



# Sharing Discoveries, Improving Lives

Translation & Dissemination at the Saint Louis University School of Public Health

## Our Mission:

The Saint Louis University School of Public Health is dedicated to the discovery, translation, and dissemination of public health knowledge to improve the health and well being of all.



## Project WOW: Walk the Ozarks to Wellness

Project WOW is a community-based research program that seeks to promote moderate physical activity, specifically walking at local trails, to prevent obesity and type 2 diabetes among adults living in rural Southeast Missouri. Interventions are implemented using an ecological framework and include tailored newsletters (individual level), health care provider counseling and walking groups (interpersonal level), trail events, media releases and contests (community level). Interventions are implemented simultaneously and evaluated using telephone surveys, trail use counters and HbA1c data collection. This project is funded by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.

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### Discovery

#### **What is the health problem?**

- ❖ Over 18 million people in the US are affected by diabetes and it contributes to over 210,000 deaths per year.
- ❖ Despite the proven benefits of physical activity, more than 50% of US adults do not get enough physical activity to provide health benefits; 26% are not active at all in their leisure time.
- ❖ Rates of chronic disease (heart disease, diabetes) and risk factors (inactivity, obesity) are higher among Southeast Missouri residents compared to the state as a whole.

### Translation

#### **How do we take what we know and apply it to communities?**

- ❖ Using a community steering committee, physical activity interventions focusing on community events, access/environmental enhancements and print media can be successfully implemented.
- ❖ The community selects about 2 interventions from a “menu” of evidence-based interventions for implementation each year.
- ❖ Those who participate in multiple levels of the intervention (individual, interpersonal, community) are about three times more likely to meet recommendations for physical activity.
- ❖ Through partnerships with an existing coalition, community organizations, worksites and city officials, program components can be sustained over time.

### Dissemination

#### **How will we disseminate Project WOW?**

- ❖ On-going dissemination of program methods and results occurs through peer-reviewed journals and presentations at professional meetings/conferences.
- ❖ Possibilities for future dissemination include an interactive CD-ROM or website to assist state, county or community level planners in implementing similar programs.
- ❖ Public health practitioners and applied researchers can take the “menu” of evidence-based interventions and allow communities to select promising programs for implementation.

### Change

#### **What changes do we anticipate will occur because of the dissemination?**

- ❖ Additional Missouri communities will be included in future Project WOW activities.
- ❖ Community members will be provided with skills needed to locate partners for sustaining a physical activity promotion program.