



HEALTHY ALBERTA  
COMMUNITIES



Centre for  
Health Promotion  
STUDIES



SCHOOL OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH  
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

# Healthy Alberta Communities: A Population Health Innovation

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# What is Healthy Alberta Communities?

- 5-year project guided by researchers from the Centre for Health Promotion Studies, School of Public Health, University of Alberta
- Funded by **Alberta Health and Wellness**
- **Goal:** prevent chronic disease and improve health by helping to influence environments and build communities that promote and support healthy choices
- **Purpose:** develop, implement and evaluate a uniquely Albertan approach that can be adapted to communities across the province

# Environment: Context for Behaviour

- Community as a point of access for environmental change
- Environmental changes support individual behaviours: “healthy choice is the easy choice”



# Community-Driven Health Promotion

- Working in 4 diverse communities to develop models for effective community participation
- Informal methods (opportunistic) and systematic processes to engage key community stakeholders in the identification of priority areas of intervention unique to each community context.
- Identifying barriers / gaps / opportunities



# The Healthy Alberta Communities

- **Medicine Hat and Area**
  - Pop: 57,000
  - Older population
  - Formal partnerships with health region and municipalities
- **St Paul**
  - Pop: 5,000
  - Rural area
  - Aboriginal communities nearby
  - Active participation of local businesses and service organizations
- **Bonnyville**
  - Service centre for 10,000 people
  - Extremely fast growth
  - Over 60 oil and gas companies
  - Formal partnership with health region
- **Norwood/North Central Edmonton**
  - Pop: 48,000
  - Culturally diverse inner city
  - Grassroots initiatives



*The Local Economy*



# HAC Approach: How do we work?

- Target the determinants of health in a community
- Leverage resources and rely on the work of individuals, groups and organizations already in the community
- Hire community coordinators
- Invest seed money to help kick-start activities and maintain momentum

**Raine, K.D., et al.** Reflections on community-based population health intervention and evaluation for obesity and chronic disease prevention: the Healthy Alberta Communities project. *International Journal of Public Health.* (2010 DOI 10.1007/s00038-010-0187-7)

# The Process

2005 - Planning and networking

2006 - Phone surveys and measurement clinics

- Community capacity building workshops
- First initiatives

2007/08 - HAC as a resource

- Sorting out priorities
- New partners/ new contributions

2009 - Community reports

- Phone surveys and measurement clinics



# Evaluation Activities (2006 - 2009)

- **Impact evaluation**
  - Phone survey (behaviours)
  - Measurement clinics (health outcomes)
- **Community evaluation**
  - Outcome
  - Process

*Your community is calling!*

## **Active. Healthy. Living well.**

Isn't this what we all want for ourselves and our families? Even so, it's sometimes hard to make healthy choices.

### **How can you get involved?**

You can participate in a phone survey and measurement clinic that is happening in your community between March 23 and June 30, 2009.



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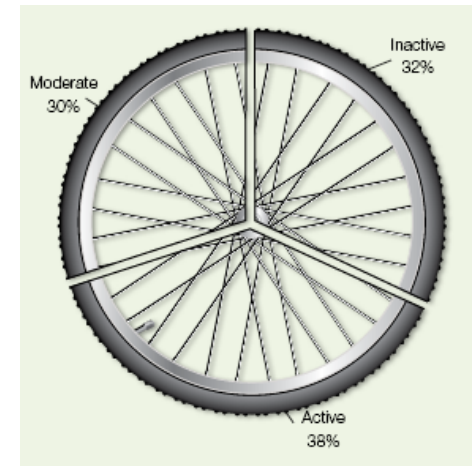
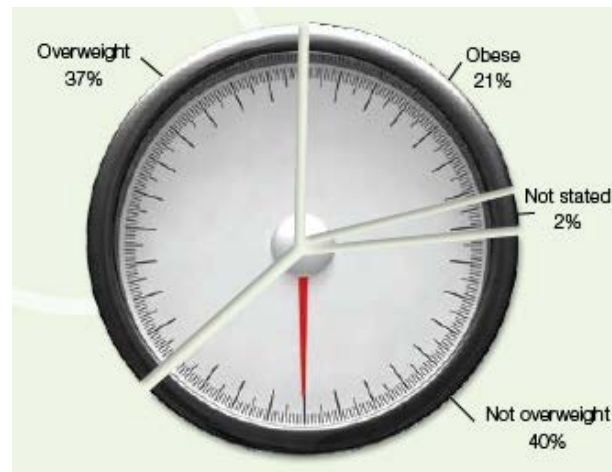
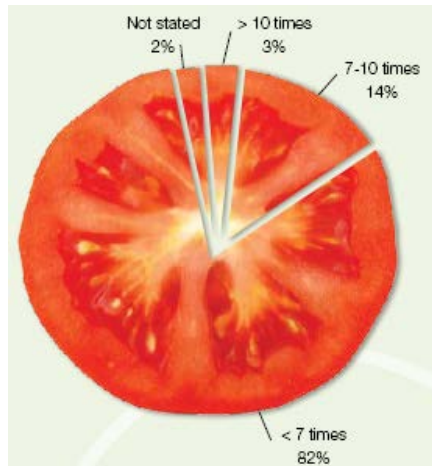
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# Baseline Chronic Disease Risk Factors: Community Reports



Building a Healthy Community:



# Community Capacity Building and ANGELO (Priority Setting) Workshops



# Analysis Grid for Environments Linked to Obesity

**(ANGELO)** (Swinburn, Egger & Raza, 1999)

ENVIRONMENT	DOMAIN	
	PA	Food
Physical		
Economic		
Political		
Sociocultural		



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# Intervention Development





# Taking Action in Bonnyville

Healthy choices available in local restaurants



## Restaurant Program

Three restaurants participating –

- ❖ Developed criteria with AHS Dietitian.
- ❖ Promoted program to local restaurants.
- ❖ Addressed concerns of restaurant owners (newspaper articles and radio ads).
- ❖ Branded the program.
- ❖ Expansion into neighboring community.

# Taking Action in St. Paul

To promote unstructured play amongst children and youth

- **Do More Watch Less Challenge – Get off the Couch and Go!**
- Principal Partner: St. Paul Community Health Services
- Sponsors, Brochure, Resource Kit
- Access to facilities
- Leaders in playgrounds in summer



# Taking Action in Medicine Hat:

Promote alternative transportation, including walking and cycling

## **Coalition for Active & Alternate Transportation (CAAT)**

- ❖ Networking and partnering with KEY stakeholders
- ❖ Now housed at the Be Fit for Life Centre

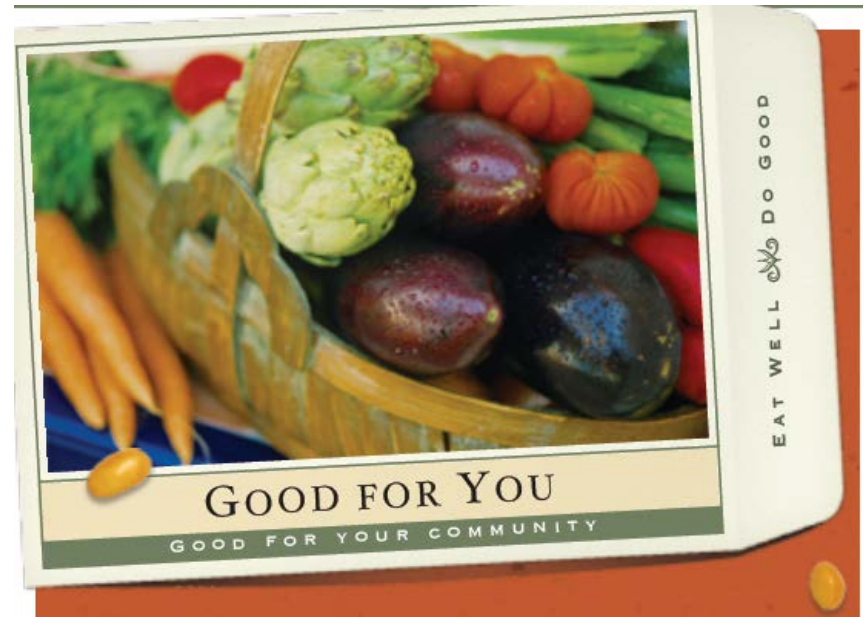


# Taking Action in Norwood/ North Central Edmonton:

## The Good Food Project

### ***Priority: Support food security***

- Urban social enterprise project
- Local food production/household food security
- Sustainable in 2010!

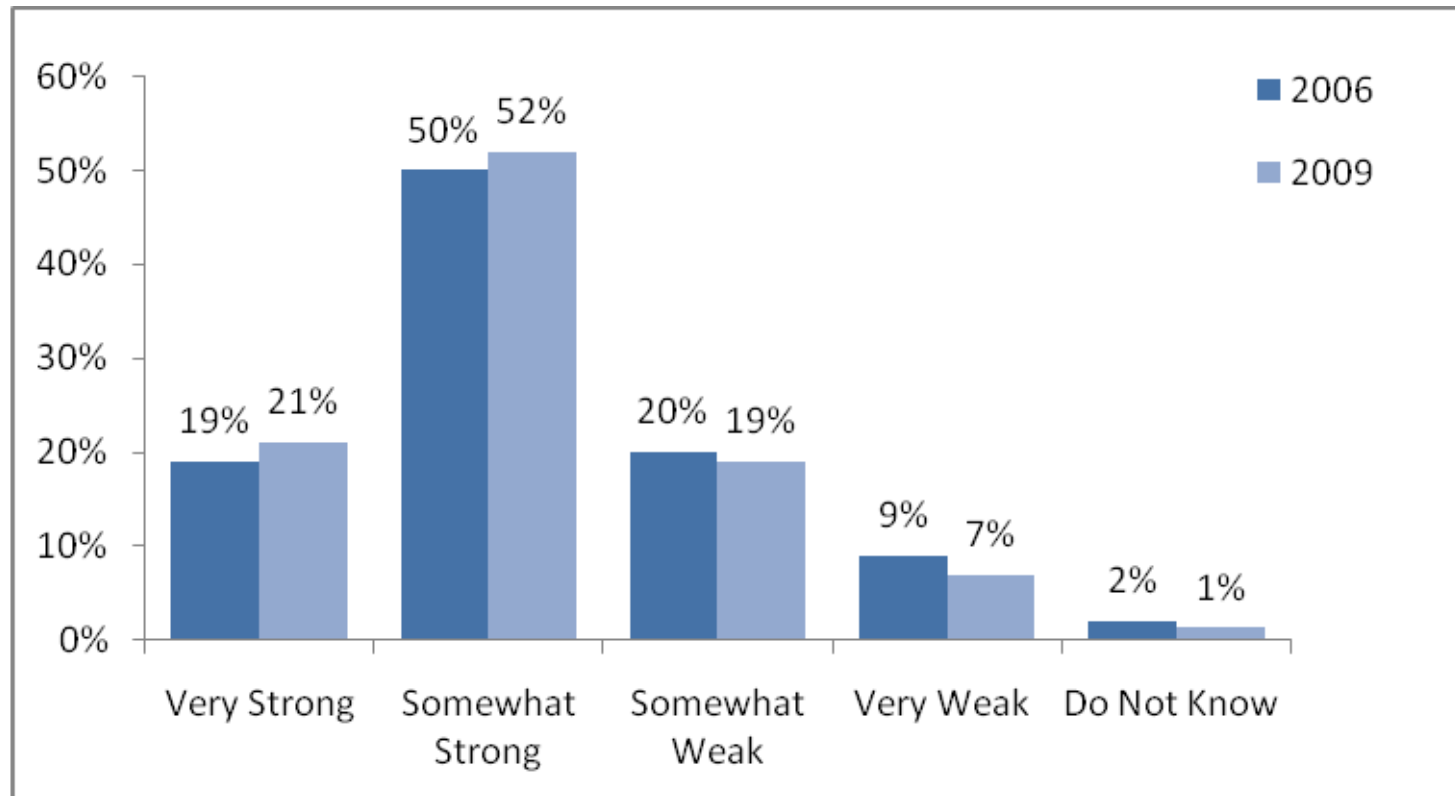




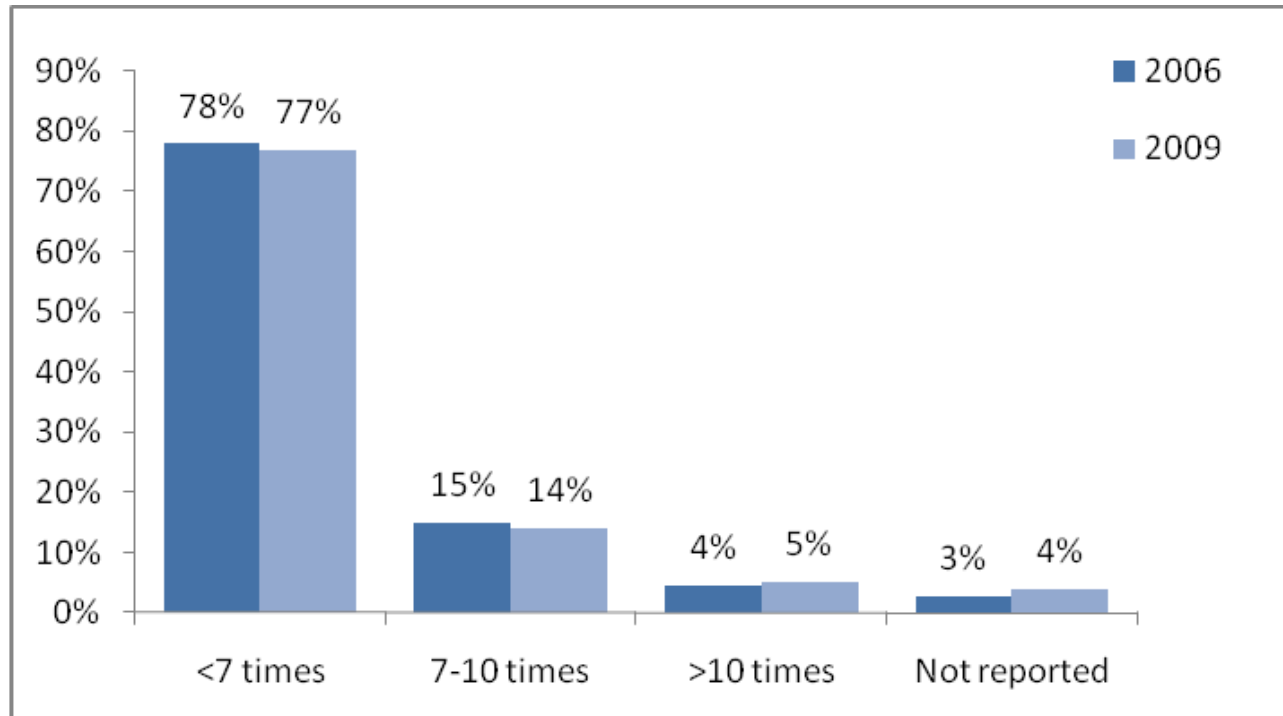
# The Measure of Health: Did We Make a Difference?

- **Telephone surveys 2006-09: Self-report**
- > 4700 people responded in both years
- Results represent pooled data from all 4 communities
- All of the data have been weighted statistically to ensure results represent the adult populations of the communities

# Sense of Belonging to Community

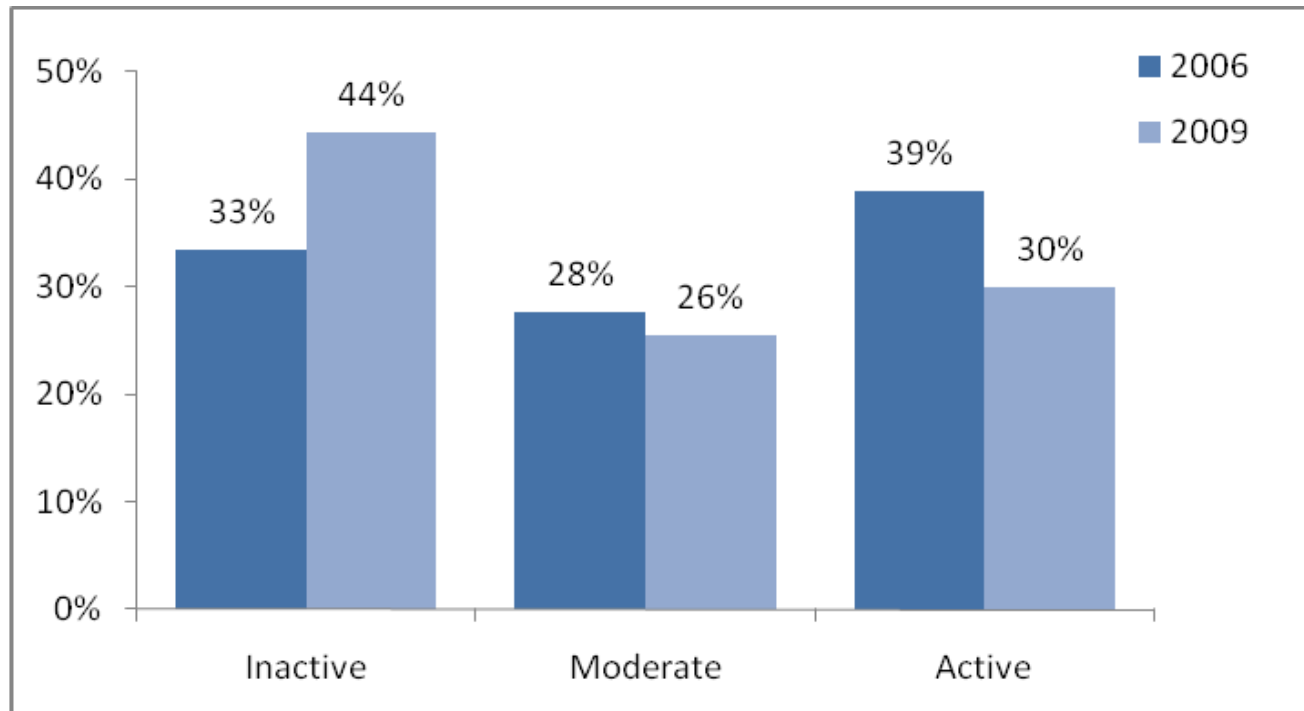


# Daily Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables



Average  
consumption  
5 servings  
per day

# Self-Reported Physical Activity

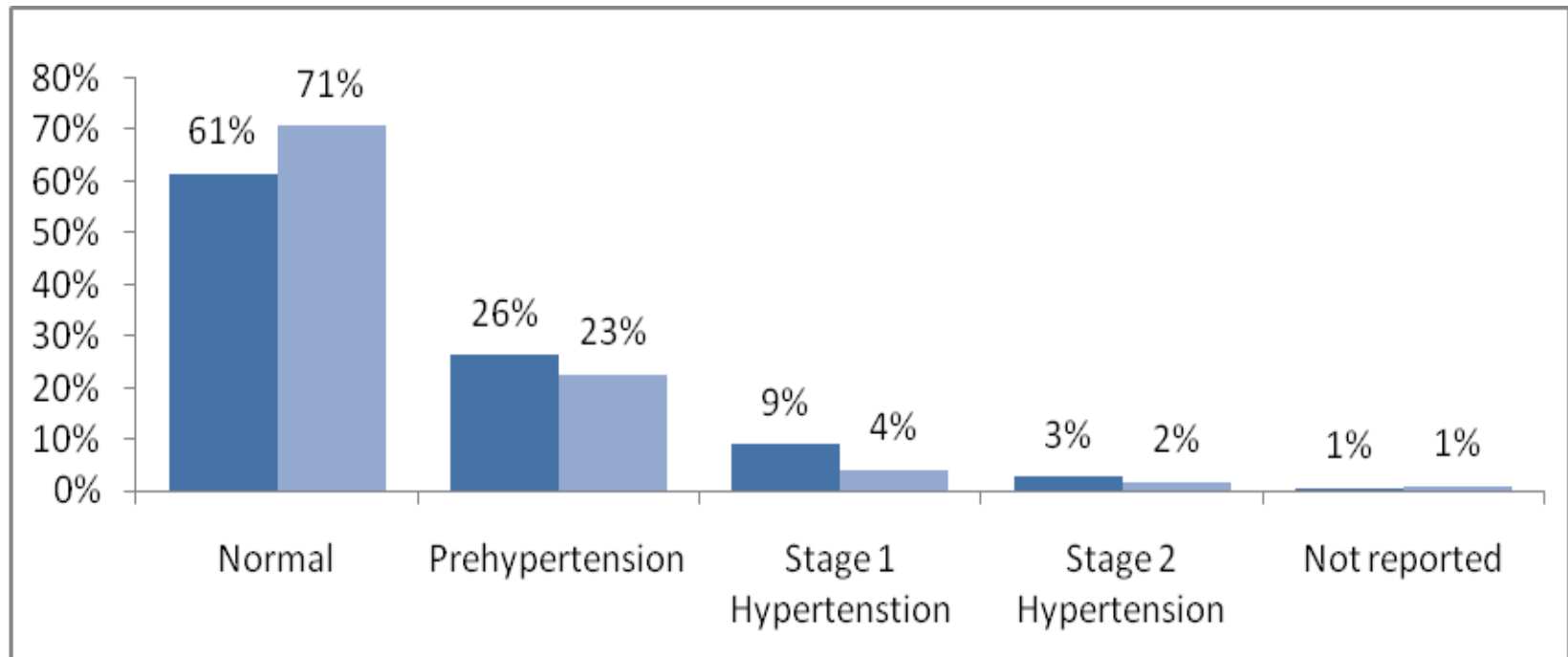




# Physical Measures from Clinic Attendance

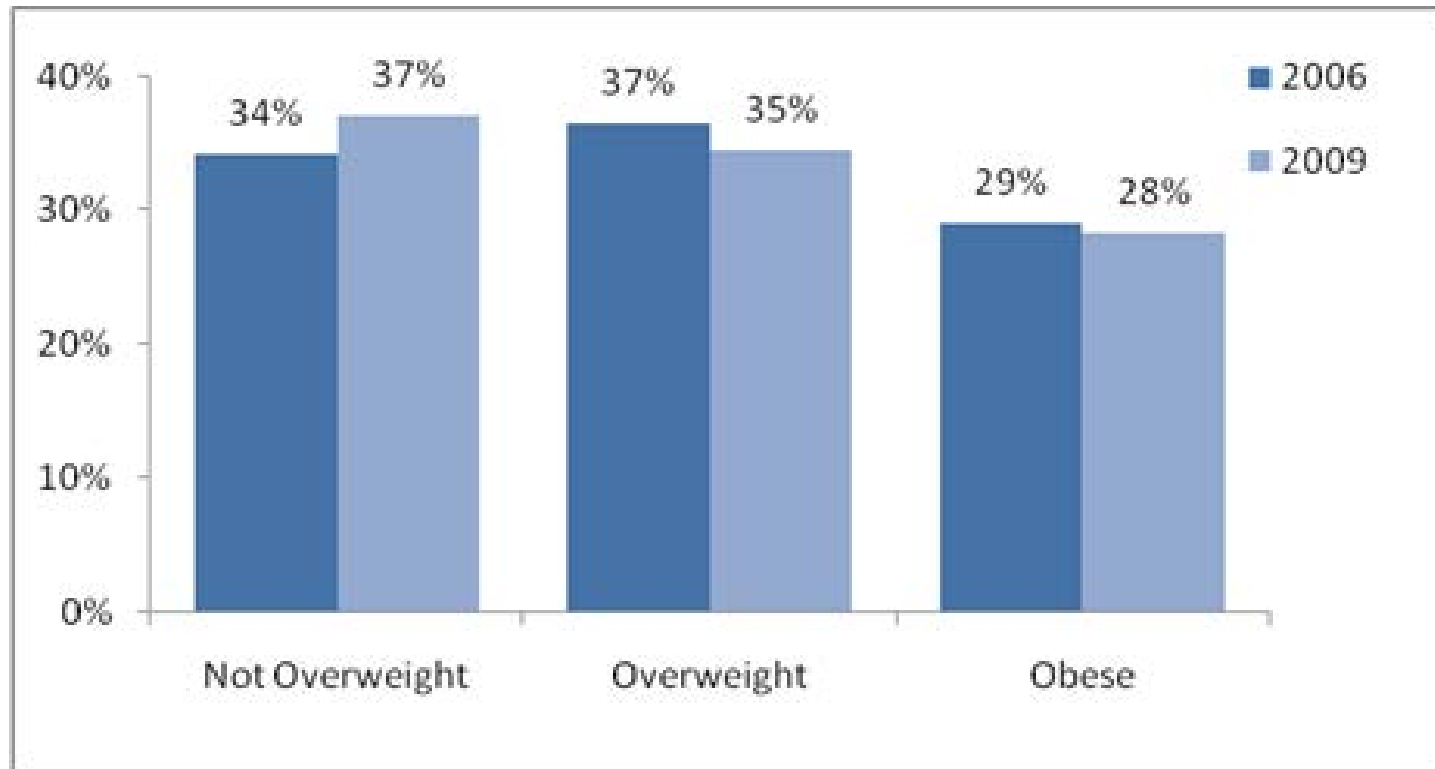
- A sub-sample of telephone respondents in all 4 communities to come in to a clinic to have a more thorough health assessment
- Trained technicians took blood pressure and measures obesity (height and weight)
- In 2006 more than 1550 people were measured in the clinics
- In 2009, more than 1800 participated

# Blood Pressure



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# Obesity – BMI Classification



# Preliminary Conclusions: Health Impact

- Self-reported health and well-being outcomes, as well as measured blood pressure and body weights showed positive trends over the three years, outcomes we have yet to compare to secular trends in Alberta
- Community-based interventions may help to slow progression of obesity and associated chronic diseases, although further data analysis is necessary to enable comparisons and explain mechanisms



# Community Evaluation

- Helped to advance understandings of how communities change
- Demonstrated the value of a partnerships that value the knowledge and expertise within the community
- Builds local capacity to act on determinants of health
- Changing environments supports healthy living

# An Investment in Community for Chronic Disease Prevention

## **Community evaluation**

- Sustainability of community projects

## **Economic evaluation**

- A small investment (< \$2/ person/ year) has grown substantially

## **Chronic Disease Outcomes: Pending/ Promising**

- Parallel evidence tells us that creating supportive environments changes behaviour and attitudes that lead to health outcomes

# HAC: Future

- Sustainability of individual projects
- Platform for connected projects: CHBE, Alberta Policy Coalition for Cancer Prevention
- Sharing our experiences with others...grow to other communities (on-line resource – PHAC portal)
- Expanding to 100 communities throughout AB in partnership with ACE communities (THR!VE on Community Wellness) AHS/ ACF

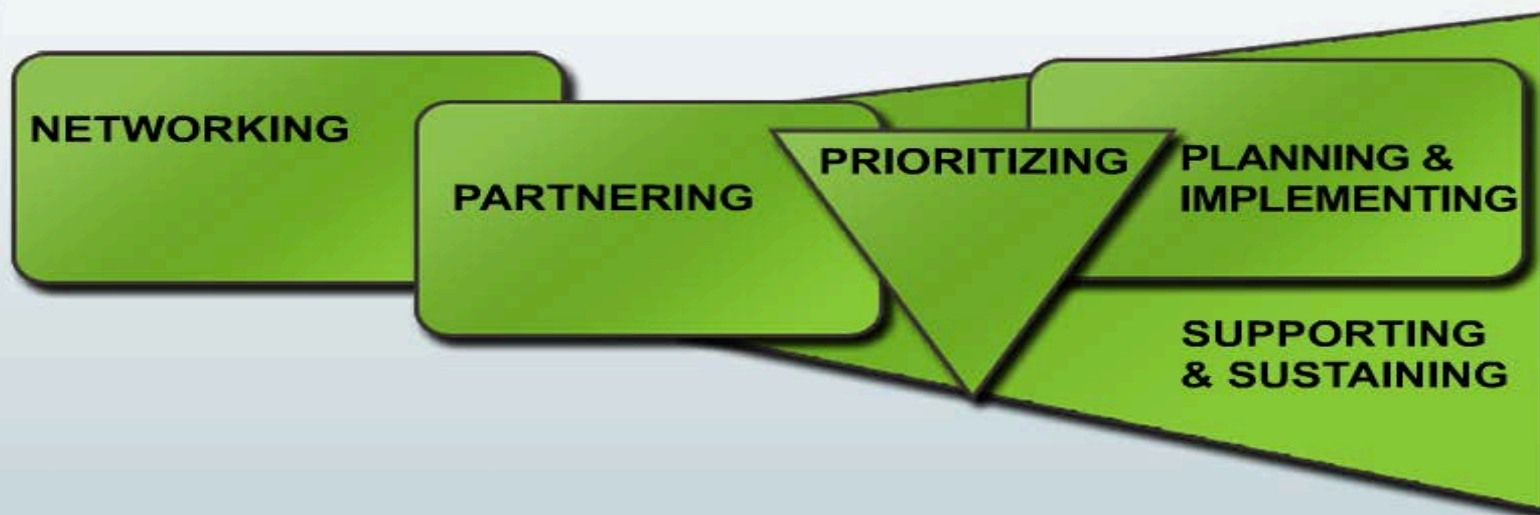


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making healthy choices easier

[Home](#)[Model](#)[Networking](#)[Partnering](#)[Prioritizing](#)[Planning](#)[Supporting](#)[Feature Projects](#)

## Model for Capacity Building in Health Promotion



"Model for Capacity Building in Health Promotion" was adopted from the master's thesis "Capacity-Building in Chronic Disease Prevention Initiatives: An Exploration of the Process of Capacity-Building Among Community-Based Health Promotion Workers", by **Genevieve Selfridge**.

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# Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice: Policy

- Capacity to make large-scale changes in the social environment dependent upon policy change
- Population policy moves beyond the community level
- Applying lessons from tobacco reduction to physical activity and nutrition



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## Welcome!

The Alberta Policy Coalition for Cancer Prevention (APCCP) represents a broad range of practitioners, policy-makers, researchers and community organizations who have come together to coordinate efforts, generate evidence, and advocate for policy change in order to reduce cancer and other chronic diseases in Alberta.

The APCCP promotes and facilitates evidence-based policies to address healthy eating, physical activity, tobacco reduction and the misuse of alcohol in Alberta communities, schools, and workplaces.

Do you want to take a stand against cancer and chronic disease in Alberta? Any individual, group or organization can become an APCCP member and make a public commitment to supporting policies and activities which promote a healthier Alberta. Click on the Join Us tab to

## Latest News

**Cancer Coalition  
Albertan Schools  
Trustee Candidates  
Protect the Health  
Children Across**

**EDMONTON**  
- The Alberta  
Policy  
Coalition for  
Cancer  
Prevention  
(APCCP) has re-  
Schools Now; and  
the Trustee Can-  
Calgary, Edmon-  
Lethbridge sch-  
find out where t-  
issues pertain-  
health.

[Read more](#)

# Policy Approaches for Environmental Change

- Restrict unhealthy food and beverage advertising targeting children
- Promote policies on urban design and zoning that promote active living and healthy eating.
  - Active transportation
  - Restrict access to unhealthy foods within 500m of schools.
- Encourage financial incentives and disincentives to promote healthy living
  - taxation of energy-dense, nutrient-poor food and beverage choices.
  - Use of tax revenues to subsidize fruits and vegetables



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Margo Fauchon, St. Paul  
Florence Senecal, Bonnyville



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# Additional Funding Support...



Promoting Optimal Weights  
through Ecological Research

P O W E R



Alberta  
Innovates  
Health  
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Funded by the ALBERTA HERITAGE FOUNDATION  
FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH Endowment Fund



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*À la conquête de solutions.<sup>MC</sup>  
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