

Making a Difference

2019 Stephens County Adult BLT In-Depth Plan Summary Sumer Russell: Family and Community Health

Relevance

More than 3.7 million individuals receive benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), historically known as food stamps. Studies have shown individuals who live in poverty (including SNAP recipients) have dietary intakes that are not in agreement with current recommendations (i.e. Dietary Guidelines or MyPlate). This audience, like many, may not recognize their risk for foodborne illness.



There are 7,000 recipients in Stephen County receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (source: Health & Human Services.gov). Research suggests that SNAP recipients and other limited resource audiences consume diets that are not in agreement with current dietary recommendations, potentially increasing their risk for the development of chronic disease. Food insecurity, obesity, and lack of access to healthy foods are other issues that impact this audience and have strong potential to negatively impact health.

- 34.8% of Texas adults are obese¹.
- Texas ranks 10th as the state with the highest adult obesity rates¹.
- Regular physical activity and controlling weight can significantly reduce the risk and impact of chronic diseases like heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer at multiple sites, hypertension, and osteoporosis².
- Community-based programs that develop a strong network, like WAT!, help motivate and maintain individual's physical activity.

Response

The Family and Community Health, Program Area Committee of Stephens County have identified health and fitness as a critical issue. Walk Across Texas (WAT) is recognized as a Best Practice Physical Activity Program by the Texas Department of State Health Services. Walk Across Texas was implemented in Stephens County starting end of June and ended the beginning of August. Walk Across Texas program is an eight- week program designed to help people of all ages support one another to establish the habit of regular physical activity.

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

Teams of eight people, or individuals walk 830 miles for eight weeks, visualizing walking across the map of Texas. Components of the program included:

- Recruitment of participants and teams
- Registration of participants and teams
- Weekly Encouragement newsletters
- Kickoff newsletter & incentive item, Mid- Way newsletter & incentive item & Celebration newsletter & incentive item

Results

A total of 40 Stephens County residents participated in Walk Across Texas, these participants have the potential to save a collective \$70,277.00 to their future health care costs by avoiding type 2 diabetes and by reducing work absences. This total reflects participation from the following:

- Average age 30-49
- 89% Female
- 11% Male
- Teams from banks, schools, churches, courthouse, and organizations

The results as reported by participants are as follows:

Walk Across Texas! Adult -Stephens county

- 40 adults registered
- 25 adults entered a wrap-up form
- 24 participants benefiting
- Diabetes Total Savings: \$38,573
- Cardiovascular Disease Total Savings: \$31,704
- Total Economic Impact: \$70,277

The economic benefit of the Walk Across Texas! Adult program is a measure that uses WAT! program evaluation results, disease risk rates, health care costs, and productivity parameters. Economic benefits are calculated for program participants who moved from inactive (pre-WAT!) to active (post-WAT!). The final number of participants benefitting is based on a follow-up survey that determined the percentage of those who maintained activity levels 3 – 9 months post program.

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VALUE

Better Living for Texans



These nutrition programs teach low-income audiences to prepare nutritious meals, stretch their food resources, improve their food-safety practices, and participate in regular physical activity. This not only improves the quality of life and reduces the risk of chronic disease for participants, but also lowers public health care costs.

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions