

CONNECTIONS

JULY 2016

NEWSLETTER OF THE FULTON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS PARTNERSHIPS TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY HEALTH (PICH) PROGRAM



Time To Step It Up

During July, the Fulton County PICH Program is promoting the benefits of physical activity and encouraging everyone to incorporate it into their daily routines. This issue also includes updates on PICH Program activities.

Seize the Summer!

There's no better time than summer to get physically active. The U.S. Surgeon General, the nation's top doctor, says that only half of American adults get enough physical activity to reduce their risk of heart disease and diabetes. According to recent data, the diabetes prevalence rate in Fulton County is about 11% and 22% of adults are obese. The health experts recommend 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each week, or 30 minutes a day five times a week. Sticking to the schedule consistently could prevent premature deaths from breast and colorectal cancer, diabetes and heart disease. "Physical activity is the closest thing we have to a wonder drug," says Dr. Tom Frieden, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Walking and wheelchair rolling are good ways to build exercise into daily life and stay healthy. Finding the time and opportunity for physical activity can be a challenge, though. Today's busy work schedules and growing family demands are shrinking the time that's available for exercise. Also, some communities don't have adequate, convenient or safe spaces for outdoor activities. Learn more at <http://bit.ly/1NScZOK>

Tips From PICH

Here are some easy ways to build physical activity into your routine and create more walkable spaces in your neighborhood:

- Roll your wheelchair or bike to work
- Walk to your bus stop or train station
- Climb the escalator steps rather than riding them
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Conduct meetings outdoors during a walk around the block
- Work with neighbors on strategies to make your community more walkable



Creating Healthier Day Care for Youngsters

In partnership with the non-profit health education organization HealthMPowers and the Georgia Department of Early Care and Adult Learning (DECAL), the PICH program is helping early care and education providers within Fulton County incorporate healthy nutrition practices and physical activity programs into their operations. Under the initiative that kicked off in April 2016, PICH is funding a project conducted by HealthMPowers to educate day care center staff members about the benefits of healthy eating and regular physical activity and to train them to write and implement wellness protocols for the children under their care. As of July 5, some 40 day care centers were participating in the workshops. For more information or to join the program, contact Felix Lawson by email at felix.lawson@fultoncountyga.gov or by phone at **404-613-3497**.

ACTIVE LIVING

PICH Interfaith Initiative Offers Fitness and Fellowship

The PICH Program's Interfaith Active Living Initiative is well underway and making significant progress in its work with Fulton County faith-based organizations to create and enhance walking clubs and other activities that build better fitness and overall wellness.

The initiative, which PICH is undertaking in collaboration with one of its community partners, the Fulton County Health Promotion Action Coalition (HPAC), is an important component of PICH's agenda in the physical activity area. Its goal is to increase the number of interfaith organizations in the County with access to physical activity and healthy food and beverage options through nature-based outdoor activities, nutritious eating programs, presentations, health fairs and educational events. The PICH-hosted activities are providing participants with the tools to lower their risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and some types of cancer; improve their strength and balance; prevent injuries; remain independent; reduce their chances of becoming depressed; and improve their ability to think, learn and make decisions. The low-impact exercise activities and healthy lifestyle events are also creating



more opportunities for fun-filled fellowship. PICH is supporting the participating faith-based congregations with educational materials, training and assistance.

So far, 21 churches have joined the initiative. To expand community awareness of the program and to promote the benefits of healthy lifestyles and participation, PICH is hosting a variety of events that focus on physical activity, good nutrition, and overall wellness for houses of worship. The first event on June 18, 2016 at the Allen Temple AME Church in Atlanta attracted more than 60 people and featured a men's wellness presentation, health screenings, cooking demonstrations, fitness classes and vendor exhibits. If you are the leader or member of a faith-based group in Fulton County and want to join the Initiative or learn more about it, contact Wykinia Hamblin by email at wykinia.hamblin@fultoncountyga.gov or by phone at **404-612-9467**.