



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

**14,459 CHANGES IMPACT UP TO 34.3 MILLION LIVES<sup>1</sup>  
YMCA of the USA's Healthier Communities Initiatives (HCI)**

In 176 communities across the nation, Ys have received federal funding from CDC's Healthy Communities Program or the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Childhood Obesity Prevention Fund to collaborate with community leaders on an effort to ensure that healthy living is within reach of the people who live in those communities. **In a recent sample of 91 of the Y's 176 sites, local leaders influenced 14,459\* changes to support healthy living within their communities, impacting up to 34.3 million lives.**

Communities engaged in the Y's Healthier Communities Initiatives (Pioneering Healthier Communities, Statewide Pioneering Healthier Communities, and ACHIEVE), are helping families put healthier food on the table by bringing fresh fruits and vegetables to neighborhoods where there are no healthy food options; giving parents peace of mind when they let their kids walk to school by making safe routes to schools possible; helping to keep a generation of kids healthier by working with schools to increase physical education and physical activity during the school day. We do this with extensive training of local leaders and modest one-time seed funding of approximately \$50,000 to develop and begin to implement strategies to increase opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity in the community. It is up to each local community to leverage dollars and sustain their work. **Our sites have on average brought \$3 to the table for every \$1 federal received.**

**Highlights from the recent survey:**

**Leaders advanced 568 strategies that provide greater access to healthier foods in the community including creating:**

- 73 new or improved grocery options
- 278 new community gardens
- 75 new farmers markets
- 65 new mobile markets or stands
- 32 new healthy corner stores or bodegas
- 45 action plans to address food deserts

**Leaders advanced 318 strategies and encouraged changes in physical environments of our neighborhoods to provide greater access to physical activity including creating:**

- 112 sidewalks designed or improved to increase physical activity options
- 71 traffic safety improvements or enhancements to increase physical activity options
- 52 "Complete Streets" that are open and accessible to all users – bicyclists, pedestrians, people with disabilities, etc.

**In schools and/or afterschool programs, we have advanced 4,526 changes to ensure that food and beverages sold to children and youth before, during or after the school day are healthier, including:**

- 1,262 afterschool sites have made their snacks or meals healthier

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<sup>1</sup> Figures cited are current as of April 11, 2011.

- 767 schools changed the food available in their vending machines or sold outside the lunch line during the school day
- 294 schools that have expanded their participation in the USDA afterschool snack or breakfast program
- 1,014 schools changed lunch menu to offer healthier choices
- 675 schools have implemented policies to require healthier food to be sold in afterschool settings
- 241 afterschool sites have changed food available in their vending machines or venues where food is sold
- 273 afterschool sites have expanded their participation in the USDA afterschool snack program

**In schools and/or afterschool programs, we have advanced 3,223 changes that have helped incorporate more physical activity before, during and after the school day, including:**

- 1,261 afterschool sites that have added or increased the amount of physical activity to their curricula
- 172 schools created or enhanced a Safe Routes to School Program
- 618 schools added or improved physical education criteria
- 594 schools have instituted classroom physical activity breaks during the day
- 242 schools have added or expanded recess during the day
- 336 sports-related programs added to the afterschool setting

**In worksites (private), we have advanced 2,091 changes that have helped employers incorporate healthier food/beverage options or expanded opportunities for physical activity into their worksites, including:**

- 386 worksites improved vending options in their worksite
- 368 worksites improved food choices available in meetings
- 866 worksites incentivized their employees to engage in physical activity or nutrition education
- 211 worksites promoted commuting options that include physical activity to and from the worksite
- 260 worksites promoted physical activity breaks during the work day

**In community-based organizations and/or public agencies we advanced 1,277 changes that have helped incorporate healthier food/beverage options or include expanded opportunities for physical activity into their settings as evidenced by:**

- 218 organizations/agencies improved vending options in their worksite
- 343 organizations/agencies improved food choices available in meetings
- 239 organizations/agencies incentivized their employees to engage in physical activity or nutrition education
- 238 organizations/agencies promoted commuting options that include physical activity to and from the worksite
- 239 organizations/agencies promoted physical activity breaks during the work day

**Leaders advanced 2,774 strategies that provide smoke-free environments as evidenced by:**

- 214 smoke-free parks.
- 1,436 smoke-free buildings/worksites
- 1,069 smoke-free public jurisdictions (e.g. counties or city)

*\*A total of 91 out of 176 communities responded to this survey. Of the 14,459 changes reported, 13,402 were made in the 74 sites that receive CDC funding and 1,057 were made in the 17 sites that receive RWJF funding.*