

Harford County Local Health Improvement Process
Healthy Harford-Obesity Workgroup
Thursday, March 10th, 2016, 8:30am
Harford Community College, Darlington Hall

Attendees: Bari Klein (Chair); Julie Mackert (Harford County Health Department - HCHD); Mallory McCloskey (HCHD), Kim Theis (University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health - UM UCH), Linda Myers (Office on Aging), Mary Nasuta (Harford County Public Schools), Robin Stokes-Smith (UM UCH), Russell Moy (HCHD), Angela Saccenti (Arena Club), Kristie Willats (UM UCH), Shane Grimm (Harford County Planning and Zoning)

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Day of Taste

In a continuous effort to create sustainable programming to abate childhood obesity, the LHIC-Obesity Workgroup/Healthy Harford is partnering with the Farm to Chef Maryland and the Harford County Public Schools to bring the Days of Taste program to Harford County Public Schools. A three day farm to school program focusing on teaching children where real food comes from, how to combine tastes, and how to assemble simple healthy meals, the Days of Taste program presents children to the world of real food. A [summary video](#) on the program was presented during the meeting in order to help members better understand the program. Days of Taste launched for 4th grade students in Harford County in 2015 at Church Creek elementary and Havre de Grace Elementary, and in the spring of 2016 will expand to Deerfield Elementary thanks to a HCPS Fuel up Play 60 grant. There is the potential to include an additional school in the spring of 2016 if funding permits.

Healthy Harford is also on the Farm to Chef Event planning committee. This is an annual event that supports Days of Taste programming throughout the region, which takes place on September 26, 2016 this year. If anyone would like further information on either attending or supporting the event, or bringing the Days of Taste program to their elementary school, please contact Bari Klein at bklein@healthyharford.org.

HarfordNEXT

Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning is still gathering public input for their [HarfordNEXT land use planning document](#). The LHIC Obesity Workgroup/Healthy Harford would like to comment as a group on the Healthy Communities and Mobility sections of the document on ways the plan could better promote healthy communities. A list of potential elements *to be added* to the document was discussed. This included:

- Make promotion of wellness and chronic disease prevention the *primary* emphasis of the Healthy Communities section and move it from the end of the chapter (goal 4.2) to the first point.
- Separate health from safety and move emergency preparedness and emergency operations to a separate section.

Food

- Place emphasis on access to *healthy* food, not just access to food.
- Expand improving the linkages between farmers/producers and local markets to include improved linkages to Food Banks and soup kitchens, as well as increase food security and improve SNAP/WIC acceptance.
- Create a healthy food environment:
 - Limit high density of fast food restaurants in vulnerable areas, i.e. low income neighborhoods, near schools, parks.
 - Improve food choices in public facilities, i.e. healthy vending, healthy workplace meetings, improved food choices at concession stands on public lands.
 - Increase access to water via fountains and refillable filtered water stations.
- Reduce food waste by creating linkages between food producers/vendors and food distribution to vulnerable populations.
- Create edible landscaping and urban orchards.

Active community

- Establish bike parking as part of county events.
- Set aside secure *priority* parking for bikes near retail, businesses, and public services. One car space can fit 20 bikes.
- Foster Healthy Lifestyles and Active Living for all Harford County residents by improving ADA access for seniors and special needs populations.
- Add provisions to link recreational land with non-motorized access, sidewalks, bike trails to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Create active communities by improving bike/ped linkages to daily necessities (work, school, retail) not just recreation areas.
- Make roundabouts safe for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Provide protected bike lanes on roads with motorized car travel over 30 mph.
- Provide separate travel facilities for cyclists and pedestrians to reduce possible accidents.

TEDEX - Harford County

As part of its 2016 initiatives to improve community awareness and education regarding healthy lifestyles, the Workgroup is exploring creating a Harford County version of the popular TED EX 12 minute videos. These videos would help to educate and inform the community on knowledge and resources available right here in Harford County. Potential topics include:

- Childhood Obesity
- Urban Farming
- Community Supported Agriculture and Community Gardens
- Personal Trainer/Physical Therapist - correct way to exercise
- Dental Health
- Cancer Prevention
- Mental Health/Suicide Prevention
- 30 Minute Meals
- Exercise at your desk
- How to get around using Harford Transit

Miscellaneous

- The Office on Aging has free produce coupons for income eligible seniors. They would like to engage community partners in helping get the word out and increase distribution of this needed assistance for access to fresh produce. Eligibility requirements and distribution sites will be available through the Office on Aging in early June. For further information, contact Linda Myers at lamyers@harfordcountymd.gov.
- Healthy Harford Day is September 24, 2016, 9am-1pm. A separate planning committee will be scheduled. If anyone is interested in helping plan this event, please contact Bari Klein bklein@healthyharford.org. The event is open to vendors in the Harford/Cecil Region. The early bird registration discount ends May 1, 2016.
- Bike to Work Day is May 20, 2016.