

# Making a Difference

## 2020 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 1,326 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 obese<sup>1</sup>.
- Texas ranks 19<sup>th</sup> as the state with the highest adult obesity rates<sup>1</sup>.
- Texas rans the 17<sup>th</sup> as the most physically inactive state.
- 27.2% of Texas adults report being physically inactive i.e. did not engage in physical activity or exercise during the previous 30 days other than for their regular job<sup>1</sup>.

### 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 as well starting in October ending the end of November. 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.

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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 & Facebook posts
- Weekly incentive gift certificate drawing to local Ridge Nutrition Smoothie Shop
- Wrap Up incentive gift bag for all who participated in online survey

## Results

A total of 27 Stephens County residents participated in Walk Across Texas, these participants have the potential to save a collective \$67,656.00 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
- 3,712 miles walked
- Teams from banks, schools, churches, courthouse, and organizations

The Economic Impact for Stephens County based on 27 adult participants.

### Walk Across Texas! Adult -Stephens county

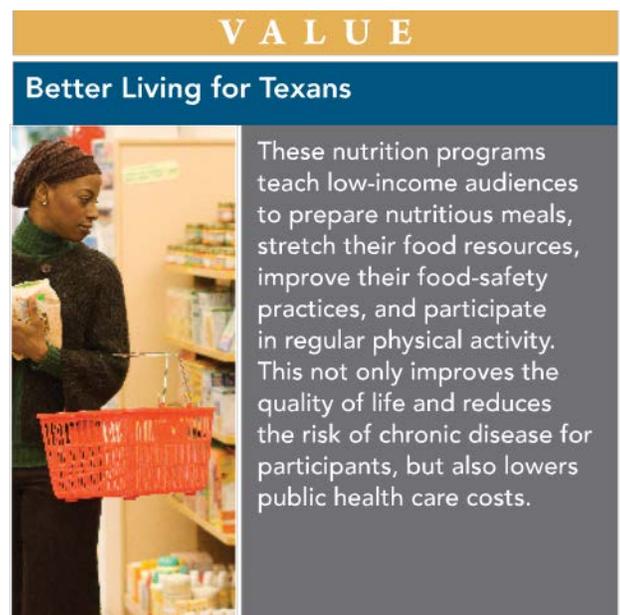
- 27 adults registered
- 17 adults entered a wrap-up form
- Type 2 Diabetes Economic Impact Total Savings: \$37,122.00
- Cardiovascular Disease Economic Impact Total Savings: \$30,534.00
- Total Economic Impact: \$67,656.00

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.

By engaging in regular physical activity, this reduces a person's risk of disease each year of their remaining life. The dollar value of the economic benefit of WAT! is calculated in terms of the projected lifetime health care cost savings and worker productivity gains.

### For More Information Contact:

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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.

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*Providing Solutions*

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