Complete Streets Promote Healthy and Active Living

June 9, 2011

Patti Miller
Senior Policy Analyst

Presentation Overview

- Overview of NHPS
- Obesity trends in the U.S. and Delaware
- Promoting physical activity in the built environment
- Active transportation
- Complete Streets
- Resources

NHPS Vision
Optimal health and development for all children.

NHPS Mission
Nemours Health & Prevention Services, an operating division of Nemours, is dedicated to working with others to help children lead healthier lives.

Promoting Health and Prevention

Traditional Medical Model
Rigid adherence to biomedical view of health
Focused primarily on acute epidemic illness
Focus on Individuals
Cure as uncompromised goal
Focus on disease

Expanded Approach
Incorporate a multifaceted view of health
Chronic disease prevention and management
Focus on communities/populations
Prevention as a primary goal
Focus on health

Child Health Promotion Strategy

- Nemours expanded its mission from the 55,100 patients it serves, to serve the state of Delaware’s entire population of 207,000 children
- Strategy utilizes the socio-ecological model - looks beyond the individual to examine a range of other factors that affect health outcomes at multiple levels
- Focus is on policy and practice changes
- NHPS population-level goals are:
  - By 2015, increase the percent of Delaware children ages 2-17 in a healthy weight range
  - By 2015, increase the percent of Delaware children ages 2-17 demonstrating targeted health behaviors
NHPS Focus on the Built Environment

- Active recreation
- Active transportation
- Access to healthy foods

Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 1985
(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs. overweight for 5’4” person)

Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 2009
(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs. overweight for 5’4” person)

Prevalence of Obesity Among Children and Adolescents

Economics of the Epidemic

Nationally
- The obesity epidemic costs the United States at least $147 billion each year

Locally
- The obesity epidemic currently costs Delaware on average $222 million per year in direct health care costs

Childhood Obesity in Delaware

- Childhood overweight and obesity affects every community in Delaware
- Approximately 40% of our children and youth are overweight or obese
- The health consequences include abnormal cholesterol, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, asthma, depression and anxiety

Benefits of Physical Activity

- Helps maintain a healthy weight and prevents chronic diseases like heart disease and type 2 diabetes
- Benefits during childhood and adolescence:
  - promotion of healthy growth and development
  - maintenance of energy balance
  - psychological well-being
  - opportunities for social interaction
- Children who grow up in physically active families are more likely to continue being physically active into adulthood compared to their peers raised in families with more sedentary lifestyles

U.S. Adults Meeting the Recommended Amount of Leisure Time Physical Activity

Promoting Physical Activity in the Built Environment

Why focus on the environment?

"It is unreasonable to expect that people will change their behavior easily when so many forces in the social, cultural and physical environment conspire against such change."

- Institute of Medicine
Promoting Physical Activity in the Built Environment: Research Conclusions

Activity Friendly Communities could:
- Generate 2 more walk/bike trips per person per week
- Prevent up to 1.7 lbs. of weight gain per year
- Positively affect walking/cycling for transportation
- Positively impact the total minutes of physical activity (40% more physical activity)
- Decrease amount of time spent in a car. Each hour spent in a car is associated with a 6% increase in the likelihood of obesity.
- Increase life expectancy by 4 years


Focusing on Active Transportation

- Walking or bicycling for transportation
- Incorporating physical activity into daily routines
- A convenient way to obtain recommended physical activity

Statistics on Active Transportation

- According to the 2009 National Household Travel Survey:
  - 37% of Americans reported no walk trips in the previous week
  - 25% of children reported taking no walks or bike rides outside for any reason in the previous week
  - Average amount of time spent in active travel each day was just 10 mins. per capita (short of recommendation of 30 mins. of physical activity per day for good health)

Source: 2009 NHTS.

Decline in Children Walking and Biking to School

- Then (1969):
  - 48% of children walked or biked to school
  - 12% arrived by private automobile
- Now (2009):
  - 13% of children ages 5-14 usually walk or bike to school
  - 44% arrive by private automobile
- A survey administered by the CDC sheds light on the causes of this decline
  - Following distance to school, the second most commonly reported barrier to walking/biking to school was traffic-related danger

Sources: 2009 NHTS; CDC, 2005.

The Challenges We Currently Face

- Our current environment supports sedentary lifestyles
- It is difficult, if not impossible, to walk or bike to most destinations of importance
- Few places actually encourage people to be active

Impact of Community Design on Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mix of Land Use</td>
<td>19% increase in walk/bike trips in areas with appropriate land use mix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence/Proximity of Convenience Services</td>
<td>27% increase in walk/bike trips in areas having high presence and good proximity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Traffic Safety</td>
<td>68% increase in walk/bike trips in areas perceived as more safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Aesthetics</td>
<td>50% increase in walk/bike trips in areas perceived as more aesthetically pleasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of Bikeway</td>
<td>57% increase in bicycling in areas with dedicated bikeways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Parks and Trails</td>
<td>75% of inactive believe there are too few parks and recreation facilities. 56% of respondents would use trails if provided in their community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Support</td>
<td>55% support more bike paths, 62% more sidewalks, 60% for improved connections to destinations, and 57% improving mass transit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Public Demand for Walkable/Bikeable Communities

- Diverse groups view walking and bicycling as the solution to an array of problems:
  - Public health professionals
  - Cities
  - Environmentalists
  - Transportation professionals
  - General public
- Public opinion polls show support for pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly communities:
  - 55% want to walk more on a daily basis to get exercise or to travel to specific destinations
  - 63% want to walk more to stores and other locations to take care of errands


Complete Streets Offer Active Transportation Options

- A complete street is safe, comfortable and convenient for travel via automobile, foot, bicycle and transit
- Complete streets open up additional safe travel options for the nearly one-third of Americans who do not drive:
  - People over age 65
  - Children under 16
  - Low-income households without automobiles
- Complete streets policies ensure that the entire right of way is planned, designed and operated to provide safe access for all users
  - 25 states (including Delaware) and more than 200 local jurisdictions have adopted Complete Streets policies
  - Safe and Complete Streets Act of 2011 has been introduced (H.R. 1780, S. 1056)

Source: National Complete Streets Coalition.

Examples of Complete Streets

Creating Complete Streets in Sacramento

Source: National Complete Streets Coalition.
Creating Complete Streets in Sacramento

Health Benefits of Complete Streets: Physical Activity

- Residents are 65% more likely to walk in a neighborhood with sidewalks.
- Cities with more bike lanes per square mile have higher levels of bicycle commuting.
- One-third of regular transit users meet the minimum daily requirement for physical activity during their commute.
- Research shows that children engage in more regular, sustained physical activity when they can walk or bike from home to school or other destinations.
- A 2009 policy statement from the AAP underscores the importance of pediatricians advocating for environmental improvements to promote physical activity.

Other Benefits of Complete Streets

- Increasing the capacity of the transportation network and reducing congestion.
- Making more efficient use of taxpayer dollars and avoiding costs associated with retrofitting transportation projects in the future.
- Increasing property values and job growth.
- Fighting climate change by reducing air pollution.
- Reducing automobile trips, which can decrease oil dependence.
- Fostering strong communities.

Resources

- Active Living by Design: www.activelivingbydesign.org
- America Bikes: www.americabikes.org
- Bikes Belong: www.bikesbelong.org
- Convergence Partnership: www.convergencepartnership.org
- League of America Bicyclists: www.bikeleague.org
- National Complete Streets Coalition: www.completestreets.org
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center: www.bicyclinginfo.org
- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy: www.railstotrails.org
- Safe Routes to School National Partnership: www.saferoutespartnership.org

Nemours Health and Prevention Services

Planting the seeds for better health
www.growuphealthy.org

Patti Miller, MPP
Senior Policy Analyst
Nemours Health & Prevention Services
252 Chapman Road, Christiana Building, Suite 200, Newark, DE 19702
(p) 302.444.9087 (e) ppmiller@nemours.org