victoria County adults that report no leisure-time physical activity in County Health Rankings (<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/rankings/data>)⁴
2. Proportion of residents who use active transportation (i.e. walk, bicycle, and public transit) to travel to work, school, and other destinations (https://nccd.cdc.gov/NPAO_DTM/LocationSummary.aspx?state=Texas)⁸
3. Proportion of adults who meet the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans for moderate-and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity (<http://www.health.gov/paguidelines>)⁹
4. Proportion of adolescents who meet 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans for moderate-and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity (<http://www.health.gov/paguidelines>)⁹

Mission and Vision

Mission

To facilitate development of a local culture that supports physically active lifestyles.

Vision

Victoria County residents will live, work, and play in environments that encourage regular physical activity.



ALP Development Guiding Principles

The Victoria County ALP is based on the U.S. NPAP vision that one day, all Americans will be physically active, and they will live, work, and play in environments that encourage and support regular physical activity.⁷

Several principles guided the ALP development:

- Physical activity improves health and wellness of community members.
- Health is everyone's business.
- Integrate the ALP into other local, state, and national health promotion and disease prevention education campaigns.
- Public health approach to increasing physical activity is needed to improve population health.
- Individuals are impacted not just by their own personal attributes and behavior, but also by political, societal and environmental influences.
- Success depends on engaging leadership and working collaboratively to determine the content of the plan and implementation of the plan.
- Make the healthier choice the easier choice where people live, work, pray, and play.
- Make it personal – tell success stories related to physical activity.



Business and Industry

Physical activity in the workplace has decreased with the rise in technology. Sedentary work environments are leading to increased health problems. Businesses lose money due to decreased productivity, absenteeism, and health care costs.¹⁰

Involving business and industry in efforts to improve physical activity leads to increased employee and employer participation in worksite programs. The NPAP offers strategies and tactics to increase physical activity. Our community will adopt similar strategies specific to our population.

Strategy 1:

Businesses provide employees opportunities and incentives to adopt and maintain a physically active lifestyle.

Tactics to accomplish the strategy:

- Provide awareness to businesses and industries about grant funding to promote healthy lifestyle programs for employees. Some businesses within Victoria promote a healthy lifestyle program for their employees. Currently, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) nondiscrimination regulations limit the value of incentives that employers may offer to employees who meet health related goals, to 20% of the cost of health care coverage. Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the maximum value of incentives has been increased to 30%. Increased ACA funding provides a grant program for small businesses to create a comprehensive workplace wellness program. To be eligible for the grant program, an employer must employ fewer than 100 employees who work at least 25 hours per week, and have had no worksite wellness program in place on March 23, 2010.

Strategy 2:

Businesses and industries will collaborate with each other to promote physical activity within the workplace and extend into the community.

Tactics to accomplish the strategy:

- Develop and implement a mentoring relationship between large industry and small business partners to increase workplace wellness programs. There are presently, several large industry partners in the Victoria area have sizable participation in workplace wellness programs. We will identify businesses that would be willing to share participation levels, workforce health data, and percentage of health care cost saving with small business partners to show the savings in both downtime and costs for their companies. This mentoring type relationship will help small businesses partners see the significance of working with their insurance provider to incentivize employees with a wellness program.

Evaluation of Business and Industry Strategies

Business and Industry sector strategies progress will be monitored by measuring and tracking the number of new wellness programs implemented, the number of businesses participating in workplace wellness program mentoring, and the number of employees impacted by wellness programs. Texas A&M Agrilife Extension will be responsible for implementing and monitoring these strategies within one year (June 2021).

PUBLIC HEALTH



Education

In the US, around 45 million students are enrolled in elementary and secondary schools.⁷ On average, these students spend around 1,300 hours per year in school.⁷ Research shows that academic performance is improved by physical activity. Schools face increasing pressure on academic achievement, and constant threats of diminishing budgets, which has led to physical activity program cuts. All educational staff, including teachers, coaches, and administrators are taking leadership roles in increasing physical activity for students. The educational sector strategies include assessment, having well-equipped school environments, school support, and individual and family participation to increase activity in the educational environment.¹⁰

STRATEGY 1

States and school districts will adopt policies that support implementation of the Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program model.

Tactics to accomplish this strategy:

- Create a committee that will develop initiatives to coordinate physical activities and competitions among students and educational staff. The newly developed activities would expand the offering of physical activities to staff. The implementation of activities depends on the collaborative development strategies formulated between the local school district, community college, and university, and at a minimum will begin within ninety days of development. Word of mouth and internal communication (e-mail, etc.) will increase participation.



STRATEGY 2

Schools will provide high-quality physical education programs.

Tactics to accomplish this strategy:

- Continue the development of coordinated physical activities among students and educational staff. In addition to the state-mandated requirements, schools in Victoria will create other types of physical activities for students such as Intramural activities at middle and high school, kick-ball teams at elementary, dance activities, and a variety of other types of sport club offerings. The extra-curricular involvement in the VISD is very active with a focus on student participation and involvement in school activities. In 2010-11 VISD had 353 different activities with approximately 15,000 students involved. For the 2014-15 school year, VISD had over 430 different activities with over 20,100 students participating. These activities are not all focused on physical activity, but the majority do include activities such as athletics, sports, band, dance, cheerleading, intramural, and kickball.

STRATEGY 3

Providers of afterschool, holiday, and vacation programs for children and youth will adopt policies and practices that ensure participants are appropriately physically active.

Tactics to accomplish this strategy:

- Work with providers and local agencies of afterschool, holiday, and vacation programs to ensure the inclusion of healthy physical activities that promote lifestyle changes. Create awareness of a variety of activities that promote healthy living through a range of marketing strategies. Advocate elements that would “kill two birds with one stone,” creating family time and exercise to encourage healthy lifestyles.

STRATEGY 4

States should adopt standards for childcare and early childhood education programs to ensure that children ages zero to five years are appropriately physically active.

Tactics to accomplish this strategy:

- Partner with organization such as Head Start, Texas Child Care Centers, and early childhood development agencies with incentives to add the standards to their policies and procedures. This reinforces with staff that it is mandatory. Provide training on what activities should be implemented and which activities are perceived as games but provide necessary exercise.

STRATEGY 5

Colleges and universities should provide students and employees with opportunities and incentives to adopt and maintain physically active lifestyles.

Tactics to accomplish this strategy:

- Develop award programs and competitions for staff and students. Create awareness on campuses by designating a person(s) to ensure flyers and information are being communicated throughout the colleges or universities. Work with the schools to offer employees assigned break time to be involved in these types of programs and competitions.

Victoria College currently has a wellness program on campus, where activities such as Wellness Wednesday provide training and healthy food choices for employees and students. There are also incentive programs with points accumulated that are traded in for a t-shirt or other award given for various physical activity accomplishments. Additionally, the Victoria College campus and the University of Houston, Victoria both offer Sports Club Teams. Other activities that have been part of the college and university culture include Intramural activities, organized athletic teams, Corporate Cup and Walk Across Texas.

STRATEGY 6

Educational institutions will provide pre-service professional training and in-service professional development programs that prepare educators to deliver physical activity programs for students of all types.

Tactics to accomplish this strategy:

- The local public school district, VISD, requires all physical education (PE) teachers to participate in professional growth opportunities each year. The state requires all certified teachers to receive 200 hours of professional growth every five years. VISD offers a variety of training opportunities for its teachers and child nutrition employees such as the Coordinated Approach to Child Care (CATCH) program, radKIDS (safety with physical activity), the Young Athletes Program for Pre-K, Preschool Programs for Children with Disabilities (PPCD) and Special Needs students, and ways to understand the state standards in planning for instruction in the classroom. Also, a variety of presenters and speakers are brought in to share with the PE teachers and teacher's activities fit for the 20 minute recess time called brain-break activities. VISD teachers have received training by leading brain research consultants such as Eric Jensen on the importance of moving and physical energy as it relates to the brain and learning. Other professional development opportunities address learning styles of students and its importance to some students' learning.

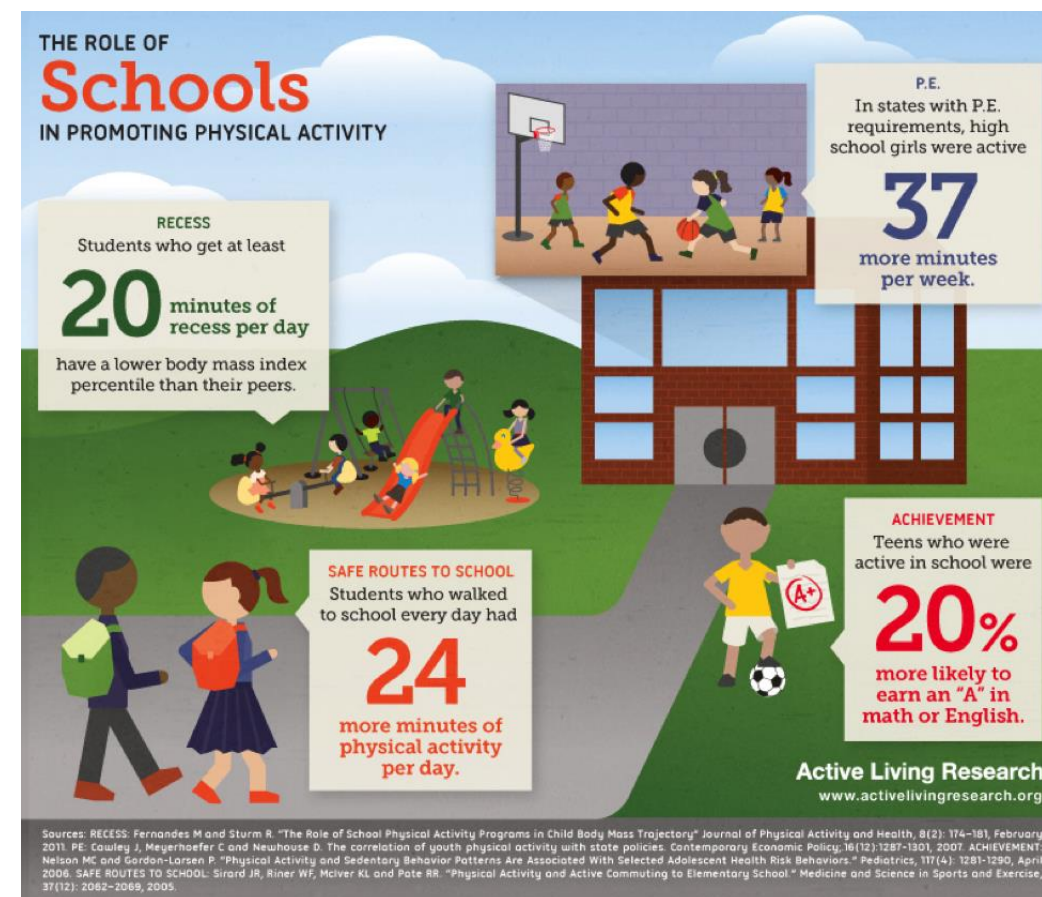


STRATEGY 7

Professional and scientific organizations will develop and advocate for policies that promote physical activity among all students.

Tactics to accomplish this strategy:

- The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) was formed within VISD to not only look at current existing strategies, but to identify gaps, create innovative solutions, and develop strategies for implementation at each organization to create a culture of healthy active living among educational staff and students. The group will publicize activities such as availability of gym facilities, healthy eating events, group walks, staff intramurals, volleyball leagues, Zumba classes, faculty softball tournaments, three on three basketball, and bowling teams to name a few examples. The goal is to develop at least one activity for Strategy 5 and one activity for Strategy 6 to be implemented across local organizations.



Evaluation of Education Strategies

Education sector strategies progress will be monitored by: measuring and tracking the number of physical activity competitions among students and educational staff; the number of student and staff participants; the number of student participants in extracurricular PE programs; the number of activities related to afterschool, holiday, and vacation programs; the number of educational organization partnerships to ensure early childhood physical activity compliance; the number of award programs and competitions, as well as the number of education staff and student participants in these programs; the number of professional trainings and in-services provided to educators; and the number of educator participants in these trainings, and development of activities for Strategy 5 and Strategy 6 to implement across local organizations. The Education Sector group will be responsible for implementing and monitoring these strategies within one year (June 2021).

See Appendix B for Education Physical Activity Requirements.



Health Care

Regular physical activity promotes health, prevents disease, and improves quality of life. Health care has typically focused on treatment, but the importance of prevention is now being recognized.¹⁰ The health care provider and patient relationship offers the opportunity to influence behavior in the area of physical activity. Healthcare strategies in the NPAP are aimed at 1) prioritizing efforts to promote physical activity 2) recognizing physical inactivity as preventable and treatable conditions that have health and cost implications, 3) partnering with other sectors to improve access to physical activity related services, particularly for disadvantaged populations with limited access, and 4) expanding education about physical activity for all healthcare professionals.¹⁰

Strategy 1

Healthcare systems will increase the priority of physical activity assessment, advice, and promotion. Will make considerations for Covid-19 precautions and virtual accommodations.

Tactics to accomplish the strategies:

- Increase active living awareness, as well as identify and promote access to physical activity events and services in the local community.
 1. Include health care events and services focused on physical activity in the City of Victoria Parks and Recreation Activities Guide brochure.
 2. Advertise physical activity event information on local television station.
 3. Provide list of health care activities and services on VCPHD web page.
 4. Publicize physical activity events and services in local magazines.
 5. Promote Get Moving Movie Night. Facilitate live or DVD physical activity prior to the movie.
 6. Determine feasibility of developing a community-wide activity application (app) to share with community members.
- Promote pedestrian safety education to community members. Address walking trail and residential sidewalk use safety to increase walking in the community.
 1. Provide safe walking education for pedestrians and drivers in schools, as well as through social media, the local newspaper, and PSA.
 2. Promote safe walking education through the Police Department Facebook page.

Strategy 2

Hospitals and health care providers will partner with other sectors to promote access to evidence-based physical activity-related services and to reduce health disparities.

Tactics to accomplish the strategy:

- Increased physical activity in the community increases the risk of cardiac or respiratory arrest incidents. Protect the local population by increasing the number of community members who know how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
 1. Local hospitals, Emergency Management Services (EMS), firefighters, college instructors, medical and other students will be involved in a city-wide CPR educational/certification campaign.
 2. Local healthcare professionals will promote CPR certification in the health care settings.
 3. Work with SHAC to incorporate STOP THE BLEED courses free to the public.

Evaluation of Health Care Strategies

Health Care sector strategies progress will be monitored by measuring and tracking the number of areas physical activity events and services are promoted, the number of activities held, the number of people reached through advertisements about physical activity events, the number of pedestrian safety educational offerings, the number of people reached through social media, news, and PSA, safe walking education included on Police Department Facebook page, the number of city-wide CPR activities, and the number of participants in CPR campaign. The Health Care Sector group will be responsible for implementing and monitoring these strategies within one year (June 2021).



Mass Media

Mass media is a powerful tool for public communication and refers to both traditional and newer routes of widespread communication. It includes, but is not limited to television, billboards social networking sites, electronic applications (apps), and text messaging. Due to its persuasiveness in American culture, it can be a useful tool to help create changes in behavior and attitudes.¹⁰ The effectiveness of mass media use in improving physical activity levels has not been demonstrated when used independently.¹⁰ However, the Victoria County ALP will use mass media to promote community-based physical activity.

Strategy 1

Government health agencies, in collaboration with non-profit health organizations will launch a physical activity campaign to educate individuals about effective behavioral strategies for increasing physical activity.

Tactics to accomplish the strategy:

1. Approach the local television station about reinstating “Health Minutes” that a local hospital utilized in the past. These are pre-taped segments focusing on different health aspects that can be used as part of their newscasts once a week (Wednesdays) rather than buying or running information from nonlocal institutes. The information would be community-oriented, not hospital specific, as in the past.
2. Seek partnership agreements with local media contacts for “free media” or matching funds to air Public Service Announcements (PSA) – billboard, television, cable, and radio – for any amount of time they will allow (weekly/ monthly participation onscreen or on air).
3. Produce a physical activity promotional PowerPoint for use by city and county authorities and service clubs in Victoria County.

Strategy 2

Physical activity professionals will partner with communications experts to develop mass communication messages and a standardized “brand” for promoting physical activity that is consistent with current federal physical activity guidelines.

Tactics to accomplish the strategy:

1. Create a campaign for the physical activity promotional program. Will seek donated time or non-profit cost. All PSAs will use the program campaign.
2. Develop a tagline to use in all communication identifying the program purpose, vision, or value statement.
3. Develop a monthly calendar with themes and premade press releases and scheduled appearances with health and physical fitness professionals that are specialists in those areas.



Strategy 3

Professionals in physical activity and public health will inform mass media professionals about the effects of physical activity on health and on effective strategies for increasing physical activity at the individual and community levels.

Tactics to accomplish the strategy:

1. Use a media calendar to push messaging out monthly to the news media, with organizational contact names to interview.
2. Ask local media organizations – news station and the newspaper – to partner with the new campaign in a competition to lose weight and increase activity for added exposure.

Strategy 4

Professionals in physical activity and public health will optimize application of social media and emerging technologies in media campaigns to promote physical activity.

Tactics to accomplish the strategy:

1. Develop program brand on Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest accounts and allow active posting. Assign someone to be in charge of monitoring and responding when questions come up. Regular posts can be managed via Canva. Organizations and fitness professionals can send information to manager to be posted. Aim for three posts from media professionals a week.
2. Have a page on the VCPHD website with program information and upcoming community activities posted with icon/logo block for people to click on.

Evaluation of Mass Media Strategies

Mass Media sector strategies progress will be monitored by measuring and tracking the creation of a campaign and logo/icon for physical activity promotional programs; the creation of a tagline for identifying the program purpose; the number of participants at physical activity events mentioned in the VCPHD website; the number of health segments aired on local newscasts; the number of PSA aired; the creation of a physical activity promotional PowerPoint; the creation of a media calendar; the number of weight and activity competitions held in the community; the number of posts on social media from media professionals per week; the number of electronic and social media likes and interactions through social media tools, the attendance in events promoted in the media, and page views or likes to organization websites; social media participation; and the number of media messages presented to community members. The Mass Media Sector group will be responsible for implementing and monitoring these strategies within one year (June 2021).

Parks, Recreation, & Fitness

The parks, recreation, & fitness sector provides access, education, and resources that allow people to incorporate enjoyable and meaningful physical activities into their lives. Playgrounds, community sports groups, trails, and gyms, provide means for people to participate in outdoor recreational activities. A focus of this sector is to help eliminate disparities across the population.¹⁰

Strategy 1

Develop new, and enhance existing, community recreation, fitness, and park programs that provide and promote healthy physical activity opportunities for diverse users across the lifespan.

Tactics to accomplish the strategy:

1. The YMCA provides Get Fit Texas, a free, no membership required, health and wellness program for individuals with developmental disabilities or epilepsy. The YMCA President/CEO is responsible for the program that started July 1, 2016.
2. The City of Victoria's Parks & Recreation department created a free mobile "pop up park" in 2020, where they bring park activities and lawn games to events for children and adults to play.

Strategy 2

The community will improve availability of and access to, safe, clean, and affordable community recreation, fitness, and park facilities to support physical activity for all residents.

Tactic to accomplish the strategy:

1. Ensure that the City of Victoria Parks and Recreation Activity Guide brochure is readily available and accessible to the public. Update the current activity guide brochure (<http://www.victoriatx.org/Home/Components/News/News/234/18?arch=1>).

Strategy 3

Community recreation and park organizations, the fitness industry and private business will recruit, train, and retain a diverse group of leaders, staff, and volunteers to promote, organize, lead, and advocate for initiatives that encourage physical activity in the community.

Tactic to accomplish the strategy:

1. Participate in the development of the Mayors Fitness Council initiative.

Strategy 4

Community recreation and parks organizations, the fitness industry and private business will advocate for increased and sustainable funding and resources to create new, or enhance existing, physical activity facilities and services in areas of high need.

Tactics to accomplish the strategy:

1. Advocate for more and/or improved playgrounds in the community.
2. Create fitness trails and fitness stations on existing bike/jogging paths.

Strategy 5

Community recreation and park organizations and the for- and not-for-profit fitness industry will improve monitoring and evaluation of participation in community-based physical activity programs to gauge their effectiveness in promoting increased levels of physical activity for all.

Tactics to accomplish the strategy:

1. Organize more community-wide health contests (Ex: HEB regional weight loss contest).
2. Organize a sports activity group to provide local oversight of youth activities.
3. Work with VISD through the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) to open up their basketball gyms for community use to run leagues and practices for basketball or volleyball.
4. Provide sports conditioning and injury education links/information on a website, such as injury prevention, hydration, purchasing the right exercise equipment.

Evaluation of Parks, Recreation, & Fitness Strategies

Parks, Recreation, & Fitness sector strategies progress will be monitored by measuring and tracking the number of participants in the Get Fit Texas program, availability of a sports activities website, the number of website hits on the sports activities website, an updated City of Victoria Parks and Recreation Activity Guide brochure, participation of the Parks and Recreation and YMCA leadership in the Mayor's Fitness Council development, the number of activities to advocate for new and/or improved playgrounds, the number of fitness trail and fitness stations on bike and jogging paths, the creation of a sports activity group, the number of hits on a website related to sports education, and the number of community contests, studies, and reports. The City of Victoria Parks and Recreation Department and the YMCA will be responsible for implementing and monitoring these strategies within one year (June 2021).



Sports

Sports can make a large impact on a person's daily life and overall health. They help create a continuous routine of physical exercise, reduce the risk of developing chronic diseases and encourage group participation within the community. Primary focus in this sector will be creating community input and group accountability for sector goals, developing a more inclusive sports programming while increasing participation in all age group populations.

Strategy 1

Establish FitVic as a central resource to unify and strengthen stakeholders in the sports sector.

1. FitVic Coalition meetings will serve as the sports sector meeting hub and use recognized platform to increase stakeholder participation in sports programs and allow for community input.

Strategy 2

Work with local sports organizations to adopt policies and practices that promote physical activity, participant growth, and development of physical literacy.

Tactics to accomplish the strategy:

1. Using Victoria Parks & Recreation as a sports program guide, other sports organizations will collaborate to develop free/affordable and inclusive sports programming.
2. Invite VISD sports officials to provide sports education and material to guide community sports programs.

Evaluation of Sports Strategies

Sports sector strategies progress will be monitored by FitVic Coalition agenda and minutes recording of sports sector projects; participation numbers of community

Strategy 2

Establish community-based experiential lifestyle programs focused on healthy eating and physical activity to reinforce education offered.

Tactics to accomplish the strategies:

1. Establish two community gardens in our county aimed at promotion of healthy eating.
2. Provide community gardening classes.
3. Offer cooking and food preparation classes.
4. Create healthy eating messages and integrate these into social media and webpages to provide additional educational support.

Implementation Plan

The VCPHD, under the guidance of Consultant Brandi Williams APR, and anticipated partnership(s) with City of Victoria Solid Waste Department and a community gardening consultant, would be the responsible party for all the initiatives. The consultant would suggest reversing the strategies so that the education comes before the actual set-up of the community gardens. The consultant/community gardener would create the presentations and conduct/facilitate the education beginning in November 2016 and complete all modules by January 2017. The consultant would initiate the community garden planning in November, 2016, but formally break ground around February or March, 2017. The consultant will also work closely with the VCPHD internal media specialist to promote Texas Healthy Communities objectives through health promotion associated activities as well as provide the following:

- Lead with distribution of Podcast to assist in participant/patient recruitment efforts.
- Working with the VCPHD to research and identify key areas of opportunity to implement the ALP public health sector strategy.
- Recruitment/retention efforts.
- Development of customized educational and experiential lifestyle community outreach plan to address identified needs.
- Provide staff training to assist with implementation of strategy.
- Work with Texas Healthy Communities staff to develop sustainability plan for overall effort.

Evaluation of Public Health Strategies

Public Health sector strategies progress will be monitored by measuring and tracking the number of educational offerings for community gardening, the number of recruitment and retention efforts, the creation of community gardens, the number of composting, gardening, cooking, and food preparation classes, the number of tours provided at city composting facilities, the number of healthy eating webpage hits and other related social media hits, the creation of an educational and experiential lifestyle community outreach plan, and the number of staff trained to assist with strategy implementation. The VCPHD will be responsible for implementing and monitoring these strategies within one year (June 2021).



Transportation, Land Use, and Community Design

Design and development of communities must be intentional to make it easier for people to be physically active in their everyday lives. Impartial and unbiased design of communities and transportation systems can make walking and biking both safe and enjoyable, provide housing that is conducive to healthy lifestyles with affordable transportation options, and offer ample space for active recreation.¹⁰

One of the greatest transportation challenges of Victoria County is facilitating the transition from passive transportation (in a personal or public vehicle) to active transportation (walking or biking). The option to use active transport depends on several factors: time and motivation, availability of a car, and community design. If a person has a car but it is safe, convenient, and pleasant to walk or bike, the likelihood of active commuting increases. Furthermore, if a person's only option to get to work or school is to walk through an unsafe neighborhood or on unsafe roads, the likelihood travel by passive transportation increases. Our goal is to encourage people to use active transportation not because they are forced to, but because they want to. Victoria County does not have zoning laws so relies on home-rule municipality structure for development of strategies.

Strategy 1

Community planners will encourage the integration of active design principles into land-use, transportation, community, and economic development planning processes wherever feasible.

Tactic to accomplish the strategy:

- The City of Victoria recently adopted a revised comprehensive plan which includes land use and mobility chapters. The mobility chapter has goals that include alternative transportation options for hike and bike networks and improved pedestrian circulation.

Strategy 2

Transportation and public health agencies will implement strategies to encourage and reward more walking and bicycling.

Tactics to accomplish the strategy:

- The City of Victoria transportation initiatives include three strategies:
 1. Create and maintain a sidewalk inventory in order to determine gaps which create areas of concerns for pedestrian traffic in neighborhoods with incomplete sidewalks.
 2. Develop a survey for pedestrian/cycling use and interest using Paseo deVictoria, which provides possible new trail options and how to expand current trails. The plan also addresses types of paths that should be considered when constructing new or reconstructing existing roadways.
 3. FitVic Coalition will attend the monthly MPO planning committee meeting beginning August 2021 to advocate planning needs for pedestrian/cycling.

Evaluation of Transportation, Land Use, and Community Design Strategies

Transportation, Land Use, and Community Design sector strategies progress will be monitored by measuring and tracking achievement of goals in the City of Victoria comprehensive land use and mobility plan, including the alternative transportation options for hike and bike networks, and improved pedestrian circulation. Progress will also be tracked through goal achievement of the three strategies outlined in the City of Victoria transportation initiatives.



Faith-Based Settings

The primary mission of religious congregations is the spiritual growth and well-being of its members, but most faith-based organizations promote community service, outreach, and volunteerism. Combined with broad reach across diverse communities, religious congregations are well-positioned to play an important role in public health practice. They have unique social systems, environments, and physical structures, communication channels, policies and practices, and often, health-related goals and supports. Faith-based settings are particularly conducive to promoting physical activity.⁷

Community leaders will identify and recruit an interfaith group to facilitate the recommended strategies designed by the Victoria County ALP Council. Strategies will be focused on the largest churches in the community, but any faith-based setting may participate in the initiatives if interested.

Strategy 1

Faith based organizations will identify effective applications of their health ministries to promote physical activity.

Tactic to accomplish the strategy:

- Educate clergy and church groups, specifically youth, men, and women groups about the benefit of physical activity and ways to live an active lifestyle.

Strategy 2

Faith-based organizations will establish partnerships with organizations from other sectors to promote physical activity in a manner that is consistent with their values, beliefs, and practices.

Tactic to accomplish the strategy:

- Partner services with organizations and community resources to promote healthy lifestyle education, such as healthy cooking, diabetes education, and fitness classes.

Strategy 3

Large faith-based organizations will institutionalize physical activity promotion programs for their employees.

Tactic to accomplish the strategy:

- Promote and involve church members in community garden activities. Provide garden produce from the community gardens to church members.

Strategy 4

Large faith-based organizations will identify or develop marketing materials tailored for faith community leaders to enhance their perceptions of the value of physical activity.

Tactics to accomplish the strategy:

1. Collaborate with local healthcare systems and mass media to develop and publicize physical activity education.
2. Use existing or create faith based specific marketing materials to promote health screenings in local churches.

Strategy 5

Physical activity and public health organizations will partner with faith-based organizations in developing and delivering physical activity programs that are accessible to and tailored for diverse groups of constituents.

Tactic to accomplish the strategy:

- Churches will sponsor physical activities and events for their church members.

Evaluation of Faith-Based Settings Strategies

Faith-Based Settings sector strategies progress will be monitored by measuring and tracking the number of clergy and church participants receiving education to promote active living and active lifestyle classes, the number of church members participating in community garden activities, and the number of church sponsored physical activity events. A Faith-Based Settings interfaith group will be responsible for implementing and monitoring these strategies within two years (June 2021)





Conclusion

Obesity is an urgent U.S. health issue that requires collaboration between public health and the community to decrease the incidence. Being inactive can increase the likelihood of overweight and obesity. Sedentary behaviors at all ages have negative consequences on health and well-being. Most people know that physical activity is beneficial, but not everyone knows the exact benefits or how to take action or change behavior to adopt a healthier lifestyle. Building relationships and partnerships with community members, businesses, government agencies, and organizations is an approach that can help promote population health education and policy, systems, and environmental improvements. The Victoria County ALP provides strategies and appropriate measurements designed to increase physical activity, which supports improved overall health and potential to reduce obesity-related health risks.

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Appendix A

Age-Specific, 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans (health.gov, 2016)

	Total Daily Physical Activity	Aerobic Activity	Muscle Strengthening	Bone Strengthening
Children and Adolescents (ages 6-17)	60 minutes (1 hour)	Most of 60 minutes should be moderate or vigorous intensity aerobic activity, at least 3 days a week.	Include muscle-strengthening activity, such as climbing trees, using playground equipment, or lifting weights, at least 3 days a week.	Include bone-strengthening activity, such as running or jumping rope, at least 3 days a week.
Adults	Avoid inactivity, some physical activity is better than none.	150 minutes (2 hours 30 minutes) each week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, such as brisk walking or tennis; 75 minutes (1 hour 15 minutes) each week of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity, such as jogging or swimming laps. Do aerobic activity in episodes of at least 10 minutes and, if possible, spread out through the week.	Do muscle-strengthening activities, such as lifting weights or using resistance bands that are moderate or high intensity and involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week.	
Older Adults (age 65 and older)	Avoid inactivity, some physical activity is better than none. For older adults who are fit and have no limiting chronic conditions, the guidelines are the same as those for all adults. For older adults who cannot do the recommended activity, they should be as physically active as their abilities and conditions allow.	150 minutes (2 hours 30 minutes) each week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, such as brisk walking or gardening; 75 minutes (1 hour 15 minutes) each week of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity, such as jogging or swimming laps. Do aerobic activity in episodes of at least 10 minutes and, if possible, spread out through the week.	Do muscle-strengthening activities, such as lifting weights or using resistance bands that are moderate or high intensity and involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week.	

Appendix B

Education Physical Activity Requirements

According to Texas Education Code (TEC) §28.002(a)(2)(C), the administrative rules adopted by the State Board of Education (SBOE), Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §74.1(a)(2)(C), §74.2, and §74.3, Physical Education (PE) must be offered in grades K-12 as a part of the required curriculum in Texas Schools. A school district may provide instruction in a variety of arrangements and settings, may add elements at its discretion, but must not delete or omit instruction in the enrichment curriculum which includes PE.

Pre-K through Grade 5

The Texas Education Code, TEC §28.002(l) requires students enrolled in full-day prekindergarten, in kindergarten, or in a grade level below grade six to participate in moderate or vigorous daily physical activity for at least 30 minutes throughout the school year as part of the district's physical education curriculum or through structured activity during a school campus's daily recess. To the extent practicable, a school district shall require a student enrolled in prekindergarten on less than a full-day basis to participate in the same type and amount of physical activity as a student enrolled in full-day prekindergarten. If a school district determines, for any particular grade level below grade six, that requiring moderate or vigorous daily physical activity is impractical due to scheduling concerns or other factors, the district may as an alternative require a student in that grade level

Grades 6-8

The TEC §28.002(l) requires students enrolled in grade levels six, seven, and eight to participate in moderate or vigorous daily physical activity for at least 30 minutes for at least four semesters during those grade levels as part of the district's physical education curriculum. Additionally, a school district may, as an alternative, require a student enrolled in a grade level for which the district uses block scheduling, to participate in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 225 minutes during each period of two school weeks.

High School

The TAC §74.12(b)(6)(F) and §74.73(b)(6)(E) limits the total number of PE credits that can be earned at 4.0 credits. Although only 1.0 PE credit is required for graduation, additional state elective credits may be earned by taking any combination of the approved TEKS-based PE courses or participation in approved substitution activities. School districts in the State of Texas are required to teach a standards based curriculum. Texas Education Code, TEC §28.002(d)(1-11) and TAC §74.1(b) require schools to establish objectives and implement an enrichment curriculum that includes all of the PE TEKS-based standards. School districts may add elements at their discretion but must not delete or omit instruction in the foundation and enrichment curriculum. In addition, schools are required to adhere to the definition of a public school PE curriculum described in TAC §74.37.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has recommended at a minimum 60 minutes up to several hours of unstructured physical activity (or free play) each day. This free plan could be made up of outdoor play and/or moderate to vigorous activity. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services has established guidelines for licensing agencies that care for children afterschool, on holidays, and during vacation and follow the similar guidance as recommended by the CDC.

Activities for pre-kindergarten age children must include at least the following physical development type of activities:

1. Daily morning and afternoon opportunities for outdoor play when weather permits;
2. Opportunities for thinking skills and sensory development. Examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include sand/water play, blocks, framed puzzles with up to 30 pieces, variety of large stringing beads, and simple board games;
3. Opportunities for small-muscle development. Examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include large non-toxic crayons, markers, paint, water colors and various size brushes, adjustable easels, collage materials, chalkboard and chalk, clay/dough and tools, workbench and accessories, round end scissors, glue and paste, different types of music and videos, rhythm instruments, and fingerplays;

4. Opportunities for large-muscle development. Examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include small wagons, light-weight balls of all sizes, small wheelbarrows, tricycles, push toys, swings, slides, climbing equipment, balance beam, hanging bars, and outdoor building materials;
5. Opportunities for active play both indoors and outdoors. Examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include active games such as tag and hot potato, dancing and creative movement to music and singing, simple games and dramatic or imaginary play that encourages running, stretching, climbing, walking and marching.

Activities for school-age children must include at least the following physical type activities:

1. Daily morning and afternoon opportunities for outdoor play when weather permits;
2. Opportunities for thinking skills and sensory development. Examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include sand and water play; construction materials/blocks; puzzles with 50 or more pieces; pattern-making materials, such as wood, paper, plastic, beads, ceramic tiles, cloth, or cardboard; games that contain rules and require some skill or strategy; specific skill development materials, such as rulers, tape measures, telescopes, weather observation equipment, models of the solar system, and microscopes; books; and magazines;
3. Opportunities for small-muscle development. Examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include art and craft materials, such as paints, markers, colored pencils, crayons, clay, weaving, or braiding materials; music and musical instruments of all types; and tape/CD recorders and players;
4. Opportunities for large-muscle development. Examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include balls and sports equipment, such as kick balls, baseballs, soccer balls, basketballs, skates, and horseshoes; riding equipment, such as kick scooters or skateboards, with kneepads, elbow pads, and helmets; outdoor and gym equipment such as slides, swings, climbing apparatus, and upper-body equipment;
5. Opportunities for active play both indoors and outdoors. Examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include active games such as tag and Simon says, dancing and creative movement to music and singing, simple games and dramatic or imaginary play that encourages running, stretching, climbing, and walking.



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