



The **Washtenaw County HIP Surveillance Briefs** are a resource to help guide your agency's activities in the HIP Focus Areas and to inform elected officials and community leaders about the role of data, policy and evidence-based practices in shaping community health. The briefs are published regularly by the **Washtenaw County Public Health Department** as part of the **Health Improvement Plan of Washtenaw County** initiative. HIP Focus Areas include physical activity, healthy eating, depression, and tobacco prevention.

Overview

Regular physical activity is associated with a healthier, longer life. Physically active people have a lower risk for chronic conditions like heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, and some types of cancers. It also lowers the risk for poor mental health.

Emerging research shows that the physical design of communities and policies that influence land use can increase opportunities for individuals to be more active. Community design elements that increase access to a more active lifestyle include: 1) combining residential areas with stores, jobs, schools, and recreation areas; 2) connecting streets and sidewalks to major destinations, and 3) improving the aesthetics of outdoor areas.

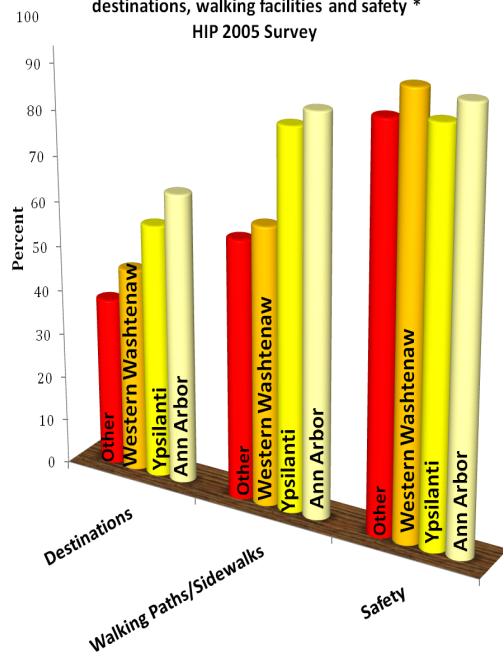
Policies that impact building codes and roadway design standards, or that require environmental changes (like improved street lighting or traffic calming such as speed bumps and traffic circles) can also contribute to increasing physical activity in urban areas.

As we encourage individuals to be physically active in their families, homes, neighborhoods, schools, and work environments, adding a broader, community and urban design policy approach to the mix helps ensure that physical activity becomes the norm, not the exception, in our communities and lives!

Disparity Counts: Selected Highlights from the 2005 HIP Survey

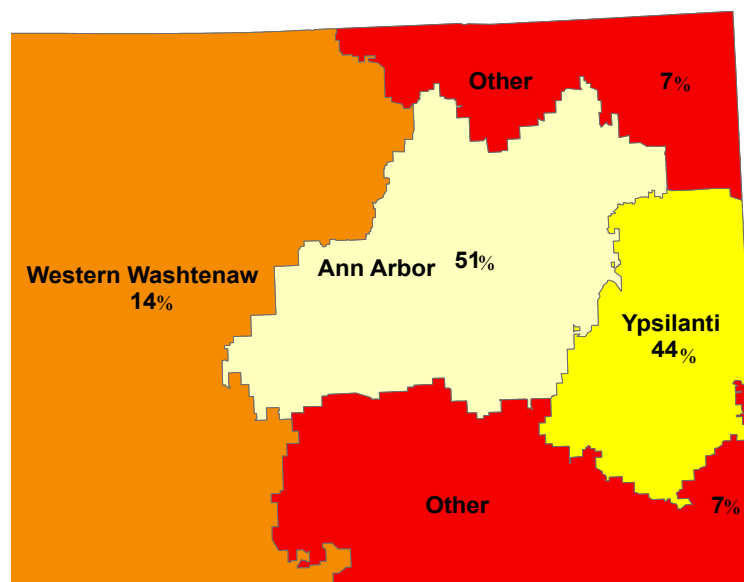
Walkability Attributes in Washtenaw County:

Residents who agreed that their neighborhood had destinations, walking facilities and safety *
HIP 2005 Survey



Percent of Adults Who Walked at Least One Mile or Less in Past Week*

Washtenaw County Residents by Region



*Questions include:

- 1) There are stores, restaurants, and other destinations within walking distance of my home.
- 2) There are pedestrian sidewalks, walking paths or trails in or near my neighborhood that I can easily use for walking, jogging or running
- 3) I feel safe walking in my neighborhood.

*Question:

For how many of these trips of one mile or less did you walk?

“What works”: best practices

The [Community Guide’s](#) most recent systematic review to assess the effectiveness of population-level interventions to increase physical activity focused on three intervention “levels”: 1) Informational, 2) Behavioral and social, and 3) Environmental and policy. The Task Force determined that each of the three interventions below are “Recommended”, meaning that enough evidence exists to show they can be effective at increasing physical activity. For additional interventions, go to <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/pa/default.htm>

Intervention Level	Strategy	Resources
Informational	Community wide campaigns	<i>A Community-Based Approach to Promoting Walking in Rural Areas</i> , 2004, Bronson et al
Behavioral and Social	School-based physical education	<i>Effects of Youth Fit for Life Protocol</i> , 2007, Annesi
Environmental and Policy	Street-scale urban design and land use policies and practices	Health, Brownson, Kruger, et al, 2006

Local Examples

Healthy Communities Walking Program

Chelsea • Dexter • Manchester

The [Healthy Communities Walking Program](#) encourages participants to maintain 2 miles or 30 minutes of walking 3 days a week. Body mass index, current activity level, and healthy days are measured and recorded when enrollees begin and again at 6 months and 12 months. In addition to the health benefits, participants receive rewards for miles walked. Milestones are recorded as distance accumulates. For more information, visit <http://www.cch.org/healthycommunities/>

University of Michigan: Wellness at Work

“Active U”: Social support • Incentives • Information

The [University of Michigan Healthy Community \(MHC\)](#) employee wellness program is catching on. Nearly 10,000 faculty and staff signed on to the 2008 “Active U” program website which tracks their physical activity throughout the 8-week event: the most since the program kicked-off in 2005. It combines social support; a blog that connects, motivates and informs; and prizes such as iPods, travel vouchers, and free participation in MFit classes. The blog allows participants to reach out to one another for support. A wide range of creative activities count towards Active U points including ice skating, intramural sports, and gardening.

Those who choose to team up with colleagues seem more consistent with their activity habit. “Our statistics show that people on teams, who have a support system, tend to do better”, says Colleen Greene, the MHC Wellness Coordinator. For more information, go to <http://www.hr.umich.edu/mhealthy/>

Selected 2020 HIP objectives related to physical activity

HEALTHY KIDS - Increase the proportion of children 6-17 years who attain at least 60 minutes of physical activity five days per week from 72% to 80%.

HEALTHY ADULTS— Increase the proportion of adults who attain at least 30 minutes of moderate activity five days per week OR 20 minutes of vigorous activity three days per week from 49% to 62%.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES - Increase the proportion of residents with pedestrian sidewalks, paths, or trails in or near their neighborhood from 78% to 86%.

The Economics of Not Moving Enough

If we don’t start moving more, the cost of treating obesity/overweight and related illnesses will more than double every decade, accounting for nearly 20% of total health care costs by 2030 (*Obesity*, July 2008).

A recent study by the *Trust for America’s Health (July 2008)*, found that for every one dollar invested in proven community programs to increase physical activity, improve nutrition, and prevent smoking, \$5.60 is gained. If just \$10/person were invested in proven programs across America, \$16 billion dollars annually would be saved within 5 years!

For Michigan, this translates into a savings of \$545 million annually within 5 years, or a return on investment of \$5.40 for every one dollar invested. Not implementing prevention would be a tremendous lost opportunity for Michigan’s health and economy.

Advocacy Action Tip!

Ask your legislator to support the [No Child Left Inside Act!](#)

It will strengthen and expand environmental education for children, getting them outdoors and inspiring a love for nature and outdoor activity. For more information, visit www.cbf.org



Special thanks to Diane Carr, Senior Program Director of the YMCA of Ann Arbor, for reviewing this brief, and to the following contributors: Ruth Shantz of Chelsea Community Hospital, Jean DuRusset-Weston and Colleen Greene of MFit, and Anya Dale of Washtenaw County Environment and Planning.