

Define it! Design it! Do it! Community Action Models to Address Disparities, Promote Health and Create Positive Social Experiences in Diverse Communities

Speakers:

Gita Rampersad, JD, MHA-DuPage Health Coalition, DuPage County, IL-Moderator/Lead
Adam Becker, Ph.D. - Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, Chicago, IL
Fil Guipoco, MA-American Heart Association
Scott Ulrich AICP, CNU-A -Columbus Public Health, Columbus, OH

Session Overview:

Obesity is a national epidemic with wide consequences and cost to America's health and productivity. Walking is a great way to keep your body at a healthy weight. Community level interventions across the nation are gaining popularity as cost efficient measures to reduce obesity and improve health. In this lively, interactive presentation, a panel of health promotion leaders will provide participants with valuable community engagement tools to promote healthy, active living and positive social networks.

First, participants will participate in **"Walk this Way! Empowering Diverse Communities to Build Better Blocks"**. In this interesting and interactive presentation, Dr. Adam Becker, Executive Director of the Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children, will provide participants with an overview of the organization's blueprint to address childhood obesity and an evidence-based audit tool it developed to promote safe and active living in communities. Participants will learn the elements of a neighborhood assessment, a framework to identify "hot spots," and how to determine solutions that help lay the foundation for living healthy lifestyles. "Better Blocks," a successful community level intervention modeled from CLOCC's audit tool and used to educate neighbors on how to make streets safer for walking and biking will also be discussed. CLOCC's collaborative approach to addressing health disparities and improving community health will enhance the ability of participants to enrich the lives of those at risk for negative health across the nation.

Next the audience will be guided through **"Start Walking Now! A Model for Creating Healthy Social Experiences and Systems in US Communities."** The risk of stroke and cardiovascular disease increase dramatically in overweight and obese individuals. Taking just 10 minutes 3X a day to walk will help individuals live longer. In fact, studies show that just one hour of vigorous exercise will increase life expectancy by two hours. Fil Guipoco, Director of Health Equity at the American Heart Association, will demonstrate www.startwalkingnow.org, a national distance markers program using a fun online tool to design free and safe routes in communities that promote physical activity, bring neighbors together and provide valuable history lessons. Special walking paths chosen by community partners are designed to make physical activity more convenient and accessible, while encouraging the public to embrace a healthy lifestyle.

Participants will also be introduced to **"We're All in this Together! Improving Health through Strategic Partnerships and Creative Walking Programs."** The Healthy Places Program at Columbus Public Health produces policy partnerships, promotes active living and builds relationships. Scott Ulrich, an urban planner, will provide examples of communities in Ohio that have completed walk studies and highlight two unique walking programs designed to encourage new connections. The audience will leave with a clear understanding of an innovative method to improve community design, establish new norms and encourage community-building. At the end of the session, participants will be able to "Define it! Design it! Do it!" by identifying barriers, developing solutions and taking action towards change. This session is an example of the power and value of community capital in addressing health disparities and will empower participants to enrich the lives of those at risk for negative health across the nation.