

# Putting Prevention to Work in Clark, Pacific, and Thurston Counties

Chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and lung disease are the leading causes of death in Washington State. These diseases are often preventable. Being physically active, eating healthy foods, and not using tobacco reduces the likelihood of getting one of these diseases. Healthy environments give Washington residents the opportunity to make healthy choices.

**In March 2010, Communities Putting Prevention to Work provided federal stimulus dollars to make changes that would encourage people to eat healthier, get more physical activity, and stop using tobacco. These are examples of how stimulus funds changed communities in Clark, Pacific, and Thurston counties.**

## CLARK

**39 percent of kids in Clark County are not getting enough physical activity.<sup>1</sup>**

Walking to school is an easy and low-cost way to get kids moving on a daily basis. Yet for kids at Endeavor Elementary School in Vancouver, even kids who wanted to walk faced heavy traffic and busy intersections. Endeavor is located in an urban area. Many students live within a half mile of school, but are still driven by their parents.

### Creating a safe route for kids who want to walk

Clark County Public Health worked with Endeavor to create a community-wide "walking school bus." First, they identified a safe walking route to school. Teachers agreed to meet students at designated spots along the route and walk with them to school. Endeavor also partnered with the local police department to station patrol cars at the busiest intersections.

### Impact

Hundreds of kids at Endeavor Elementary are now walking to school. The local school district is now exploring how this model can help reduce transportation costs for other schools in the district.

## PACIFIC

**69 percent of adults in chemical dependency treatment centers smoke, compared with 15 percent of adults statewide.<sup>2,3</sup>**

Quitting smoking is hard enough. It is even more difficult for people struggling with an additional drug or alcohol problem. Willapa Counseling Center in Pacific County provides drug and alcohol treatment services for over 700 clients. Until last year, clients trying to quit smoking were still exposed to tobacco smoke at their facility.

### Giving clients the choice to recover tobacco-free

Staff from Willapa Counseling Services participated in a statewide workshop about implementing tobacco cessation strategies in chemical dependency treatment centers. As a result, managers, employees, and clients developed a plan to protect everyone from secondhand smoke.

### Impact

The Willapa Counseling Center campus went smoke-free in 2011. They now offer smoking cessation classes to help clients who are ready to quit.

## THURSTON

**75 percent of adults in Thurston County don't eat enough fruits and vegetables.<sup>4</sup>**

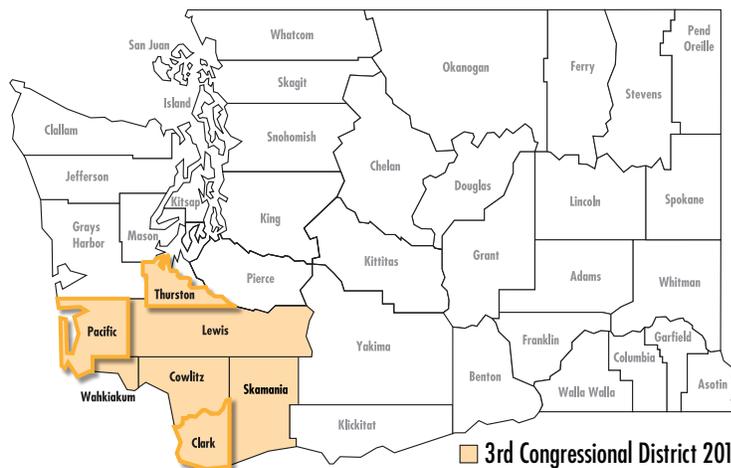
Convenience stores, not known for their fresh produce, are often the only food source in low-income, urban neighborhoods. Lucky 7 Food Store in downtown Olympia, was one of those stores.

### Providing a place to buy fruits and vegetables

Thurston County Public Health and Social Services connected the Lucky 7 Food Store with two local farms. Rising River Farms set up an outdoor farm stand at the convenience store one day a week. Left Foot Organics provided fresh fruits and vegetables in coolers inside the store.

### Impact

Many people in the Olympia neighborhood expressed appreciation for the effort. The local health department is looking for ways to continue the project.



### Data sources:

- <sup>1</sup> Data for 6th grade students, Healthy Youth Survey, 2010
- <sup>2</sup> Data for adult patients admitted to publicly funded chemical dependency treatment in Washington State, Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery Treatment Analyzer (DBHR-TA), 2011
- <sup>3</sup> Data for adults in Washington State, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2010
- <sup>4</sup> Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2007 and 2009