



## **Virginia Statistics**

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data indicates that more than 50 percent of American adults are not regularly active. The percentage of adult Virginians who reported not participating in any physical activity within the past month is 21.6 compared the national average of 23 percent. Virginia mirrors the national average when it comes to adults not getting enough physical activity; more than 50 percent of adult Virginians do not meet the recommended amount for moderate physical activity

## **About Creating Communities for Active Aging**

Creating Communities for Active Aging helps communities develop strategic plans to promote active aging. Topics include:

- Involving stakeholders;
- Assessing barriers and opportunities to physical activity; and
- Developing strategies for increasing the number of older adult walkers and cyclists.

Active aging strategies range from public policy changes, to improved community design, to information and education approaches. This document is a guide for community groups to use to create a strategic plan to engage the older adults in your community in more physical activity. The guide contains goals and terms for your group to discuss and adapt as you develop your own community's plan. You can tailor your own strategic plan to meet the needs of the place where you live and the people who live there. You will find suggestions on involving key stakeholders from your community in the process of finding the obstacles and prospects.

## **Training Requirements**

This program requires a 1-day VDH sponsored training and VDH technical assistance.

## **Program Implementation Specifications**

- Implement an 8-week walking campaign

### Creating Communities for Active Aging Trainer Responsibilities

- Participate in VDH training and technical assistance.
- Convene or Establish a Walking Workgroup. This workgroup will ultimately determine the program focus and components.
- With the Walking Workgroup Develop a Strategic Plan to promote physical activity among older adults using the Key Steps
- Conduct a Community Assessment using the Walkability Checklist
- Prioritize results of checklist by Walking Workgroup goals and feasibility; Develop strategies to reach the goals
- Develop a promotion plan for recruiting participants and increasing walking among older adults including a Kick-Off event.
- Implement an 8-week walking campaign
- Implement the program, track participants, collect data, and perform evaluation.

### Budget Checklist: Creating Communities for Active Aging

Program materials needs will vary for each group implementing the Active Aging Guide. Below are the suggested materials for implementation and a chart to use in preparing the budget.

Item	Budget Considerations	Cost
Walking Workgroup Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant Packet including: Nametags, Workgroup member responsibilities, Communications on the benefits of walking, Walkability Checklist, Tools to begin writing a strategic plan, Copy of Creating Communities for Active Aging</li> <li>• Space for meeting</li> </ul>	
Walkability Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• -Walkability checklist, camera, clip boards, flashlight</li> </ul>	
Supplies for Kick-Off Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campaign Information Packet including: Your business card, Guest Sign-In Sheet, Media Sign-In Sheet</li> <li>• Campaign items including: Campaign banners, Campaign scrapbook of newspaper clippings, event pictures, etc, Give-away items, Event information sheet/flyer, Flyers on upcoming walking events</li> <li>• Water stations (number depends on distance and number of walkers): Water coolers, Tables</li> </ul>	
Communications/Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on upcoming walking events: Posters, local newspaper advertisements, postcards</li> </ul>	
Tracking participant physical activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedometers (\$4/pedometer)</li> <li>• Steps tracker to record number of steps</li> <li>• Method of retrieving physical activity data (duration, number of activities, steps, etc)</li> </ul>	
	Total	

## **Creating Communities for Active Aging Evaluation**

- Completion of BRFSS Pre-test; Completion of BRFSS Post-test

### **Tips for Success in Creating Communities for Active Aging**

Involve stakeholders in program planning and implementation. Stakeholders provide critical insight into the needs, desires, and social norms of a community. By including stakeholders from the outset, residents are invested in the program and will be more likely to participate.

Base the program in an accessible and acceptable area to the target audience. Community walks can begin in a residential area or at a community center to boost participation.

Build evaluation into program plans. Evaluation helps planners modify programs to enhance effectiveness as well as ensure accountability. Consult the Walkability Checklist for evaluation components.

Ensure available and dedicated staff and enlist volunteers. A dedicated staff is required to have a consistent emphasis on physical activity. In addition, volunteers can contribute expertise in planning, coordination, and evaluation.

Make everything free or low-cost and open to anyone; also provide incentives to participants. Eliminating even low user fees can increase participation as many seniors live on a fixed income. Communities that provide small incentives to participants can entice people to start and stay with a program.

Use a multi-generational approach. While different age groups have divergent needs, appealing programs can unite generations, strengthen communities, and change social norms.