

Success Story
PHHS Block Grant in Maine

Name of State Program: Healthy Maine Partnerships
Name of Project: Policy and Environmental Changes
Funding: Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant, CDC

Issue:

- Each year thousands of Maine residents die from chronic diseases that are strongly related to tobacco use (and second-hand smoke), physical inactivity, and poor nutrition. The number of deaths in Maine from heart disease, diabetes, and cancer was 3,164, 405, and 3,202, respectively, in 2002.
- Maine is one of only three remaining states nationwide who have continued to use their tobacco settlement dollars for the purpose which the tobacco settlement was for, and at CDC's suggested level of funding.
- With the settlement dollars, Maine formed 31 community and school partnerships called the Healthy Maine Partnerships (HMP). HMP's are tasked with creating environments and policies that support and provide more opportunities for people to be physically active, to live a tobacco/smoke-free life, and access to healthier food choices.

Intervention:

- State HMP programs/departments (Maine Cardiovascular Health Program, Partnership For a Tobacco Free Maine Program, Community Health Promotion Program, Physical Activity and Nutrition Program, and the Department of Education) collaborate on many initiatives and combine contracts with vendors to save resources, and to provide more cohesive interventions, projects, and products.
- The state HMP programs/department also work collaboratively with the 31 local Healthy Maine Partnerships providing technical assistance, resources, and linkages to create change on both the local and statewide levels. The state level HMP receives input and information on grass-root efforts that have contributed to the success of the entire Healthy Maine Partnership initiative.

Impact:

The success of the Healthy Maine Partnership has led to many accomplishments. The Healthy Maine Partnerships have created over 250 policy and environmental changes locally and/or statewide. Below are just a few policy and environmental changes that have occurred due to the collaborative synergy of HMP:

- The first smoke-free ski resort policy, in the US, was passed and implemented. At Black Mountain in Rumford Maine.
- A statewide committee of state and local level HMP's was formed to work on smoke-free public housing. This grew out of the Lewiston/Auburn HMP effort with local public housing developments, which developed and passed the first smoke-free public housing policy in Maine.
- Many schools with an HMP School Health Coordinator have made changes to their vending machines. These changes either limit access to vending machines (only available at certain times), or completely changed what is offered in vending machines. Some have taken soda machines out and replaced them with milk, water, and 100% fruit juices as well as replacing high fat and sugar snacks with lower fat/lower sugar options. 68% of HMP schools prohibit the sale of soda in their vending machines. (2004, Environmental Indicator Study)
- Several HMP towns have passed outdoor smoke-free recreation and/or park policies. For example, the City of Portland and the Town of Gardiner have both passed smoke-free public park policies and smoke-free playing field policies.