

LiveWell Greenville: 6 Years of Coalition Work

Over the past six years, the more than 150 partners actively engaged with LiveWell Greenville have kept a laser focus on moving the needle on **childhood obesity** rates by making healthy choices available and accessible. The partners of LiveWell Greenville have increased access to **healthy foods** and opportunities to engage in **physical activity** throughout Greenville County.

Global and targeted, broad and deep. LiveWell Greenville's initiatives fit into two categories: those that are **global** and intended to reach the general public, and those that are **targeted** to reach specific populations. This two-pronged approach allows the coalition to address childhood obesity both broadly and deeply.

PSE and CBPR. LiveWell Greenville focuses on making shifts in **policies, systems, and environments** (PSE), creating longer lasting change rather than short term programs. Using **Community Based Participatory Research** principles (CBPR), the coalition seeks, welcomes and requires the input of the community in developing, implementing, and evaluating initiatives.

Leadership Team and Advisory Board. LiveWell Greenville's **Leadership Team** functions as its Board of Directors, meeting 10 times per year. Each workgroup facilitator sits on the Leadership Team, facilitating the communication of the overall coalition work to every workgroup member. The **Advisory Board** members are influencers, often top ranking officials in their organizations. Advisory Board members meet twice per year to provide recommendations on the coalition's overall plans.

The Workgroup Structure. LiveWell Greenville is structured in workgroups, six of which are **setting-specific**, allowing partners around the workgroup tables to look deeply at the commonalities among schools, faith communities, early childhood sites, workplaces, out of school time sites, and healthcare. Interventions are then designed with the constraints and advantages of each setting in mind.

The remaining three workgroups focus on **topic** areas: healthy eating, physical activity, and active transportation. Partners in these workgroups design interventions looking through the lens of the topic instead of through the lens of a particular setting.

Evaluation

Evaluation is a critical component of the coalition's work; without local data, it is impossible to successfully understand the coalition's impact or to tailor initiatives to the needs of Greenville County residents. LiveWell Greenville's founding Principal Investigator structured LiveWell's evaluation efforts using CPBR guidelines to ensure community participation and ownership in all implementation and evaluation. LiveWell's evaluation plan was also designed to integrate into the fabric of Furman University's student and community engagement plans. The evaluation team is led by Melissa Fair of the newly formed **Institute for the Advancement of Community Health at Furman University**, developed in partnership with Greenville Health System. Nine researchers from four South Carolina higher education institutions evaluate LiveWell Greenville initiatives, and over the years, **dozens of student fellows, interns, and**

research assistants from Furman, Clemson, USC and others have participated in these evaluation efforts.

In addition to the many papers and presentations LWG's evaluation team has authored, the team has conducted three studies that are foundational to the coalition's work in addressing health disparities in Greenville. These studies monitor the levels of obesity in our county's youth; identify those neighborhoods with the least access to healthy foods (food deserts) and identify those neighborhoods with the least access to safe physical activity and recreational opportunities (play deserts). When layered together, the data from these studies demonstrates that the greatest needs are in the northern-most, western-most and southern-most segments of the county.

Coalition Impact

While the highlighted successes below show the end result of the coalition's collaborative work, the foundation of this work has been bringing partners to the table who, together, can make change happen. This assembly is intentional, and the coalition's relationships with partners are nurtured constantly to build trust. Realized at the Advisory Board, Leadership Team, and workgroup levels, thriving partnerships are the greatest sign of the coalition's ability to be successful.

Highlights of our collective impact over the past 6 years include:

At School

- Completion of Culinary Creations implementation in all 85 Greenville County School District schools: all 85 public schools switched to scratch made meals featuring higher nutritional value, as well as made commitments to healthier fundraisers, student rewards and celebrations. In conjunction with Furman University, body mass and other health outcomes of all students in grades 3-8 and PE 1 (high school) were measured twice annually for the past three years to continue to assess the impact of Culinary Creations and monitor local youth obesity rates.

Major partners: Greenville County School District (GCSD), GCSD's Food and Nutrition Services, Culinary Institute of the Carolinas at Greenville Technical College, District 1 PTA

- School Wellness: all 85 Greenville County School District schools completed the School Health Index (SHI) to assess the health practices in each school in 2014-2015; the schools identified areas of need and set goals to improve access to healthy foods and engage in physical activity more frequently throughout the school day. The evaluation team has aggregated that data into a comprehensive report that demonstrates consistent needs across the district including a need for more staff wellness in 95% of schools.
- Forty-three schools were recognized in 2016 as LiveWell Schools (designation award), an increase from 31 in the previous year. The At School Award Application is in the process of

shifting to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's School Award, which will embed LWG's work in a state/national recognition program.

- In an effort to increased physical activity in or near school settings, the partners worked to fund the Bike Trailer initiative through Greenville Health System. Three trailers are equipped with 25 bikes each and travel to schools throughout the county to be utilized in physical education classes in 4th and 5th grades. The trailers are often booked more than 9 months in advance. Additionally, 8 schools developed travel plans through Safe Routes to School with the aim of increasing the number of students that walk or bike to school.
- Physicians As Liaisons in Schools (PALS) is an initiative that seeks to strengthen a culture of school health by encouraging active participation of a doctor on the school wellness team. It is modeled after MUSC Boeing Center for Children's Wellness Docs Adopt schools health initiative, a similar initiative that began in Charleston in 2010. Seven Greenville schools have signed on to this pilot program for the 2016-17 school year.

Out of School Time

- Forty-three out of school time (OST) providers (afterschool and summer care) were assessed for health practices, set and met goals to increase physical activity and exposure to healthy foods in OST, and 54 sites were recognized as LiveWell Out of School Time sites. Clemson University continues to assess the impact of this initiative through monitoring of changes in practices and time spent physically active in OST.

Major partners: YMCA of Greenville; City of Greenville; Greenville County Parks, Recreation, and Tourism; Communities in Schools; Building Opportunities in Out of School Time (BOOST); United Way of Greenville County; Clemson University

- LiveWell Greenville's Out of School Time efforts have formally integrated with the Building Opportunities in Out of School Time (BOOST) Quality Initiative to create a sustainable and comprehensive measure of quality afterschool care that no longer separates health quality from the other 10 components of quality including safety, school achievement, staff education and preparedness, etc.

Early Childhood

As the success of the out of school time efforts grew, demand from early childcare settings for the same types of interventions grew. In response to that demand, LiveWell Greenville initiated the Early Childhood effort to increase physical activity and healthy meals in pre-schools. A pilot initiative with 10 sites kicked off in September 2016.

Major Partners: Greenville First Steps, YMCA of Greenville, Greenville County School District, DHEC, Furman University

At Work

LiveWell at Work has recognized 15 companies for their wellness efforts through the LiveWell at Work Award and continues to publish articles monthly in the Upstate Business Journal,

provide technical assistance and networking quarterly through roundtable sessions, and elevate the community conversation regarding a healthy work force.

Major Partners: Spartanburg Regional Health System, Bon Secours Saint Francis Health System, Greenville Health System, South Carolina Hospital Association

At Worship

- 14 congregations have signed a covenant with LiveWell Greenville to create a culture of health in their churches. Each church has an established wellness/health minister and committee, and more than 75 individuals participate in quarterly networking sessions and the annual summit.
- LiveWell At Worship is evaluated on individual and institutional levels annually. Preliminary data suggests that individuals begin making healthier choices in the first year after signing the covenant, but changes in policy at the church level take longer to come to fruition.

Major partners: Long Branch Baptist Church, Bon Secours St. Francis Health System, Pelham Medical Center, Furman University, USC Upstate, SC DHEC

At the Doctor

LWG's Healthcare workgroup developed and disseminated a pediatric toolkit with the assistance of a diverse partnership of pediatricians representing all pediatric health care providers in Greenville. It includes evidence-based materials for patients on healthy living, motivational interview training for physicians, training to conduct accurate BMI assessments, and information on American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines for preventing and treating obesity and overweight in the primary care setting.

Major Partners: Greenville Health System, Bon Secours St. Francis Health System, Furman University

At Play

- Park Hop: the fourth annual Park Hop campaign, a community wide scavenger hunt aiming at increasing park usage and physical activity, was a huge success. This initiative not only serves the interests of the community, but it also has brought a sense of cohesion and collaboration to the many parks and recreation partners in the county, who represent Greenville County and the City of Greenville, as well as 5 smaller municipalities within the county. The number of participating families more than doubled from 2015 to 2016 and participation among targeted populations increased, specifically: girls, minority youth and low income youth.
- The synergy of Park Hop moved the At Play workgroup to develop a plan to increase community play and engagement in "play deserts," communities with fewer opportunities

for recreation. In partnership with the county and city, outreach efforts into low income neighborhoods have expanded.

- LWG has partnered with the City of Greenville to greatly expand 2 programs that seek to create opportunities for safe, active play for children and families in highest need areas. Mobi-Rec, a specially equipped van stocked a wide variety of sports equipment, and Play Streets, a national initiative that closes down sections of streets for a period of time to create a safe place for play, reached over 6000 children and families in 2016 alone. The partnership with LWG allows this city resource to be used in areas outside the city where access to safe play spaces is scarce.
- Park Heroes is an initiative by the Greenville County Parks and Recreation Department that uses volunteers to provide clean-up and maintenance for parks, trails and greenspaces. With support from LWG, this program has tripled in the past couple of years, with nearly 40 projects completed since the partnership began. In addition to saving money on parks maintenance, Park Heroes fosters park ownership by the volunteer groups that participate, and provides an opportunity for physical activity while community-building.

Major Partners: Greenville County, City of Greenville, City of Greer, City of Simpsonville, City of Fountain Inn, City of Mauldin, City of Travelers Rest

At Mealtime

- Partners throughout the county come together to address the needs of those living in food deserts: communities with limited access to affordable, healthy food options. These efforts have led to the establishment of 10 new community gardens through Gardening for Good and 8 new mobile market stops through Mill Village Farms.
- At Mealtime Partners advised Greenville County in its efforts to create a Regional Food System Plan and hold planning meetings through Ten at the Top, an organization that aims to address the needs of the South Carolina Upstate's 10 counties.
- LiveWell on the Menu is a menu labeling initiative that makes healthy choices easy to identify. Taking place at 16 restaurants, 13 retail outlets including Lowe's Foods, and 10 vendors, LiveWell on the Menu is a global effort intended to reach the general population. The biggest success to date is the agreement with the Bon Secours Wellness Arena, or The Well, Greenville's large concert venue that also hosts Greenville's hockey team, the Swamp Rabbits. Evaluation efforts for LiveWell on the Menu use sales data to determine the effectiveness of the labeling initiative.

Major Partners: Mill Village Farms, Greenville County, Feed & Seed, Gardening for Good and Project Host, Furman University, Loaves & Fishes

Around Town

This workgroup, now a standalone non-profit organization called Bike Walk Greenville, focuses on active transportation. The group is engaged in developing the biking and pedestrian master plan for the City.