

**A Step-by-Step  
Approach to  
Developing  
Community-Based  
Nutrition/ Physical  
Activity  
Programs**



North Dakota Department of Health  
NDSU Extension Service  
and partners across the state



1997, Revised October 2003



**Mission Statement the North Dakota Department of Health**

We, as public employees, are dedicated to the goal of assuring that North Dakota is a healthy place to live and to the belief that each person should have an equal opportunity to enjoy good health. To accomplish this mission, we are committed to the promotion of healthy lifestyles, protection and enhancement of the environment and provision of quality health care services for the people of North Dakota.



**Mission Statement of the NDSU Extension Service**

To create learning partnerships that help adults and youth enhance their lives and communities.

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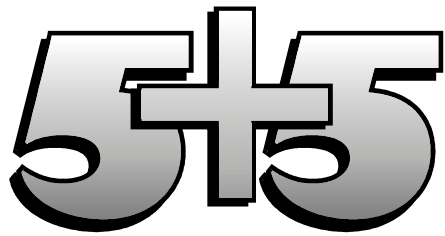
**Marnie Walth**  
Prairie Rose State Games

“

**N**ever doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

**Margaret Mead**

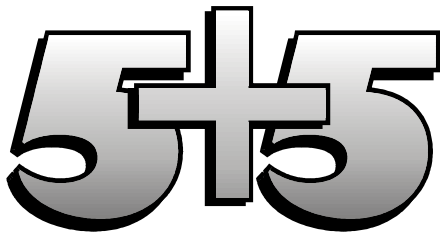
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# Introduction

## Background Information

North Dakotans experience an exceptionally high quality of life. On a daily basis, we take for granted our safe neighborhoods, quality schools, and clean air and water. However, here as in the rest of the United States, the state of our health is calling for attention. To improve our quality of life, we need to improve the quality of our health. Although it is recognized that both proper nutrition and regular physical activity are necessary to improve and maintain health, North Dakotans are falling short of recommendations for healthy diets and physical activity. Findings of the 2002 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) show that among adults:

- 20.4 percent of North Dakotans eat 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day.
- 21.7 percent did not participate in any physical activities during the past month.
- 62 percent of North Dakota adults are overweight or obese — up from 47 percent in 1990.

Nor are our youth meeting recommendations. According to the North Dakota 2001 Youth Risk Behavior Survey:

- 20 percent of North Dakota’s high school males and 16 percent of females eat 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day.
- 19 percent of North Dakota’s high school seniors participate in daily physical education courses.
- Close to one quarter (21.4%) of North Dakota students in grades nine through 12 are at risk for becoming overweight or are overweight.

These trends dramatically highlight the need for population-based, community-wide physical activity programs throughout the state of North Dakota. The Surgeon General of the United States, David Satcher, issued a *Call To Action To Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity* in 2001.

Citing the figure that approximately 300,000 U.S. deaths a year currently are associated with obesity and being overweight (compared to more than 400,000 deaths a year associated with cigarette smoking), the Surgeon General noted that the conditions of obesity and being overweight are costly to the quality of life and to the pocketbooks of America. The total direct and indirect costs attributed to obesity and being overweight amounted to \$117 billion in the year 2000.

“Communities can help when it comes to health promotion and disease prevention,” Satcher said. “When there are no safe places for children to play, or for adults to walk, jog, or ride a bike, that’s a community responsibility. When school lunchrooms or workplace cafeterias don’t offer healthy and appealing food choices, that is a community responsibility. When new or expectant parents are not educated about the benefits of breast-feeding, that’s a community responsibility. And when we don’t require daily physical education in our schools, that is also a community responsibility.”

The health and economic consequences of poor nutrition and physical inactivity are beginning to catch the eye of government officials and decision-makers, from the president of the United States to the governor of North Dakota. President George W. Bush in 2002 launched the *HealthierUS* initiative to encourage all Americans to “be physically active every day, eat a nutritious diet, get preventive screenings and make healthy choices.”

In 2002, North Dakota Governor John Hoeven launched the *Healthy North Dakota* Initiative. The initiative emphasizes individual choices but seeks to provide support structure, education and encouragement to each North Dakotan who wants to adopt a healthier lifestyle. A summit was held in

August 2002, during which more than 130 participants representing more than 75 agencies identified the top priorities for improving health in North Dakota. Those priority areas are Healthy Weight – Nutrition, Physical Activity, Worksites Wellness, Tobacco Use, Substance Abuse, Mental Health, Health Disparities, Community Engagement, Third Party Payers/Insurance. At the time of printing this manual, committees have been formed to address each of the priority areas. The feedback received from the summit participants and the *Healthy North Dakota* committees is being used to develop a *Healthy North Dakota* plan. This statewide plan will serve as the framework for all prevention programs in North Dakota and will enhance communication and collaboration among all partners, both public and private. The 5 Plus 5 program works to implement the goals of the *Healthy North Dakota* initiative by helping communities provide structure and education to support citizens' choices.

**The simple goals of the 5 Plus 5 Program are:**

- To encourage North Dakotans to eat fruits and vegetables 5 times a day as part of a high-fiber, low fat diet.
- To encourage North Dakotans to be physically active for 30 minutes at least 5 days a week.

These goals for the 5 Plus 5 Program are in line with goals outlined in the *Guidelines for Comprehensive Programs to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity*, 2002, compiled by the Nutrition and Physical Activity Work Group. The goals of a comprehensive nutrition and physical activity are to promote healthy eating that follows national dietary guidance policy; maintain recommended levels of moderate and vigorous physical activity from childhood through adolescence into adulthood; eliminate disparities in diet, physical activity, and incidences of being overweight among disadvantaged population groups; increase access to healthy foods and to opportunities to be active

for every age and population group; and promote health weight among adults and children.

This 5 Plus 5 manual provides background information, suggestions for community development, program design ideas for nutrition and physical activity programs, and resources. The manual has been developed to encourage positive changes in North Dakotans' nutrition and physical activity habits through integrated community-based programs. Because health programs and facilities are often limited in small communities and rural areas, care has been taken to offer program ideas that can be easily implemented in these settings.

**Communities can reduce their residents' chronic disease risks by:**

- initiating programs that encourage gradual lifestyle changes,
- promoting awareness of the need for change,
- developing individuals' skills for making changes, and
- adapting the community environment and policies to encourage lifestyle change.

The significance of making small changes toward these goals should not be overlooked. Small steps lead to more lasting change, and we encourage 5 Plus 5 program planners to emphasize the importance of making attainable, lifelong changes.

This manual is adapted with permission from *5 Plus 5, A Step By Step Approach to Developing Community Based Nutrition/Physical Activity Programs*, produced by the Iowa Department of Public Health, Bureau of Health Promotion. Our thanks go out to Sandi Ryan, M.S., R.D. for her cooperation with this project. Information in the manual comes from manuals produced by state health agencies in Minnesota, New York, and California, as well as from materials of the national 5 A Day for Better Health program.

