

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 2015 Healthy Weight Community Champion Recognition Program. The Department invites local governments across the state to participate. The program highlights local government efforts to increase physical activity and improve nutrition as part of the Healthiest Weight Florida initiative, a public-private collaboration to help Florida's children and adults make consistent, informed choices about healthy eating and active living. This is the second year of the Recognition Program. In 2014, 38 communities from all over the state were recognized for their model practices which affect 9.4 million Floridians.

"I am encouraged to see Florida's local governments become ambassadors of health in their communities," said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health, Dr. John Armstrong. "The Department is proud to recognize innovative health efforts by county and municipal governments that will help to achieve the goal of becoming the healthiest state in the nation."

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 36.4% of adults are at a healthy weight. If the state continues on its current trend, six out of ten children born today will be obese by the time they graduate from high school.

Local governments can implement a variety of policies that help people become more physically active and encourage better nutrition. These "best practice" policies are reflected in the Healthy Weight Community Champion Recognition Program. Examples of criteria for the recognition 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 August 6, 2014 through November 14, 2014. The best practices will be posted and communities will be recognized on January 5, 2015. 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:

- September 17, 2014 at 10:00 AM (EDT)
- September 30, 2014 at 2:00 PM (EDT)
- October 15, 2014 at 10:00 AM (EDT)
- November 4, 2014 at 2:00PM (EST)

Florida Department of Health

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