

**Health Action:**  
*Planning for a Healthy Sonoma County*

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**Community Health Task Force**

**MEETING SUMMARY**

June 6, 2008

8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

North Coast Builders Exchange  
1030 Apollo Way, Santa Rosa

**Attendance:** *Co-Chairs:* Santa Rosa City Council Member **Jane Bender**; Community Action Partnership Sonoma County; **Oscar Chavez**; *Health Action Members:* **Judy Coffey**, Kaiser Permanente; **Stanley Cohen**, Sonoma City Council; **Terry Davis**, Community Volunteer; **Jerry Dunn**, Human Services Department; **Mary Maddux-Gonzalez, MD**, Public Health Officer; **Tom Maloney**, Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council; **Lisa W. Schaffner**, Healdsburg City Council; **Ben Stone**, Economic Development Board; **Carl Wong**, Sonoma County Office of Education; *Community Members:* **David Brown**, Sonoma County YMCA; **Mark Charnas**, PyschStrategies; **Mary Clemens**, Sonoma County Regional Parks; **Ginny Doyle**, Area Agency on Aging; **David Goodman**, Redwood Empire Food Bank; **James Johnson**, Permit and Resource Management Department; **Cathy Luellen-Aflague**, Santa Rosa City Schools; **Shan Magnuson**, Asthma Coalition; **Karen Miller**, Agilent Technologies; **Kirk Pappas, MD**, Kaiser Permanente

**Opening Comments**

Jane Bender welcomed everyone to the third meeting of the Task Force. She introduced Bob Klose, a communications consultant, who will be assisting with Health Action public relations and communications efforts. She reviewed the intended outcomes of today's meeting:

- To review the goals and strategies for each goal area
- To confirm that goals and strategies further Health Action vision and best meet approved criteria
- To learn about community engagement process

Jane thanked all task force members for the great work done by the sub-groups since the last meeting.

**Discussion of Work from Sub-groups**

Bobbie Wunsch presented a grid that provided a synthesis of goals and strategies developed to date by the sub-groups. She explained that there are three goals and a range of strategies compiled from the work of the sub-groups and previous discussions. The three goals are:

- Increase consumption of healthy foods
- Increase physical activity for all residents
- Create a culture of active, healthy living in Sonoma County

Bobbie asked the task force members to review the grid and answer the following questions:

- What's missing?
- Are we thinking about the whole community, particularly areas or populations with greatest disparities?

- Have we stretched our thinking in creative ways?
- Are we going to get excited about what we are doing?
- Are we going to have significant impact?

Comments on goal to increase consumption of healthy foods:

Vision and Collaboration:

- Need to define access to healthy food. Think about removing barriers (e.g. providing coupons for seniors at farmers markets) and improving access to healthy foods in low-income neighborhoods.
- We need to create something visionary and convey the spirit of what we are trying to achieve (e.g. something that is worthy of “charging the castle.”)
- Need to discuss concerns about “limiting access” to unhealthy food. Need to make sure that we are not coming across as telling residents and stores what to do. Are there opportunities to use education rather than policy or mandates to reach our goals? Can we promote school campuses that are excellent, safe and healthy.

Policy and Local Government

- There was discussion over how to best use General Plans, land use and other policy approaches. More information can be brought to the group regarding the effectiveness of policy approaches.
- Can we partner with cities to help promote healthy food initiatives? It would be good to see strong commitment from local governments to do something.
- Think about how to incorporate the safety net programs, such as the food bank, Meals on Wheels, etc. to leverage existing programs. Take into account existing programs.
- School changes, such as sodas, salad bars, gardens, fundraising, etc., are linked to policy and changing culture.
- Need to revamp policy statements so that people can understand them.

Target Groups

- Target low-income children.
- Focus on all people, not just low income.
- Parents need education.

Comments on goal to increase physical activity:

Vision and Strategies

- Include “walking zones” especially in school locations where no cars would be allowed. There could be policies to help this along.
- Address neighborhood safety issues in relation to walking.
- Address parents’ fears about child safety concerning Safe Routes to School (SRTS). Consider partnership with Neighborhood Watch and identifying safe houses.
- Place a map of SRTS on the website with public input and red-yellow-green codes.
- Leadership includes critical local champions.
- Require slower driving speeds.
- Develop Health Impact Assessment to study impact on Safe Community designs.
- Go for “demand side” approach. Do “walkability audits.”

- There needs to be a two-pronged strategy: streets need to be safe and take back the streets. For instance, grandparents can walk children to school.
- There needs to be education about policy approaches.
- How will our group work on these projects? Will we do all this? The selection of strategies depends on capacity to implement them.

### Community Involvement

- Create partnerships to support schools.
- Identify opportunities to partner with health insurers and businesses to reward students for walking or eating well.
- Have communities compete for Health Awards (step thermometers, for example).
- Create a groundswell grassroots effort.
- The Green Business program is great and works. Bring Green Business together with Healthy Business.
- The key to success and engagement has to be a common thread with organizations.

### Promotion & Social Marketing

- “Use Your Feet” – potential slogan. Use pedometers and other merchandise to promote the message.
- Use Wikipedia to rank safe places to walk and ride bicycles. Help people identify green routes. Public officials can add crime statistics. Let the public decide what is safe.
- Most effective is point of purchase, multi-level institution prompts.
- What is the feedback in developing messages and branding? We need a good sales approach to make it work with the community. For example, employers need interactive, multi-phased roll out and a consistent presenter with a consistent message and a consistent structure to be able to delineate change.
- Need a different message for different audiences.
- Need to build a movement – take to the cities to endorse.

### Target Groups

- Target specific neighborhoods that are perceived to be unsafe, especially near schools. Cities can respond and target changes to help residents feel or be safer.
- Provide suggestions as to how local public officials can publicize their steps.
- Some communities cannot afford to take advantage of our lofty ideas. Be aware of barriers for low -ncome communities. Engage everyone but prioritize areas where there are disparities.
- This issue affects everyone in different stages of life.
- Gear our programs to meet the needs of all people, especially low-income people. Prioritize compromised communities.

### Model Programs

- Evaluate effective programs.
- Look at the “Walk Oakland” program as a potential model.
- Check out Healthy Shasta County.
- Rotary Club walking programs.

### Policy and Local Government

- Do cities have the ability to be proactive in their investments?
  - Cities can endorse and push to the next level. Will get support and enthusiasm from cities.

- Grassroots support helps City Council members feel comfortable to support issues.
- Need connectivity of bicycle lanes. Now these lanes just end.

### **What Gets You Most Excited?**

Bobbie asked task for members to go around the room and identify which strategy gets them most excited when thinking about the Health Action criteria. Responses included:

- Use branding for a countywide approach – make it simple. Water cooler topic at worksites. Finding the common denominator.
- A culture of activity and health.
- Culture of action. Long term – on the hips and lips of all Sonoma County residents.
- Getting people to move – how it works for them.
- Moving, stress reduction.
- Gardens in backyards, schools, and neighborhoods
- Summer camp – bicycling, walking.
- Community design and SRTS effectiveness.
- Establishing SRTS and promoting walking.
- “Safe Routes” opportunities for employers
- Healthy business campaign.
- Food policy council.
- Social marketing campaign – launches partnership and engages everyone to change behavior.
- Increase public awareness as a platform to community building.
- Culture – education, awareness.
- Mobilize and engage parents, community to support healthy eating and physical activity.

### **Community Engagement**

Ellen Bauer introduced Selena Polston a consultant who will be assisting Health Action in our community engagement process. She will be conducting a series of 20-25 community meetings (or “conversations”) around the county in July, August and September to get community input on potential strategies being developed by the task forces. She anticipates conducting 60-90 minute “conversations” facilitated by bilingual consultant (if needed), in partnership with Health Action staff and/or Health Action Task Force members. The meeting content will include:

- Overview of Health Action: purpose, process, outcomes
- Overview of the specific strategies being considered by the task forces
- Discussion:
  - Do these strategies make sense?
  - How might they work in your community?
  - What needs to happen to make them successful in your community?
  - Other??

Selena will present findings from these meetings to the task forces in September.

### **Public Comment**

### **Closing Comments**

Oscar invited all task force members to attend the July 11th Health Action meeting from 8:00 -10:00 a.m. at the North Coast Builders Exchange. Health Action will review the draft strategies that the task forces have been working on and will be discussing a larger “blueprint,” or Vision for Health in Sonoma County.

The next Community Health Task Force meeting is tentatively scheduled for **Friday, July 18, 2008, 8:00 –10:00 a.m.** at North Coast Builders Exchange at **1030 Apollo Way, Santa Rosa** (to be confirmed).

For more information please contact Ellen Bauer at 565-6684 or [ebauer@sonoma-county.org](mailto:ebauer@sonoma-county.org) or visit the Health Action website at: [www.sonomahealthaction.org](http://www.sonomahealthaction.org)