



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

## STATEWIDE PIONEERING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES SUCCESS STORIES

Implementation of  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
Policy Priorities  
YMCA OF THE USA

---

### RECOMMENDED READERS

- Statewide PHC team members
- National and local Y partners
- Community leaders involved in healthy eating and active living efforts

### QUICK SUMMARY

- Introduction to the YMCA Statewide Pioneering Healthier Communities (PHC) Initiative
- Background on the Statewide PHC communities
- Overview of how Statewide PHC communities are aligning around the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) policy priorities

# CONTENTS

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Statewide PHC: Taking Steps to Reverse Childhood Obesity .....</b>   | <b>1</b>  |
| Creating healthier communities that enable all children to thrive.....  | 1         |
| About the Y .....   | 2         |
| Partnering with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.....   | 2         |
| Collaboration is key .....  | 3         |
| <b>Creating Sustainable Change.....</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Policy Priorities .....</b>  | <b>7</b>  |
| Ensure that all foods and beverages served and sold in schools meet or<br>exceed the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans.....    | 7         |
| Increase access to high-quality, affordable foods through new or<br>improved grocery stores and healthier corner stores and bodegas ..... | 8         |
| Increase the time, intensity, and duration of physical activity during<br>the school day and out-of-school programs .....                 | 9         |
| Increase physical activity by improving the built environment in communities.....   | 11        |
| Use pricing strategies—both incentives and disincentives—to promote<br>the purchase of healthier foods.....                               | 12        |
| <b>Concluding Observations .....</b>  | <b>13</b> |
| <b>Statewide PHC Profiled Communities.....</b>  | <b>15</b> |

# STATEWIDE PHC: TAKING STEPS TO REVERSE CHILDHOOD OBESITY

## CREATING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES THAT ENABLE ALL CHILDREN TO THRIVE

In the fight against childhood obesity, the Y has tested and demonstrated a solution that works. For the past four years, Ys across the nation have worked in collaboration with other community and state leaders to ensure that healthy living is within reach of all individuals, especially low-income and vulnerable families. The Y's Healthier Communities Initiatives have engaged state leaders (convened by local Ys) in policy, system, and environmental (PSE) change efforts that support and promote healthy lifestyles for all residents of their states.

The obesity epidemic poses a major threat not only to the economy but also to individuals' quality of life in this country. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than one-third of U.S. adults are obese and 12.5 million children and adolescents are obese. Childhood obesity rates have nearly tripled since 1980, creating a scenario in which, for the first time ever, today's generation of children may have shorter life expectancies than their parents. These statistics are amplified by the staggering medical costs associated with obesity and related diseases, estimated at \$147 billion annually.<sup>1</sup> Recognizing these impacts on the future of our children and families leads us to focus on creating healthier communities across the nation.

Sustainable local and state efforts are necessary to address the three main risk factors for obesity and chronic disease: physical inactivity, unhealthy eating, and tobacco use and exposure. These behaviors take a toll on the nation's health and health-care system. Because these factors are tied to lifestyle, a fundamentally new and aggressive social response is required to develop policies and environments that encourage healthy behaviors. Unfortunately, many communities lack access to healthy options that would allow people to adopt healthy behaviors. By creating policy, system, and environmental changes, those communities are ultimately able to overcome barriers to healthy living and create environments where the healthier choice becomes the easier choice.

---

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2012. "Overweight and Obesity." Atlanta. [www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/adult.html](http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/adult.html)

## **ABOUT THE Y**

At the Y, we work to ensure that all individuals have the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive regardless of age, background, or location. As a leading nonprofit dedicated to improving the nation's health, the Y supports individuals and families by helping them live well, reduce their risk for chronic disease, and reclaim their health when they have been affected by chronic disease. We do this through community-based healthy living and chronic disease prevention initiatives that support people in changing their behavior, encourage organizations and communities to adopt strategies that promote healthy living, and promote the public's health through advocacy.

For more than 150 years, the Y has worked to strengthen communities. This history, plus the Y's presence in more than 10,000 communities across the country, places the Y in a unique position to implement health and wellness initiatives at both local and state levels. The Y's enduring commitment to youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility supports its ability to convene multisector leaders to assist them in implementing community change.

## **PARTNERING WITH THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION**

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) is equally committed to improving the health of the nation and has demonstrated that commitment with a number of initiatives over the past 40 years. As a champion in this effort, RWJF has set a goal to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic by 2015. YMCA of the USA (Y-USA) has partnered with the Foundation to help in this fight and received a grant from the Foundation in 2009 to create the Y's Statewide Pioneering Healthier Communities (PHC) initiative. Statewide PHC works to empower communities to create lasting policy, system, and environmental (PSE) changes that promote healthy living and reverse childhood obesity. The initiative operates at the local and state level in six states (Connecticut, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and Tennessee) and 32 communities. Participating Ys and their communities represent small, medium, and large communities in rural, suburban, and urban areas. The work of Statewide PHC teams has led to 2,705 policy changes to date.<sup>2</sup>

Statewide PHC teams are focused on serving communities of color, low-income populations, and underserved populations who are often at greatest risk for chronic disease and obesity. For some of these populations, access to healthier foods and opportunities for physical activity can be scarce. These disparities create a great threat to long-term health and quality of life for those who reside in these communities. Working with these populations can help eliminate inequalities and create a healthy environment for all.

---

<sup>2</sup> YMCA of the USA. 2012. "Demonstrating Impact Survey." Chicago.

The Statewide PHC initiative centers on collaborating with community and state leaders to make environmental changes and to develop and implement policies and practices that improve health and well-being for all. An incredible amount of work is being done in local communities, with a growing number of organizations involved in these efforts. Health coalitions have the potential to become silos, with one coalition's efforts duplicating or even diminishing the effects of another. To create more efficiency overall for the Healthier Communities Initiatives, the Statewide PHC model brings together multiple organizations, coalitions, and leaders to collectively address a common cause like reducing childhood obesity. When these efforts are effectively coordinated, the impact is magnified and significant change is accomplished.

## FOUR KEY PRINCIPLES DRIVE STATEWIDE PHC

- Community and state leaders are involved throughout the initiative, using their positions, influence, and ability to make changes within their organizations and the greater community.
- Multiple sectors and diverse organizations are involved to maximize experience, assets, resources, and skills.
- Local and state initiatives are developed organically, with strategies specific to the needs of each community.
- The Y serves as convener in the community and co-leads with partner organizations.

## COLLABORATION IS KEY

The linchpin of Statewide PHC work is the involvement of the Y State Alliances. When Ys link arms through Y State Alliances, they become a formidable advocate at the state and national levels. Together, Y State Alliances and local Ys work to hold elected officials accountable for legislation that will impact millions of people throughout the United States. Ys understand that they gain strength and can further serve their diverse communities when they rally around their common cause and establish a strong regional and statewide presence through effective advocacy. Y State Alliances not only facilitate collaboration and partnerships among Y associations, they also connect with other local and statewide organizations that have similar goals and values. Collaborating with others amplifies the impact of the work Ys do to strengthen community and enables a more effective allocation of resources.

The Y State Alliances and the RWJF-funded local teams work together to help advance state initiatives and to enhance efforts at the community level. By supporting one another and involving one another in the planning and implementation processes, both the local and state coalitions are able to provide their networks with powerful information that leads to significant changes that address the obesity epidemic. The Y State Alliances have the ability to lend credibility to local efforts, while the successes of the local teams help to support the

work being done at the state level. The local teams serve as a vehicle for grassroots advocacy to support policy changes at the state level to address statewide issues impacting the health and well-being of youth.

This document highlights the RWJF-funded efforts in 32 communities spread throughout six states that are participating in work that recognizes the important linkages between local- and state-level actions in addressing the root causes of childhood obesity.

# CREATING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

Where people live often affects how they live: a person cannot make healthy choices if there are no choices. Strategies that focus on policy, system, and environmental (PSE) change create sustainable paths to creating communities that are rich in opportunities for individuals and families to make healthy choices. By engaging decision-makers in the community, change process strategies can more rapidly be advanced to alter the physical landscape and a bigger impact can be made with less time and fewer resources. By making PSE changes, communities can help tackle health issues like obesity, diabetes, cancer, and other chronic diseases.

RWJF funds efforts at the local, state, and federal levels to change public policies and community environments in ways that promote improved nutrition and increased physical activity. In 2009, RWJF established six policy priorities that evidence suggests will have the greatest and longest-lasting impact on children. These priorities, which can be supported by numerous approaches, help guide and frame the work of the Foundation:

- Ensure that all foods and beverages served and sold in schools meet or exceed the most recent dietary guidelines for Americans
- Increase access to high-quality, affordable foods through new or improved grocery stores and healthier corner stores and bodegas
- Increase the time, intensity, and duration of physical activity during the school day and out-of-school programs
- Increase physical activity by improving the built environment in communities<sup>3</sup>

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The term *built environment* is defined broadly to include land use patterns, transportation systems, and design features that together provide opportunities for travel and physical activity. Land use patterns are the spatial distributions of human activities. Transportation systems are the physical infrastructure and services that provide the spatial links or connectivity among activities. Design features are the aesthetic, physical, and functional qualities of the built environment, such as the design of buildings and streetscapes. Design features relate to both land use patterns and transportation systems.

---

<sup>3</sup> Definitions in the sidebar are based on Susan Handy's "Critical Assessment of the Literature on the Relationships Among Transportation, Land Use, and Physical Activity," a paper prepared for the Transportation Research Board and the Institute of Medicine Committee on Physical Activity, Health, Transportation, and Land Use, available at <http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/archive/downloads/sr282papers/sr282Handy.pdf>.

- Use pricing strategies—both incentives and disincentives—to promote the purchase of healthier foods
- Reduce youth exposure to unhealthy food marketing through regulation, policy, and effective industry self-regulation

While creating changes that address the unique needs of their community, the local teams and the Y State Alliances work together to support the six RWJF policy priorities. Five of the six priorities are currently being implemented and have been key to the success of Statewide PHC communities in addressing issues that contribute to the obesity epidemic. The success stories presented in this document showcase how state and local communities have incorporated RWJF's policy strategies to address childhood obesity.



# POLICY PRIORITIES

## **ENSURE THAT ALL FOODS AND BEVERAGES SERVED AND SOLD IN SCHOOLS MEET OR EXCEED THE MOST RECENT DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS**

With nearly 40 percent of children’s calories being consumed during the school day, it is important to ensure that the foods and beverages available to them meet or exceed the most recent dietary guidelines. Not only should the items sold in the cafeteria lines be healthy, but those sold in vending machines and school stores need to be nutritious as well. To be even more effective, fundraisers and classroom treats and snacks should be held to the same nutrition standards.

Offering children a variety of nutritious foods helps them to build healthy habits that they will carry home with them and keep for a lifetime. The Statewide PHC teams have worked to transform schools in their communities to meet the dietary guidelines and provide healthy environments for their students. From eliminating fryers in school cafeterias to the complete elimination of vending machines, school districts are shifting the culture within their walls and making the healthy choice the easy choice. Efforts at the state and national levels are also addressing foods that are sold in schools. These efforts help to validate local communities’ efforts while paving the way with statewide policies.

### **BRISTOL, TENNESSEE-VIRGINIA**

In these twin cities, home to 45,000 residents, the Statewide PHC team sought to combat childhood obesity by improving the nutritional content of foods and beverages in the Bristol Tennessee City Schools school system. They began by educating school staff on the benefits of serving low-fat, roasted, and nonfried vegetables rather than foods high in fat. As a result of the Statewide PHC team’s work, Tasty Tuesday was implemented, a trial program that introduced students to fresh fruits and vegetables. Over the course of the program, the number of students choosing and eating fresh fruits and vegetables over high-fat foods increased by more than 10 percent.

The Statewide PHC team’s work also resulted in the schools’ increased commitment to providing youth with healthier meals. To demonstrate that commitment, the school system took fryers out of all school cafeterias, which means 4,000 students have healthier meals served to them every school day.

The Statewide PHC team used evidence-based strategies to enable students to increase their consumption of healthy foods while decreasing their consumption of unhealthy foods, which leads to improved health and a lower incidence of overweight.

## MANSFIELD, OHIO

The Statewide PHC team worked to educate school officials about the benefits of serving healthier foods in school. In an attempt to embrace the team's recommendations, the school system updated its menus using recipes from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation. In addition, the Mansfield City School District applied for and received a USDA fruit and vegetable grant designed to help students make healthier choices by increasing their awareness of and exposure to fresh fruits and vegetables.

The Statewide PHC team's work has the potential to positively impact over 4,700 students enrolled in the Mansfield City School District by increasing and promoting healthy food options in schools.

## INCREASE ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY, AFFORDABLE FOODS THROUGH NEW OR IMPROVED GROCERY STORES AND HEALTHIER CORNER STORES AND BODEGAS

Where people live can directly affect their ability to make healthy choices. This is especially true when it comes to access to healthy food. Corner stores in low-income neighborhoods often do not stock fresh produce. The food on the shelves tends to be highly processed, packaged, and full of fat or sugar. Often there is not a grocery store convenient to these neighborhoods.

Without access to healthy foods, families are often left with no choice but to purchase items that are lower in nutritional content. When healthy options are available and affordable, however, the healthy choice becomes the easier choice.

## ADRIAN, MICHIGAN

In assessing community needs, the Statewide PHC team visited more than 40 corner stores throughout Adrian to evaluate such things as proximity to a larger grocery store, target population, and types and prices of food being sold. The examination included a review of the corner stores' marketing practices and a study of their capacity to offer fresh foods. The study revealed a lack of access to fresh fruits and vegetables, so the Statewide PHC team worked with corner stores to pilot the sale of produce. The first pilot, providing fresh apples and oranges, was at a local Wheelock Pharmacy. Marketing efforts were targeted to over 200 residents living near the pharmacy. Progress is being tracked to determine how to create additional changes that will allow other corner stores in Adrian to offer healthier, more affordable options for its nearly 90,000 residents.

In fact, research has shown that having a supermarket or grocery store in a neighborhood increases fruit and vegetable consumption and is associated with lower body mass index (BMI) among adolescents.<sup>4</sup>

Statewide PHC coalitions have collaborated with local governments to increase access to nutritious foods and partnered with the business community to bring new and healthier foods to corner stores and bodegas in underserved areas. Many communities are building new farmers markets and working to bring supermarkets back to low-income areas.

## MARION, OHIO

The Statewide PHC coalition is concentrating its resources on increasing the quality of the food sold in the local corner stores. The coalition has performed assessments in 12 local grocery and convenience stores, including three Speedway locations around Marion. The Statewide PHC team learned through its assessments that many of the Speedways across the state sold fresh fruits; however, fresh produce was not available in the Marion stores. As a result of the collective actions of the Statewide PHC team and a call to the corporate office of Speedway, all three locations are now selling fresh fruit, such as apples, bananas, grapes, and oranges. The team is continuing to spread this work and anticipates that 66,500 residents of Marion will have access to high-quality, affordable foods because of its efforts.

## INCREASE THE TIME, INTENSITY, AND DURATION OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DURING THE SCHOOL DAY AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

To secure the health of our children, school administrators, community leaders, and parents must work together to ensure that physical activity is included during the school day and in out-of-school programs. This can be accomplished in various ways, such as requiring active participation in daily physical education classes, finding ways to add physical activity throughout the day, and allowing time for outdoor recess. Afterschool programs located in schools, parks, and recreation centers can also find fun and innovative ways to help children be more active and increase the time allocated for physical activity.

---

<sup>4</sup> L. M. Powell, M. C. Auld, F. J. Chaloupka, P. M. O'Malley, L. D. Johnson. 2007. "Associations Between Access to Food Stores and Adolescent Body Mass Index." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*: S301–S307. [www.impactteen.org/journal\\_pub/pub\\_PDFs/AJPM\\_Supplement\\_2007/AJPM2007\\_S301\\_powell.pdf](http://www.impactteen.org/journal_pub/pub_PDFs/AJPM_Supplement_2007/AJPM2007_S301_powell.pdf)

Unfortunately, year after year, schools across the country reduce or even eliminate physical education and recess from their curricula, even in light of the substantial evidence that physical activity can help improve academic achievement, including grades and test scores.<sup>5</sup>

Statewide PHC coalitions are collaborating with school leaders to incorporate fun and appealing physical activity programs into the school day. They are also working to change healthy eating and physical activity standards and improve environments in afterschool programs so that more children can participate in physical activity outside the school day.

## PORT HURON, MICHIGAN

The Statewide PHC team has increased the amount of physical activity time offered throughout the school day and in out-of-school programming, doubling the required amount of physical education time in elementary schools from 1 hour to 2 hours per week beginning fall 2012.

Community running/walking programs are also offered in 10 of 11 elementary schools and 1 of 3 middle schools. With students, teachers, parents, and community members participating, the programs are making a big impact by providing over 5,000 students with more opportunities for physical activity.

## FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY

Incredible improvements have been made by the Statewide PHC team to increase physical activity throughout the school day. The team has used its funds to support implementing the Take10 program, which integrates short bouts of physical activity with core academic content in all 12 public and private elementary schools in Frankfort. These funds have provided 185 classrooms and 4,450 students and their teachers with the resources to successfully run this program and get the students active during the school day.

As a result of the Statewide PHC team's work, the school included language in its wellness policies that encourages everyone to use the program daily. Now, nearly 4,500 students in the Frankfort schools are engaging in more daily physical activity, which leads to lower rates of obesity and improved health.

---

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2010. "The Association Between School-based Physical Activity, Including Physical Education, and Academic Performance." [www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/health\\_and\\_academics/pdf/pape\\_executive\\_summary.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/health_and_academics/pdf/pape_executive_summary.pdf)

## **INCREASE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BY IMPROVING THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT IN COMMUNITIES**

Statewide PHC communities are making changes in their environments—building walking trails, improving sidewalks, and creating recreational spaces—and helping residents take advantage of them. Increased signage, websites, and brochures spread the word on how people can take advantage of these great community enhancements that promote physical activity.

When individuals and families are faced with crumbling or nonexistent sidewalks, poorly lit streets, playgrounds with damaged equipment, and unsafe intersections, physical activity (including active transportation) becomes difficult. Improving streets so they are safe for all users—whether they walk, bike, or drive—and ensuring safe play spaces is an important step toward creating healthier communities.

### **DYERSBURG, TENNESSEE**

The Statewide PHC team, hoping to increase the physical activity levels of the individuals who live in this city of nearly 17,000, has made improvements to the built environment. A Safe Routes to School grant allowed the team to work with the community to create safe sidewalks that lead to the middle schools in the area, affecting up to 200 children. If the team receives another trail grant, it plans to connect these sidewalks to another section already created. Working with the Tennessee Department of Transportation to create a 9-mile section of road with wide shoulders will help make this happen.

The team also recommended and adopted creating a 12-mile bike trail throughout the city. A bike route center will be created to help encourage bicycling as both a form of transportation and enjoyable recreation.

### **WILTON, CONNECTICUT**

The Statewide PHC team worked to create what they call “pedestrian zone”—a system of sidewalks and trails that connects several youth-serving organizations and activity areas that links the community of 18,000 to the facilities they use and encourages more physical activity.

In collaboration with the town, an area near the high school track has been established as an outdoor fitness center with four cardio equipment stations for use by the public. The community has also installed nine bike racks for bicyclists, signage along the path to indicate areas of the Norwalk River Valley Trail, and two “Wellness Kiosks” with trail maps for guidance.

In the future, the team will be supporting the creation of a pedestrian footbridge from the Wilton train station into Wilton Center to further encourage walking instead of driving as well as supporting the Norwalk River Valley Trail committee to establish a 5-town, 20+ mile greenway that can be used for recreational purposes.

The result of these efforts has been a marked increase in awareness within the community of the dangers of childhood obesity. There has been considerably more use of the sidewalk system by both youth and adults, and collaborative efforts with the Wilton Chamber of Commerce to draw pedestrians into the center of town have gained support.

## USE PRICING STRATEGIES—BOTH INCENTIVES AND DISINCENTIVES—TO PROMOTE THE PURCHASE OF HEALTHIER FOODS

Food prices influence consumers' purchasing decisions and can truly affect their overall health. Low-income households often need to make the choice between spending \$2 on a bulk pack of instant soup that can feed a family of three for three days and spending \$3 on a head of lettuce that might go bad after only one day because the family lacks proper refrigeration. When this is the case, the cheaper and often less nutritious options seem like the most obvious choices. However, with incentives such as lower prices for healthier foods, the health and nutrition needs of children and families can be met. When healthier foods are made more affordable, families feel more empowered to make healthier choices.

### KINGSPORT, TENNESSEE

Healthy Kingsport, the Statewide PHC team, has supported and promoted expansion of the Downtown Farmers Market to better serve the community. In an attempt to make healthy food choices affordable to lower income families, the markets now accept SNAP and WIC vouchers as payment. This reduces families' out-of-pocket costs and fosters making these healthy choices. The 50,000 residents of Kingsport now have healthier options at a reduced cost.

Farmers markets are becoming places in which these choices can be made. With the acceptance of Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), lower income families are able to purchase healthy foods that are sold at local farmers markets. These provisions allow fresh fruits and vegetables to make their way onto the plates of young children, which can help reverse the obesity epidemic.

### PEORIA, ILLINOIS

Working with local dietetic students to assess their community, the Statewide PHC team found several areas without access to fresh foods and discovered that the farmers market was not used as often as they had hoped. To help encourage purchases of fresh fruits and vegetables, the team worked with the farmers market manager to make it possible for the market to accept SNAP/LINK cards. Also, for the third year, dietetic interns staffed the SNAP/LINK booth. A highlight from the market in 2012 was a \$2,500 grant the market received to double the value of SNAP dollars up to \$25. The team has seen a tremendous increase in SNAP customers at the market, and the double redemption program has increased the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables that low-income individuals can purchase. A grassroots fund, Wholesome Food Group, was created to accept donations and has raised over \$5,500. This money is being used to continue the double redemption program for SNAP/LINK.

# CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Since 2009, the partnership between YMCA of the USA (Y-USA) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) has provided tools and support to 32 communities in six states in an attempt to reverse the trend of childhood obesity. Using policy priorities set forth by the Foundation, Statewide Pioneering Healthier Communities (PHC) community teams have influenced 2,705 changes to support healthy living within their communities and states and have impacted nearly 2.3 million lives. By breaking down the silos that are so prevalent in communities and states, the teams are building enthusiasm for this work and have brought together many organizations to make this all happen.

Statewide PHC teams have advanced 368 changes within schools to ensure that healthy foods and beverages are sold to children and youth; in early childhood and afterschool programs, they have facilitated 404 changes that have helped incorporate more physical activity (time, intensity, or duration) before, during, and after the school day. Leaders have also advanced 187 strategies that provide greater access to healthier foods in the community, including farmers markets and mobile markets. In neighborhoods, teams have advanced 66 strategies and encouraged changes in built environments to provide greater access to physical activity. These incredible achievements place the communities in a position to offer the healthiest options for their residents and, in turn, begin to decrease obesity rates and the resulting complications.

Y-USA grantees were able to leverage the RWJF funding they received to raise an additional \$1,332,100 to help sustain their efforts. As the Statewide PHC teams experience these successes, Y-USA has been able to document them and use the information to help expand the model. The local communities and states are equipped with the tools needed to sustain their efforts when the financial support from RWJF concludes. They have found unique and creative ways to become engaged, self-sustaining coalitions that will create further health policy, system, and environmental changes within their communities.

As the work has evolved, Y-USA has been fortunate to receive funding from additional sources such as the Sam's Club Foundation and the CDC's Community Transformation Grants to expand the initiative. This has allowed more communities around the country to be impacted by this work and create true cultural change for all involved. Childhood obesity and the complications associated with it have become prominent issues for the country, but with help from generous funders, communities are now devoted to shifting the trend.

The more that is learned from the Statewide PHC initiative, the better the community teams become at supporting themselves and one another. In addition to the resources and tools provided, Statewide PHC communities within each state come together to share their successes and their limitations and truly learn from one another. Knowing what works and

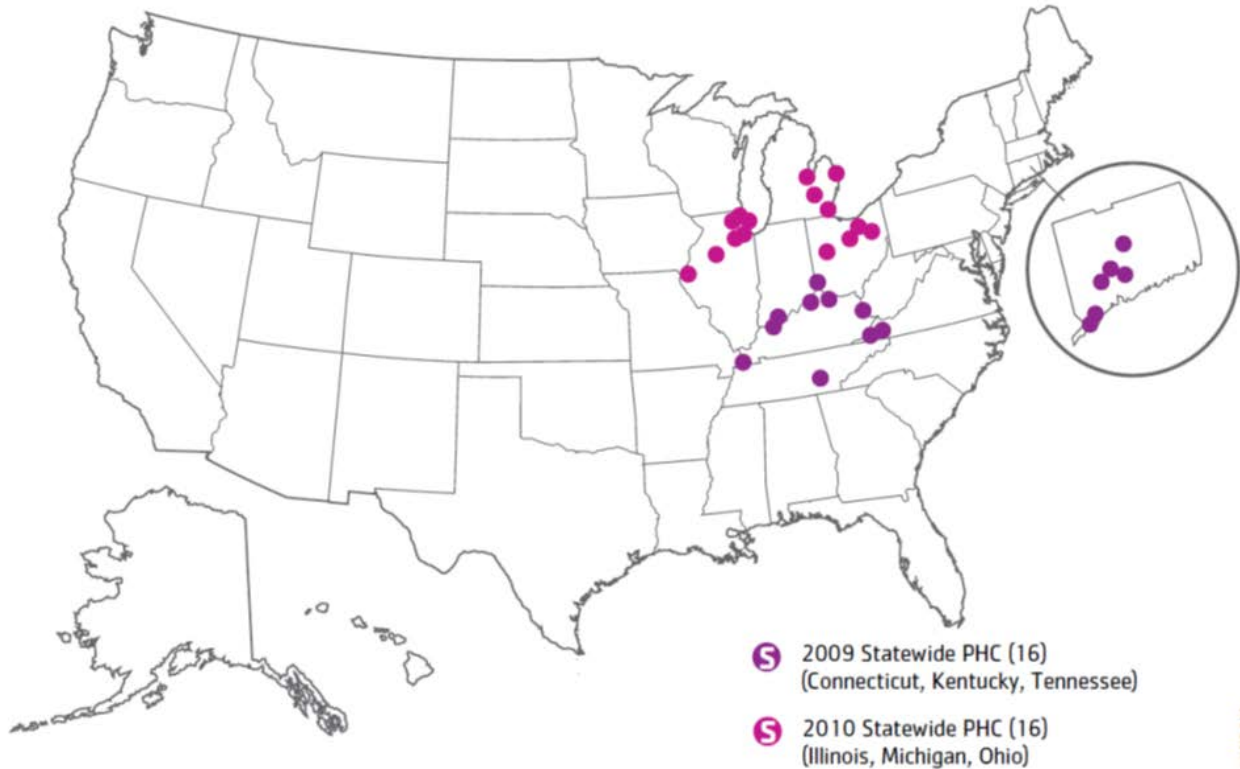
what doesn't can help teams make informed decisions about the processes they implement to bring about healthy changes. Teams are also participating in new and complementary coalitions, helping to spread the work even farther and get more communities engaged.

Because Y State Alliances come together every two years to share successes with one another, these alliances will spread their lessons to colleagues in other states. Learnings from our infrastructure of over 200 healthy community sites can help additional communities understand how to come together at the state level to advance change more broadly and on a larger scale for all their residents.

As the culture of the country shifts even further toward healthy living, YMCA of the USA and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation will continue to be champions of the effort and will remain dedicated to reversing the trend of childhood obesity.



# STATEWIDE PHC PROFILED COMMUNITIES



**S** 2009 Darien, CT • Hartford, CT • Southington, CT • Wallingford, CT • Waterbury, CT  
Wilton, CT • Burlington, KY • Frankfort, KY • Madisonville, KY • Owensboro, KY  
Paris, KY • Pikeville, KY • Bristol, TN • Chattanooga, TN • Dyersburg, TN • Kingsport, TN

**S** 2010 Chicago, IL • Glen Ellyn, IL • Joliet, IL • Kankakee, IL • Oak Park, IL • Peoria, IL • Quincy, IL  
Schaumburg, IL • Adrian, MI • Owosso, MI • Port Huron, MI • Dover, OH • Mansfield, OH  
Marion, OH • Piqua, OH • Toledo, OH

## YMCA OF THE USA

101 N Wacker Drive, Chicago IL 60606

800 872 9622

[yexchange.org](http://yexchange.org)