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Step Into Cuba - Community-wide Campaigns

University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center

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Community–Wide Campaigns



PREVENTION RESEARCH CENTER
Prevention & Population Sciences

hsc.unm.edu/som/prc



www.stepintocuba.org

National recommendations call for regular physical activity (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2008). The Guide to Community Preventive Services (Community Preventive Services Task Force) recommends successful community strategies to increase physical activity. Cuba, New Mexico, has applied many of these strategies. The Step Into Cuba program, a nationally recognized model, is under study by the University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center (PRC). This fact sheet, one of a series of five, shares initial findings for New Mexico community use.

Recommendation from the Community Guide: Community–wide campaigns should be used to increase physical activity and improve physical fitness at all ages. Campaigns should be adapted to specific needs and interests of the target population.

Community-wide campaigns to increase physical activity are interventions that:

- Involve many community sectors
- Include highly visible, broad-based, multicomponent strategies (e.g., social support, risk factor screening or health education)
- May also address other cardiovascular disease risk factors, particularly diet and smoking

Evidence: Results from a Systematic Review by the Task Force

Research demonstrates that community-wide campaigns are effective in increasing physical activity and improving physical fitness among adults and children. As a result of campaigns, the following benefits are established:

- Percentage of people who report being physically active increases by an average of 4.2%
- Energy expenditure increases by an average of 16.3%
- Measured physical activity increases
- Knowledge about exercise and physical activity increases
- More people state their intention to be more physically active
- Risk factors for cardiovascular disease decrease

Cuba Strategy

Step Into Cuba adopted an ongoing multi-component informational strategy that increases awareness and promotes availability of new trails and places to walk, worksite or other supported walking groups, and a walking champion with whom to develop a physical activity plan.

Specific Cuba Approaches

❖ Maintaining a Website for the Public

A website was chosen as an important vehicle to engage and inform the public of Step Into Cuba sponsored trails and physical activity opportunities. The site was established with the help of the program’s university partner and maintained through regular contact between Step Into Cuba Alliance leadership and the university “webmaster.” The website is established as home page at the Cuba Library where many people from the community access the internet. The website may be found at: www.stepintocuba.org.

❖ Producing Informational Walking Guides

Walking guides have been developed to promote places for physical activity. See Fact Sheet #2, Access to Places for Physical Activity.

Community Campaign

Access to Places

Individually Adapted

Street Scale Design

Social Support

More Information

stepintocuba.org

hsc.unm.edu/som/prc/

thecommunityguide.org

❖ Locating Posters, Kiosks, Motivational Signs and a Traveling Exhibit in Popular Locations

Various permanent information and promotional displays are used to encourage Cuba area residents to walk, volunteer, or provide input to Step Into Cuba

- Attractive posters were developed for kiosks and display cases at the village office, clinic and US Forest Service office
- Outdoor kiosks promoting the Continental Divide Trail and Step Into Cuba activities were permanently installed at the Cuba Post Office and village park
- Signs encouraging people to walk for health or convenience were placed at popular locations such as the post office, clinic, credit union and visitor center
- A portable plan for proposed development of the village park to increase its use for physical activity is rotated on a two week cycle to various popular public places such as the schools, clinic, electric cooperative, village office and library.

❖ Submitting Local Newspaper Articles

Shortly after initiating program activities, the local monthly newspaper was chosen to keep the public informed of Step Into Cuba and related activities and opportunities for physical activity. Organization of submissions into a special dedicated section of the paper was chosen by the editor and has worked well. Reports of accomplishments and events, a calendar of activities, photographs and personal suggestions for health are included, as well as informational flyers as inserts. The local healthy community coordinator/walking champion, an employee of the Nacimiento Community Foundation, is usually responsible for submissions.

❖ Sponsoring Events for the Public

Events were sponsored and held for the purpose of gathering public input, training and rewarding volunteers, and promoting physical activity and volunteerism. Important events have included:

- Walkability workshop (4 hours) – see Fact Sheet #4, Street-scale Design
- Backcountry trail construction workshop (2 day)
- Nacimiento Community Foundation sponsored picnics and hikes where volunteers for Step Into Cuba, Cuba Farmer's Market, Checkerboard Food Pantry and Cuba Community Garden were recognized for their contributions
- Walk and Roll to School Day – Step Into Cuba volunteers, UNM PRC and school staff and students walked from school to the village park, walked on the park trail, and returned
- Moonlight Fisher Community Trail hike – the community was introduced to the new trail under the rise of a full moon
- St. Francis of Assisi Park planning meetings – the park plan was developed with assistance from graduate students of the UNM Landscape Architecture program
- Rio Puerco Watershed Clean-up – a new trail was bladed and constructed, and tires and trash were removed from riparian areas used for walking trails

Step Into Cuba
A Trails, Walkways and Physical Activities Program

Coordinated by
Nacimiento Community Foundation

LOCATION: Village of Cuba, New Mexico and surrounding areas.

PROJECT GOAL: To promote a healthy lifestyle by increasing walking and hiking in Cuba and on surrounding scenic Federal lands.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES:

- Creating and promoting walkways and trails
- Increasing pedestrian safety and walkability
- Developing and improving St. Francis of Assisi Park as a central trailhead and recreation destination
- Linking the Village of Cuba to the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail
- Engaging individuals and organizations in a shared goal of promoting physical activity and offering social support

PARTNERS:

- Continental Divide Trail Alliance
- Cuba Independent School District
- Healthy Kids, Healthy Cuba
- Mid-Region Council of Governments
- Nacimiento Community Foundation
- New Mexico Dept. of Health
- New Mexico Dept. of Transportation District 6
- Presbyterian Medical Services
- Sandoval County
- Step Into Cuba Volunteers
- University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. National Park Service Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program
- Village of Cuba

Get Active, Get Involved!
Contact Jeanette Linville, Executive Director,
Nacimiento Community Foundation at (575) 289-3718.

Visit: www.stepintocuba.org