

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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STATE SURGEON GENERAL ANNOUNCES HEALTHY WEIGHT COMMUNITY CHAMPION RECOGNITION PROGRAM

~ Local governments to highlight healthy weight best practices in their community~

TALLAHASSEE- The Florida Department of Health today announced the launch of the Healthy Weight Community Champion Recognition Program and invited local governments across the state to participate. The program highlights local government efforts to increase physical activity and improve nutrition and is a part of Healthiest Weight Florida, a public-private collaboration to help Florida's children and adults make consistent, informed choices about healthy eating and active living.

"As we survey the health landscape, we see that the #1 public health threat that challenges the bright future of Florida is weight," said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health, Dr. John Armstrong. "Florida's county and municipal governments play a critical role in shaping environments so that the healthy choice becomes the easy choice."

Rates of obesity in the U.S. have increased dramatically over the last 30 years to the point that it is now considered a national epidemic. In Florida, only 35% of adults are at a healthy weight. Additionally, 6 out of 10 children born today will be obese by the time they graduate from high school. The costs of care for chronic diseases from obesity alone—diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and arthritis—are unsustainable, estimated to be \$34B over the next 17 years.

Local governments can implement a variety of policies that can help people be more physically active and have better nutrition. These "best practice" policies are reflected in the Healthy Weight Community Champion Recognition Program. Examples of "best practices" include whether a jurisdiction maintains a system of parks, provides incentive programs to attract grocery stores to underserved neighborhoods and prioritizes personal safety in areas where people can increase physical activity.

All of Florida's 410 active municipalities (cities, towns and villages) and 67 counties are eligible to submit best practices. Submissions will be accepted November 1, 2013 through January 31, 2014. The best practices will be posted and communities will be recognized on February 14, 2014. To submit best practices and for more information visit www.HealthiestWeightFL.com.

To assist local governments with the submission process, the Florida Department of Health will be offering four technical assistance opportunities via webinar. Webinar dates and times are:

November 14, 2013 at 2:00PM (EST)
December 2, 2013 at 10:00AM (EST)
January 9, 2014 at 10:00AM (EST)
January 22, 2014 at 2:00PM (EST)

The Department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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Florida Department of Health

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