

# COOK COUNTY HEALTHY KIDS, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES CASE REPORT

COOK COUNTY, GEORGIA

Evaluation of the Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities National Program

December 2009 to December 2013



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## BACKGROUND

### Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities National Program

With the goal of preventing childhood obesity, the Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities (HKHC) national program, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), provided grants to 49 community partnerships across the United States (Figure 1). Healthy eating and active living policy, system, and environmental changes were implemented to support healthier communities for children and families. The program placed special emphasis on reaching children at highest risk for obesity on the basis of race, ethnicity, income, or geographic location.<sup>1</sup>

Project Officers from the HKHC National Program Office assisted community partnerships in creating and implementing annual workplans organized by goals, tactics, activities, and benchmarks. Through site visits and monthly conference calls, community partnerships also received guidance on developing and maintaining local partnerships, conducting assessments, implementing strategies, and disseminating and sustaining their local initiatives. Additional opportunities supplemented the one-on-one guidance from Project Officers, including peer engagement through annual conferences and a program website, communications training and support, and specialized technical assistance (e.g., health law and policy).

For more about the national program and grantees, visit [www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org](http://www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org).

**Figure 1: Map of Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities Partnerships**



### Evaluation of Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities

Transtria LLC and Washington University Institute for Public Health received funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to evaluate the HKHC national program. They tracked plans, processes, strategies, and results related to active living and healthy eating policy, system, and environmental changes as well as influences associated with partnership and community capacity and broader social determinants of health.

Reported “actions,” or steps taken by community partnerships to advance their goals, tactics, activities, or benchmarks from their workplans, formed community progress reports tracked through the HKHC Community Dashboard program website. This website included various functions, such as social networking, progress reporting, and tools and resources to maintain a steady flow of users over time and increase peer engagement across communities.

In addition to action reporting, evaluators collaborated with community partners to conduct individual and group interviews with partners and community representatives, environmental audits and direct observations in specific project areas (where applicable), and group model building sessions. Data from an online survey, photos, community annual reports, and existing surveillance systems (e.g., U.S. census) supplemented information collected alongside the community partnerships.

For more about the evaluation, visit [www.transtria.com/hkhc](http://www.transtria.com/hkhc).

### Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities

In December 2009, the Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities partnership received a four-year, \$360,000 grant as part of the HKHC national program. The partnership focused on increased healthy eating and active living in Cook County, specifically in the towns of Adel, Lenox, Cecil, and Sparks. The rural county, located just north of the Florida border, had a population of approximately 17,200. The county seat, Adel, had the largest population (5,334) of the four target areas.

Cook County Family Connection and the House of Grace were the lead agencies for the Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities partnership. The partnership and capacity building strategies of Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities included:

- *Farmers’ Market and Community Garden Advisory Committees*: The partnership created committees, made up of individuals, organizations, and HKHC staff, to lead the farmers’ market and community garden initiatives.
- *Training and Capacity Building*: Several training opportunities were provided to the partnership and community on healthy eating and active living policy and environmental changes.
- *Youth Involvement*: Youth were involved in the planning, implementation, and maintenance of school and community gardens developed as a result of HKHC.

See Appendix A: Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities Evaluation Logic Model and Appendix B: Partnership and Community Capacity Survey Results for additional information.

Along with partnership and capacity building strategies, the Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities partnership incorporated assessment and community engagement activities to support the partnership and the healthy eating and active living strategies.

- *Mobile and Farmers’ Market*: To increase access to fresh produce, the partnership collaborated with local farmers and businesses to develop the Cook County Farmers’ Market and a mobile farmers’ market that would run during the off-season.
- *Community and School Gardens*: The partnership worked with the Cook County School District and local partners to develop or revitalize eight community and school gardens.
- *Parks and Play Spaces*: To increase physical activity opportunities, the partnership focused on developing two play spaces in the community, one in Lenox and one at the Boys and Girls Club.
- *Joint Use Agreements*: The partnership collaborated with Cook County Parks and Recreation Department and Cook County School District to create joint use agreements that would allow the public access to facilities for physical activity.

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

Cook County, located in southern Georgia, has a population of 17,212.<sup>2</sup> Located about 30 miles north of the Florida border, the county has four towns: Adel, Cecil, Lenox, and Sparks. The HKHC initiative focused on impacting Cook County, including the four towns and surrounding rural areas (see Figure 2). Although, the main focus was on Adel, the county seat, which was home to many partner organizations and institutions.

Adel has the largest population (5,534) of the four towns, while Cecil has the smallest population (286). Adel is approximately 8 square miles, while Cecil, Lenox, and Sparks range from 3.7 square miles to less than one square mile. Residents of Cook County are mainly white (67%). Adel, Cecil, Lenox, and Sparks residents are mainly white (42.5% to 56.4%) and black (36.0% to 49.6%). Adel (32.8%) and Lenox (41.1%) have the highest rates of poverty in the target area (see Table 1).<sup>2</sup> Cook County School District consists of a primary school, elementary school, middle school, and high school. The district serves approximately 3,375 students.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 2: Cook County, Georgia Map<sup>4</sup>

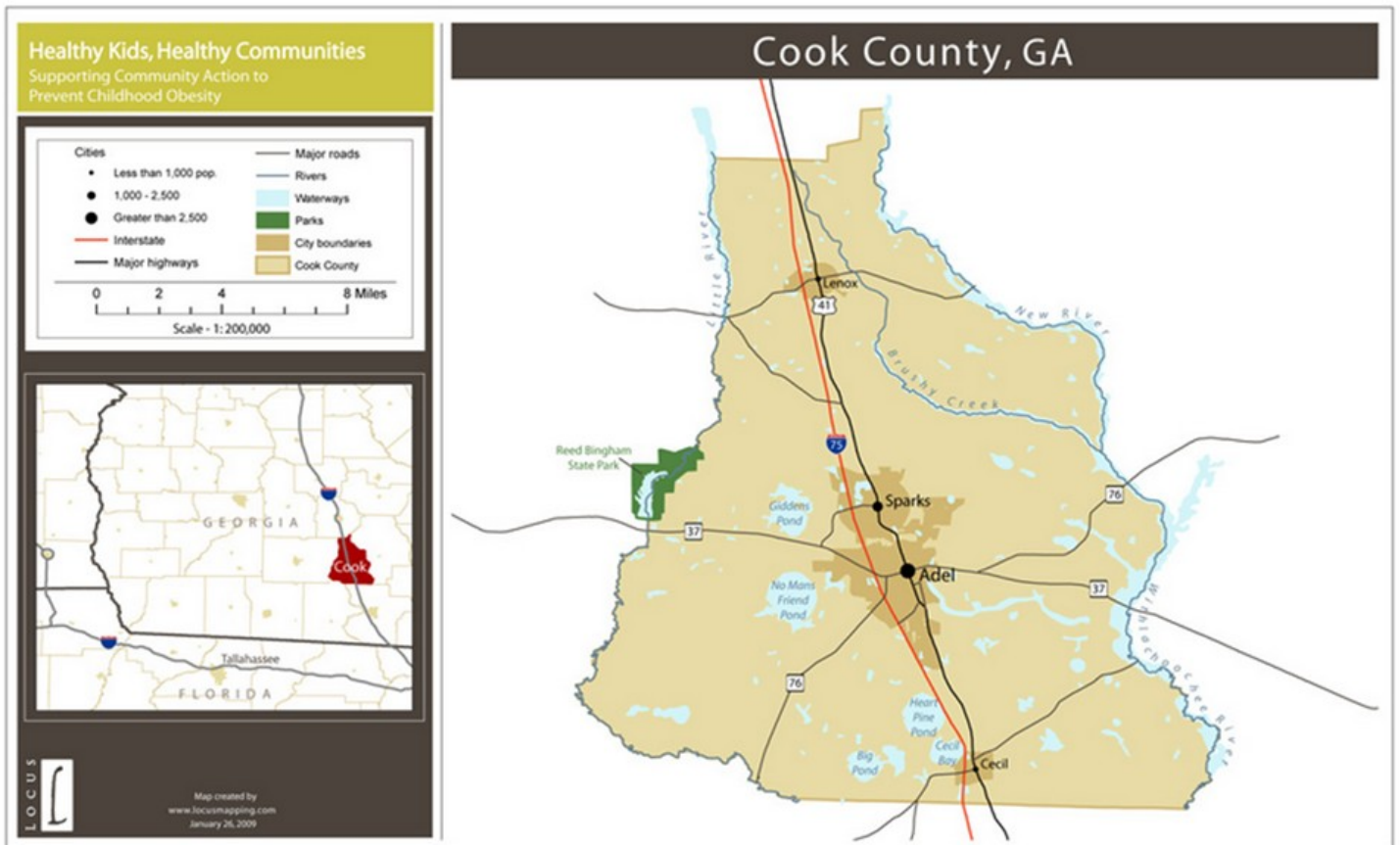


Table 1: Demographics of Cook County, 2010

Community	Population	% Below Poverty	Race/Ethnicity		% Language Other than English
			Black	Hispanic	
Cook County	17,212	23.0%	27.3%	5.9%	7.3%
Adel	5,334	32.8%	45.4%	7.9%	12.2%
Cecil	286	17.8%	43.4%	4.5%	0.0%
Lenox	873	41.1%	36.0%	6.4%	10.9%
Sparks	2,052	21.1%	49.6%	8.8%	10.6%

## INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL DETERMINANTS

### Poverty

In 2009, Cook County was ranked as one of the ten poorest areas in the State of Georgia, with a 23% poverty rate and \$18,755 per capita income.<sup>2</sup> Approximately two-thirds of students in the Cook County School District qualify for free or reduced-price lunches.<sup>4</sup>

### Unemployment

Cook County has an unemployment rate of 12.7%, compared to the national average of 5.0%.<sup>5</sup> The lack of jobs in the rural county and towns contribute to the high rate. Recent graduates often leave the smaller towns to get a job in Adel, Valdosta, or other nearby cities.

“...they [young adults] definitely leave if they want to do anything. People that live here in Cecil, they’ve got to travel to Valdosta or...Adel or somewhere they could go...to get a job. [...] unless you work for the city, there are no jobs here.” -Staff

### Community Resources

The four target communities have little opportunities for recreation. The towns do not have a shopping mall, movie theater, bowling ally, or recreation center. One community has no play spaces for children, which requires families to travel to Adel or other larger areas. Cecil has a race track that often attracts people to the area, but community members complain about the noise.

### Transportation

Public transportation is not available in Cook County. Residents oftentimes share or offer rides to the market or to other community resources. A partner mentioned that southern hospitality helps the community overcome the lack of public transportation.

“It’s the south. If you’re going, you check with somebody else. People just pitch in and help each other.” –Partner

Cook County is rural and the communities are spread out. Students must travel far to get to one of the schools in the area.

## COOK COUNTY HEALTHY KIDS, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP

### Lead Agency and Leadership Teams

The Cook County Family Connection was the initial lead agency for HKHC. Created in 1991, the non-profit collaborative served children and families of Cook County. Over 40 partners, which includes representatives from the community, schools, youth organizations, private and public organizations and agencies, and businesses, collectively served the community. The vision of the collaborative was “all children, youth, and families of Cook County will have an enhanced quality of life through a continuing, comprehensive, and coordinated community effort.”<sup>6</sup>

Mid-way through the grant period, the lead agency was formally transferred from Cook County Family Connections to the House of Grace. The House of Grace was a non-profit community agency, located in Sparks, that served men who were homeless, men with addictions, and men who were incarcerated.<sup>7</sup>

The purpose of the Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities partnership was to raise awareness of obesity and to promote infrastructure changes in the community. The partnership, which included several local organizations (e.g., Kiwanis Club, Cook County Exchange Club, Cook County School District), was started by a group of community members prior to receiving HKHC funds. See Appendix C for a complete list of partners. In addition to HKHC, partners collaborated on other initiatives, such as Systems of Care and Drug-Free Communities.

Zoe Meyers, the Project Director, along with Project Coordinators and other current and past staff members and interns of the Cook County Family Connection led the partnership. Dr. Chet Ballard from Valdosta State University led evaluation efforts.

Partners developed committees and boards to lead specific HKHC initiatives, such as the farmers’ market and community gardens.

- **Farmers’ Market Advisory Committee:** In 2010, an advisory committee was formed to lead planning and implementation of the Cook County Farmers’ Market. Members included farmers, vendors, community members, and individuals from Adel/Cook Chamber of Commerce, Cook County Schools, Adel City Council, and HKHC staff.
- **Farmers’ Market Board of Directors:** Formed in 2012, the Board of Directors consisted of volunteer individuals from Memorial Hospital of Adel, Cook County Family Connection, Cook County Exchange Club, Trust Bank, Silverwood Farm, and City of Lenox.
- **Community Garden Advisory Committee:** A Community Garden Advisory Committee was formed in 2010 to plan and implement community and school gardens in the Cook County area.

The Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities partnership met bi-monthly. The meetings were held to update partners on the progress of the HKHC initiatives and to gain input from members. On average, approximately 30 partners attended the meetings.



Photo from the Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities Dashboard



## PARTNERSHIP FUNDING

There were several funding sources obtained to support the HKHC initiatives. Grants or funds were received from private and public foundations or organizations. As part of HKHC, grantees were expected to secure a cash and/or in-kind match equal to at least 50% of the funds received from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) over the entire grant period. Several partner organizations provided in-kind support for staff time and meeting space as part of the matching funds. For additional funding information, see Appendix D: Sources and Amounts of Funding Leveraged.

The following organizations provided in-kind support for the HKHC initiative: Cook County Board of Education, Cook County Family Connection, Georgia Family State Connection, Hands on Georgia, and Valdosta State University.

In addition, the following funds were received for the initiative:

- In 2010, a grant was received for \$30,000 from the Georgia Division of Public Health to supplement HKHC initiatives.
- The local Farm Bureau and Saving Rivers Water Conservation and Development donated \$500 in resources to promote the Cook County Farmers' Market.
- In 2011, Cook County Family Connection provided over \$15,000 in cash and in-kind donations to develop the "Swings with Wings" garden park.
- In 2012, KaBOOM and Dr. Pepper provided \$15,000 in grant funding for a new park in Lenox. The City of Lenox matched the funds from public and private funding.

## COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

The partnership developed and conducted general assessments to guide the HKHC initiative.

- **Focus Group:** A community focus group was conducted in Cecil to discuss healthy eating and physical activity. The partnership was interested in receiving community members' feedback on potential park spaces.
- **Community survey:** The partnership, in collaboration with Dr. Ballard at Valdosta State University, developed a survey to obtain challenges and opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating.

In addition, the partnership conducted focus groups and other assessments related to parks and play spaces, Safe Routes to School, joint use, nutrition assistance in stores, farmers' markets, and gardens.

- **Key Informant Interviews:** In 2010, Mayors and City Council members of Cecil and Lenox were interviewed to glean their level of interest in revitalizing playgrounds and creating new play spaces.
- **Windshield Survey:** In 2010, Dr. Ballard from Valdosta State University led the completion of windshield surveys at schools, recreation facilities, and at the Head Start Center. Data was analyzed by the university. In 2011, a potential garden site at the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Cook County was assessed using the windshield survey. Data found that the site was suitable for a community gardening project, as it was accessible from Cook Elementary School and Cook Middle School.
- **Walkability Survey:** An assessment was conducted for three play spaces on the property of the Cook County Schools. All three areas were determined to be safe and in good condition.
- **Safe Routes to School Tally Forms:** Over 100 teachers completed a tally form in Cook Primary School, Cook Elementary School, and Cook Middle School. The data was sent to Georgia SRTS Resource Center to be analyzed. It was determined that approximately 1% of students walked or biked to school.
- **Parents' Food Choice Survey:** A survey was developed for parents of students in pre-kindergarten through 8th grade to identify where food was purchased for their family. Over 3,000 hard copy and electronic surveys were distributed by the schools. The partnership also distributed about 350 surveys to families picking up food boxes at the Kiwanis Club's Toys for Cook Kids event. Parents that returned the surveys were entered into a drawing for a grocery store gift card. Data collected indicated that a majority of parents shopped at a local grocery store, while about 30% shopped at a local dollar store.
- **Nutrition Environment Measures Survey (NEMS):** HKHC staff attended training on NEMS, which is an assessment for grocery and corner stores. Letters were sent to 22 stores. Stores were assessed with the help of volunteers. The partnership also considered conducting the assessments in restaurants, but needed an updated list.
- **Georgia Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Inventory Requirement Checklist:** Partners at Valdosta State University assessed the space and produce inventory of local grocery stores and convenience stores for WIC eligibility in October 2011. The assessment was completed in ten stores, including two convenience stores, five dollar stores, one pharmacy, and two small grocery stores. One grocery store was found to be eligible. The partnership offered assistance to help the store owner become certified.
- **Farmers' Market Environmental Audit:** Partners conducted the Farmers' Market Environmental Audit to assess the presence or absence of different features as well as the quality or condition of the physical environment. The audit tool was completed for the Cook County Farmers' Market located in downtown Adel. Data was completed on October 13 and October 27, 2012. The market was open twice a month from May to October. Results indicated that one to two vendors sold fresh produce, a variety of vegetables were sold, and there were no signs indicated acceptance of Electronic Transfer Benefits (EBT) or other payments. For more information, see the summary report in Appendix E.
- **Parks and Play Spaces Environmental Audit:** Partners conducted the Parks and Play Spaces Environmental Audit, which was a tool adapted from the Physical Activity Resource Assessment and the BTG-COMP Park Observation Form 2012. The audit tool assessed the presence or absence of different features as well as the quality or condition of the physical environment. The tool was completed for two

parks in Cook County, Swings with Wings and Lenox. Swings with Wings was assessed one time (March 16, 2013) by two auditors. Lenox Park was assessed in September 2012 (pre-audit) and in October 2012, November 2012, and March 2013 (post-audit) by four auditors. Overall results indicated that Swings with Wings and Lenox Park were both multi-feature publically accessible parks, located outdoors. The parks had parking, but neither had sidewalks leading to the park. There were no bike lanes, sharrows, or bike signage leading to the parks. Swings with Wings featured swings and climbing bars, while Lenox Park had swings. The post-audit for Lenox Park indicated that new playground equipment was added, including slides, climbing bars, and other climbing features. For more information, see the summary report in Appendix F.

- **Parks and Play Spaces Direct Observation:** Partners conducted the Parks and Play Spaces Direct Observation, which was adapted from the System for Observing Play and Leisure Activity (SOPLAY) and System for Observing Play and Recreation in Communities (SOPARC) tools, protocols, and operational definitions. The tool was used to assess individuals' behaviors in their natural setting. Data was collected between September 16, 2012 and April 12, 2013 at Lenox Parks and Swings with Wings. Pre- and post-data was collected for Lenox Park, while cross-sectional data was collected at Swings with Wings. During the observation, the play space was scanned for one minute and the observation was recorded for one minute. There was a total of 728 observation periods, with a total of 165 activity counts per hour which reflects the children's activity levels at a particular moment in time. Overall, Lenox Park post-test has the greatest number of observation periods (n=338), but Swings with Wings has the largest number of activity counts (n=120.0). Across all age groups, over half (62%) of the activity counts were sedentary, with 34% moderate, and 15% very active. For more information on each individual park, see the summary report in Appendix G.

## PLANNING AND ADVOCACY EFFORTS

### Community Outreach and Engagement

The partnership actively engaged community members in the HKHC initiatives through the planning and implementation process. Several trainings, seminars, and retreats were offered to partners and community members to increase engagement. A few examples were:

- In September 2010, a “Leading by Example” seminar was held at the Adel First Assembly of God and about 90 participants attended.
- A summer retreat was held in June 2011 with collaborative partners and the Board of Directors. HKHC accomplishments and upcoming activities were covered during the meeting.
- A full-day training retreat, “An Apple A Day”, was held in June 2012 to focus on environmental and policy change. Approximately 20 participants attended the retreat.
- In September 2012, an “All Aboard” seminar was held at the Dell Beamguard Center in Adel. Over 90 participants attended the all-day event that was focused on bringing assets of the community together to prevent childhood obesity.
- A full-day seminar was conducted in September 2013 to train community members and partners on environmental prevention strategies and policy change.



Photo from Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities Dashboard

### Programs and Promotions

Media attention was received throughout the HKHC initiative. Radio and television (e.g., WALB-Albany News) interviews were conducted in January 2010 to announce the launch of HKHC. The Adel News-Tribune published several articles on the project.

A community fitness kick-off was held in February 2010. At the kick-off, volunteers and participants signed up for biking, walking, running, and intramural sports. Free health screenings were also provided. In the same month, the partnership presented an overview of the project to Cook County Primary School Parents’ Lunch and Learn.

In March 2010, HKHC materials were distributed at the Cook County Family Connection’s Teen Expo which was funded by the System of Care program.

A monthly newsletter on childhood obesity was distributed by e-mail from Cook County Family Connection to partners during the bi-monthly meetings.

### Safe Routes to School

The partnership hoped to implement a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program in 2011 to improve infrastructure for kids walking to school. However, in 2012, the partnership decided that SRTS was not feasible, because schools were in high-traffic areas that were spread out across the community. Parents and community leaders were concerned that the idea was potentially dangerous; therefore, the partnership decided to focus on a safer solution.

### Cook County Family Connection March 2013 Highlights

**BIDS FOR KIDS!** Family Connection is still hosting a BIDS FOR KIDS on-line store where we are selling donated items. We are posting a variety of items on our FACEBOOK page at Cook County Bids for Kids. If you would like to purchase items, you simply post a message below that item and we will hold it for you...or you can call Lisa at 229-549-7976 to make an offer and seal the deal. All of our items stay on our FACEBOOK page for up to 30 days before we move them to THE BARN rummage and antique store at Lake Park. SO BID QUICKLY! Proceeds from this on-line store will help support our efforts as we work to prevent child abuse, alcohol and drug abuse, and other risk factors for local youth.



**WHICH CAME FIRST...THE CHICKEN OR THE EGG?** That was the topic of the presentation at the March 2013 House of Grace dinner hosted by Cook County Family Connection. Do you know if an egg is fresh or hard boiled...just spin the egg. If it wobbles, it is raw. If it spins easily, it is hard boiled. The color of the egg shell is related to the hen that laid it. The men learned interesting nutritional facts about eggs while enjoying a great meal prepared and served by volunteers.



Family Connection has gathered and compiled some interesting, alarming, and up-to-date statistics on local alcohol and drug use trends. Watch *The Adel News* during April for an informative news article on these statistics...or call our office at 549-7976 to request a copy of the full report

Photo from the Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities Dashboard

## MOBILE AND FARMERS' MARKET

To increase access to fresh produce in the community, the partnership worked to establish a Cook County Farmers' Market and to support a mobile farmers' market.

### Policy, Practice, and Environmental Changes

The following policy, practice, and environmental changes occurred:

- The Cook County Farmers' Market was opened on May 12, 2012.
- The partnership collaborated with B.J.'s Produce of Tifton to co-sponsor a mobile produce market during the off-season (November to April).

### Complementary Programs/Promotions

The markets were promoted through fliers, newspapers (e.g., Adel News Tribune), presentations, and mailers.

The Cook County High School made a banner for the road, and a Facebook page was created. In addition, two television interviews were conducted, and media was invited to the market's opening day.

### Implementation

#### Cook County Farmers' Market

The partnership worked to build relationships with local farmers to gauge their level of interest in participating in a farmers' market. A farmers' market committee, which included potential vendors and farmers, was developed in 2011 to plan and implement the Cook County Farmers' Market. Committee members included Adel/Cook Chamber of Commerce, Cook County Schools, Adel City Council, and HKHC staff members. In 2012, the Cook County Farmers' Market Board of Directors was formed with individuals from Memorial Hospital of Adel, Cook County Family Connection, Cook County Exchange Club, Trust Bank, Silverwood Farm, and City of Lenox.

The committee met on several occasions to flush out the details of the market. Several different locations were considered by the committee for the market including: downtown Adel, Boys and Girls Club, and the Cook County Exchange Club building. Rules and regulations were established by the Board of Directors. A vendor packet was developed using the rules that included vendor fees (\$10 per day or \$75 for the season), dates and hours of operation, attendance rules, booth requirements, and parking. A registration form was included that provided space to indicate all items that the vendor would sell. The partnership decided to waive a vendor fee at the beginning to increase the interest of vendors. The partnership gave priority to vendors and farmers who planned to sell local produce. The partnership planned to sell produce grown at the Boys and Girls Club garden to raise money to cover start-up costs of the farmers' market. Donations were collected from sponsors to support promotion of the market, support EBT, and to educate children on how to garden.

The partnership decided to establish the Cook County Farmers' Market at the Boys and Girls Club in Adel. The Boys and Girls Club had agreed to allow the market to be set up indoors during inclement weather. No official joint use agreement was put in place between the partnership and Boys and Girls Club. The market operated on the second and fourth Saturday of each month from May through October 2012.



Photo from Cook County Farmers' Market Facebook page.

## Farmers Market

### Saturday, Oct. 27

**9AM - 12 Noon**

Parking Lot of Boys  
& Girls Club  
Hwy. 41 North · Adel,  
Georgia



**Join us for the last Farmers  
Market of the season!!**

**\*No fee to sell - you keep the profits  
and "we all eat healthy."**

Brought to you by Family Connection -  
Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities

Flyer from the Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities Dashboard

A free Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) machine was available through Georgia Organics, although the partnership waited to apply until the market was established.

The Boys and Girls Club operated a thrift shop on the same days as the market to help draw in more customers. Overall there were 4 to 10 vendors selling at the market, with an average of 50-75 customers. The market shut down in October 2012 and reopened in the spring of 2013.

### Mobile Farmers' Market

The partnership collaborated with B.J.'s Produce of Tifton to co-sponsor a mobile produce market during the off-season (November to April). The market was held at the Community Center in Sparks, Cook County Family Connection office, Performance Learning Center at Cook High School, Boys and Girls Club, local Head Start pre-school program, and the Board of Education Office.

A friend of a local commercial farmer culled the produce and used his truck to make 1 to 2 deliveries a month. Produce that was provided during market days included squash, cucumbers, bell peppers, cabbage, tomatoes, and eggplants.

Youth that came to the market were able to receive free produce, nutrition tips, and recipe cards. Collaborative partners covered the cost of the produce that was provided to the youth. Cook County Family Connection provided \$30 vouchers to other local participants to purchase fresh produce from the market.

In 2013, a range of 20 to 150 youth received fresh produce from the market during deliveries. Approximately 20 to 32 seniors were provided with the surplus produce.

### Population Reach

The Cook County Farmers' Market targeted all residents of Cook County. The mobile market was targeted toward low-income children aged 5 and older enrolled in youth programs and seniors residing in Cook County. The mobile market had increased access to fresh produce for over 100 youth.

### Challenges

The partnership identified a few challenges to developing the mobile market and the Cook County Farmers' Market:

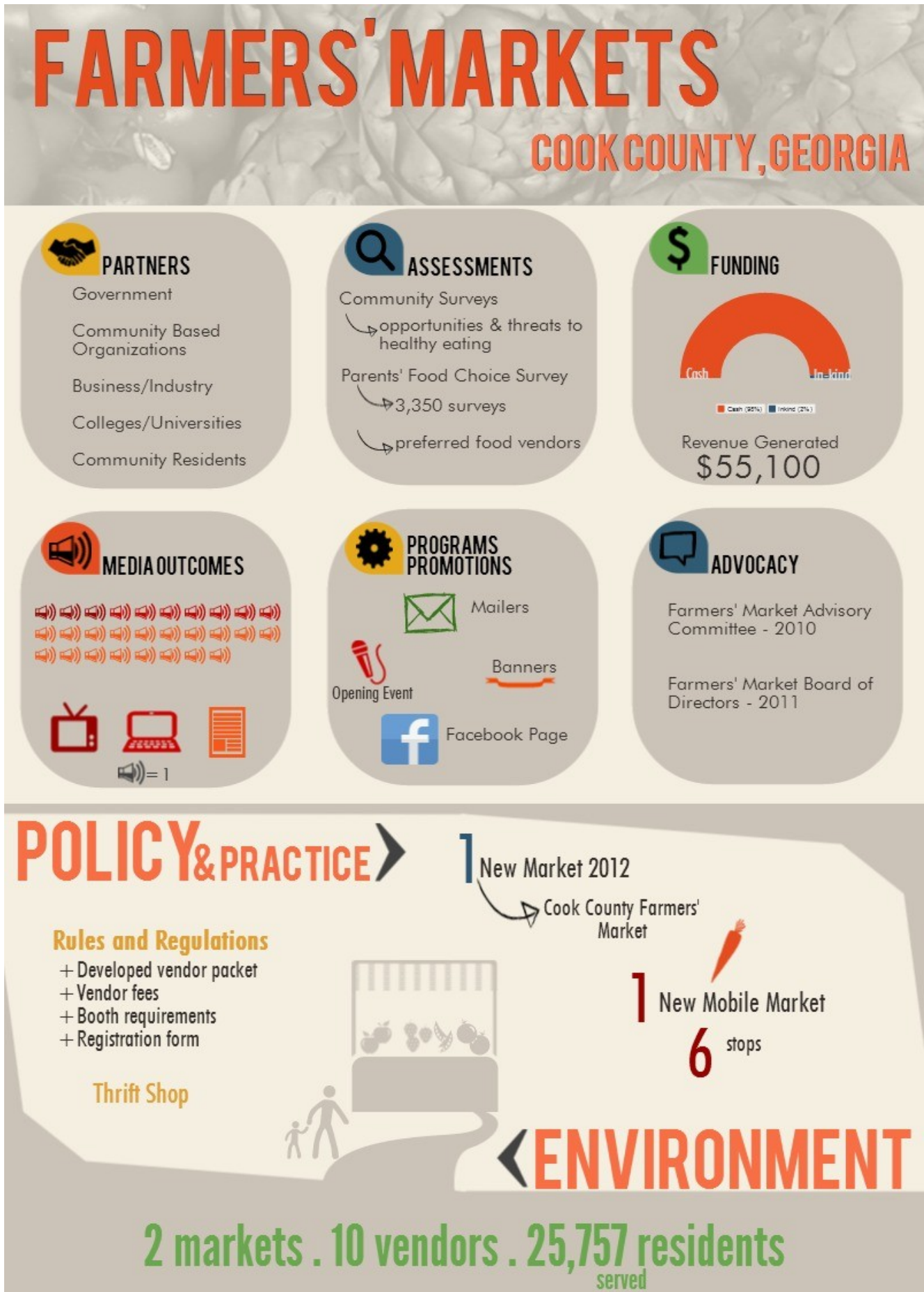
- In the first year of the grant, there was a lack of interest from produce vendors. After several attempts to engage the vendors, only a few expressed interest.
- Farmers were afraid to invest their time and resources until the market was established because of previous failed attempts.
- Some local farmers were hesitant about providing produce at a lower cost.
- Communication and scheduling with farmers was difficult, because they were not in an office during regular business hours, as they were outside working.
- Raising funds for the markets was difficult, especially with competition from other programs (e.g., Boy Scouts) and the newness of the market.
- Community members did not have transportation to the stationary market.

### Sustainability

The partnership is working to sustain the markets through several avenues. The Board of Directors have developed a sponsorship form detailing the cost and expenses of the markets to give the public an idea of where the money would go if they chose to donate. In addition, the partners are working with farmers on the possibility of volunteers gleaning the fields to sell on the farmer's behalf.

For additional information see Figure 3: Farmers' Market Infographic.

Figure 3: Farmer's Market Infographic



## COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL GARDENS

The partnership implemented community and school gardens throughout Cook County to increase access to fresh produce.

### Policy, Practice, and Environmental Changes

The following policy, practice, and environmental changes occurred as a result of HKHC:

- Four raised garden beds were installed on March 2012 at the Cook County Middle School.
- Four raised garden beds were installed at the Cook County Primary School, which served 900 students in pre-kindergarten through 2nd grade.
- A garden was installed in October 2011 at the Boys and Girls Club of Adel by youth attending the after-school program.
- A garden was installed at the Cook County Exchange Club in October 2011.
- A garden was installed at the local community homeless shelter, House of Grace.
- Students from the high school Key Club revitalized a garden at the Adel Memorial Convalescence Center in October 2011.
- In July 2012, the Future Farmers of America planted and maintained a garden at the Cook County Family Connections office in Sparks.
- In April 2013, a garden was planted at the Senior Center in Sparks.



Photo from Transtria LLC.

### Complementary Programs/Promotions

A partner facilitated cooking classes for teens at the Boys and Girls Club Teen Center. The classes received positive enthusiasm from the teens and their families.

### Implementation

A Community Garden Advisory Committee was formed in 2010 to plan and implement community and school gardens in the Cook County area. The committee, in collaboration with the partnership, identified several locations for gardens, including Cook County schools, the Boys and Girls Club, The Cook County Exchange Club, and a local homeless shelter.

### School Gardens

The Cook County School District provided land for school gardens. HKHC staff worked with teachers and a local landscaping company to get materials needed for the gardens. The Cook County 4-H Club provided gardening expertise and support.

A 4-foot by 12-foot garden, with four raised beds, was installed at the primary school. The Curriculum Director helped to manage the garden, and 4-H gardeners had offered youth-led cooking classes. Four raised beds were installed at the middle school. Students that were a part of the Future Farmers of America group helped to install a garden. The 6th grade special education teacher helped to manage the garden.



Photo from the Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities Dashboard



## Boys and Girls Club Garden

A garden was installed at the Boys and Girls Club of Adel in October 2011. Youth ages 5 to 15 that attended the Boys and Girls Club planted and harvested the garden. The garden was only open to youth attending the club. Approximately 100 kids attend the club. There were about 20-30 gardeners who ranged from 7th to 9th grade. Youth were allowed to take the food home or it was used for healthy cooking classes.

## Cook County Exchange Club

A garden was installed in September 2011 at the Cook County Exchange Club. The Exchange Club offered land and water for garden construction at Adel fairgrounds. The site was located close to the elementary and middle school, with sidewalk access. The space (40-feet by 150-feet) was divided into plots (8-feet by 30-feet; 8-feet by 20-feet; 8-feet by 10-feet) for the Exchange Club, the elementary school's accelerated class, and the KOLORS drug-free communities youth program. The remaining space was divided into smaller plots for families in the community that would not be charged a fee for use. The Exchange Club and the KOLORS program provided assistance to foster children. The owner of a local farm business provided water free of charge, and a watering system with tower sprinklers along garden rows was installed. The Cook County Exchange Club managed the garden.

## Other

The partnership also supported the following gardens:

- A garden was installed on the property of a local homeless shelter, House of Grace, to be used for the resident's meals.
- An existing garden at the 4-H office was maintained by the partnership.
- In October 2011, students from the high school Key Club revitalized a garden at the Adel Memorial Convalescence Center. The students, in collaboration with the Kiwanis Club of Adel and Adel Memorial Hospital, planted a variety of greens, trees, and flowers.
- In July 2012, the Future Farmers of America planted and maintained a garden at the Cook County Family Connections office in Sparks. This garden is maintained by Future Farmers of America students. This garden and several others around town are harvested, and the yield is shared with House of Grace shelter residents, persons in need who come into the office or are identified, the Boys and Girls Club, and sold at the Farmer's Market.
- In April 2013, a garden was planted at the Senior Center in Sparks. The Future Farmers of America used the site as a hands-on learning garden.

## **Population Reach**

Students in the Cook County School District and youth attending the Boys and Girls Club after-school program were targeted by the garden initiative.

## **Challenges**

Community participation was low at the gardens. The partnership felt that since many families owned land or had access to nearby land, they were not interested in joining a community garden. There were discussions of targeting low-income neighborhoods that had little access to land for gardening.

## **Sustainability**

Administrators of the Boys and Girls Club Teen Center, the Future Farmers of America Club, 4-H Club, and Cook County schools will ensure that volunteer youth plant, maintain, and harvest their gardens.

## PARKS AND PLAY SPACES

The partnership worked to increase active living opportunities through the development of new park and play spaces.

### Policy, Practice, and Environmental Changes

The following policy, practice, and environmental changes occurred:

- The partnership, in collaboration with Cook County Family Connection and several community groups, revitalized an abandoned community park (Swings with Wings) located in front of the Cook County Boys and Girls Club in 2011.
- In September 2012, the partnership developed a community park in Lenox.



Photo from Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities Dashboard

### Complementary Programs/Promotions

A Community Build Day was held on September 21, 2012 in Lenox Park. Food and drinks were provided to volunteer builders.

### Implementation

In 2011, the partnership conducted assessments, interviews, and community forums to determine the feasibility of establishing parks in Cecil and Lenox. Through the process, locations were identified and funding was sought in 2012.

#### Swings with Wings

Approximately 150 low-income children attended the after-school and summer programs at the Boys and Girls Club. The partnership chose the site because there was no playground equipment available for the children to use. Through donations, the partnership and community developed a playground and Swings with Wings garden park. The area featured playground equipment, butterfly gardens, a bird sanctuary, and a family picnic.

#### Lenox Park

Lenox was selected as the second site for development of a play space, as the community had often been isolated from Adel, Sparks, and Cecil. In April 2012, the partnership secured funding (\$15,000) through KaBOOM! and Dr. Pepper to build a community park in Roscoe Francis Memorial Park. The City of Lenox agreed to fundraise to provide a \$9,000 match for the equipment. Donations were requested from individuals, businesses, and agencies so that funds would not have to come only from the city. HKHC staff collaborated with City Officials in Lenox and community members over several months to plan the project. The playground equipment was delivered in September 2012. Base parts were installed on September 20, while the remaining pieces were installed on September 21 during a Community Build Day. The City of Lenox will maintain the park.

### Population Reach and Impact

At least 300 children were targeted as a result of the park and play space project, but the most significant impact of the project was the level of community involvement. Youth helped to clean and prepare the area for new equipment. They built and painted bird and butterfly houses. Residents at the homeless shelter helped to trim shrubbery and haul debris. Overall, more than 300 people were involved in the development of the Swings with Wings garden park.

### Challenges

During the planning phase, the partnership had difficulty identifying land suitable for a park and play space in Cecil. Insufficient resources and funds were also a barrier to development. The city was not able to provide land or matching funds for the site. In the fall of 2013, the Boys and Girls Club learned that it had to move locations; therefore, the Swings with Wings garden park would have to be re-established in a new location.

## JOINT USE AGREEMENTS

The partnership collaborated with the Cook County Parks and Recreation Department and Cook County Schools to establish joint use agreements.

### Policy, Practice, and Environmental Changes

The following policy, practice, and environmental change occurred:

- In 2012, two joint use agreements were established with local schools and city agencies that provided recreation facilities to children during the summer.

### Complementary Programs/Promotions

A one-week physical activity summer program was held as a result of one joint use agreement between the partnership and the Cook County Parks and Recreation Department. The program, Power Camp, was held in 2012 and 2013. Over 100 children and volunteers participated in the event. The children engaged in physical activity, learned about healthy eating, and were provided healthy snacks during the camp.

### Implementation

In the planning phase, the partnership met with the Cook County Parks and Recreation Department and Cook County Schools to discuss the development of a joint use agreement.

The Superintendent and Administrators of Cook County Schools planned an agreement between the county and school. In November 2012, an agreement was obtained that allowed the public to use the tennis courts on the property of Cook County Middle School. In addition, a formal agreement was to be drafted between the City of Adel and Cook County Schools to ensure that the playgrounds would remain open to the public.

### Population Reach

Joint use agreements were developed to benefit more than 400 children in Cook County.

### Challenges

The partnership identified that the establishment of a formal joint use agreement had taken longer than anticipated.

### SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PARTNERSHIP AND INITIATIVE

Although several sources of funding will end in 2014 for the lead agency, the partnership received funds from the Healthcare Georgia Foundation for the next three years. The foundation will provide technical assistance and evaluation consulting, along with funds that will allow the partnership to expand its childhood obesity prevention efforts. Over the next three years, the partnership plans to expand capacity of the collaborative, expand awareness and education campaigns, and to implement new policies and environmental change for healthy eating and active living. The partnership also plans to create a Youth Health Team and a Children's Health Taskforce to plan for new ideas and initiatives.

## REFERENCES

1. Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities National Program Office. *Home and About*. 2009. <<http://www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org/>>. Accessed January 10, 2014.
2. United States Census Bureau. *QuickFacts*. 2010. <<http://www.quickfacts.census.gov>>. Accessed January 10, 2014.
3. National Center for Education Statistics. *2010-2011 School Year*. <<http://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/index.aspsearch=1&State=&city=&zipcode=&miles=&itemname=Cook+County&sortby=name&School=1&PrivSchool=1&College=1&Library=1&CS=AEEC4D38>>. Accessed March 12, 2014.
4. Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities National Program Office. *Cook County, GA*. 2014. <<http://www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org/communities/cook-county-ga>>. Accessed March 12, 2014.
5. University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and RWJF. *County Health Rankings and Roadmaps: A Healthier Nation, County by County*. 2013. <<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/georgia/2013/cook/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot/by-rank>>. Accessed March 12, 2014.
6. Cook County Family Connection. *CCFC and Our Mission*. <<http://www.cookcountyfamilyconnection.org>>. Accessed February 19, 2014.
7. The House of Grace. *Welcome and About Us*. <<http://thehouseofgracega.org/#/welcome>>. Accessed February 19, 2014.

## APPENDIX A: EVALUATION LOGIC MODEL

In the first year of the grant, this evaluation logic model identified short-term, intermediate, and long-term community and system changes for a comprehensive evaluation to demonstrate the impact of the strategies to be implemented in the community. This model provided a basis for the evaluation team to collaborate with the Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities partnership to understand and prioritize opportunities for the evaluation. Because the logic model was created at the outset, it does not necessarily reflect the four years of activities implemented by the partnership (i.e., the workplans were revised on at least an annual basis).

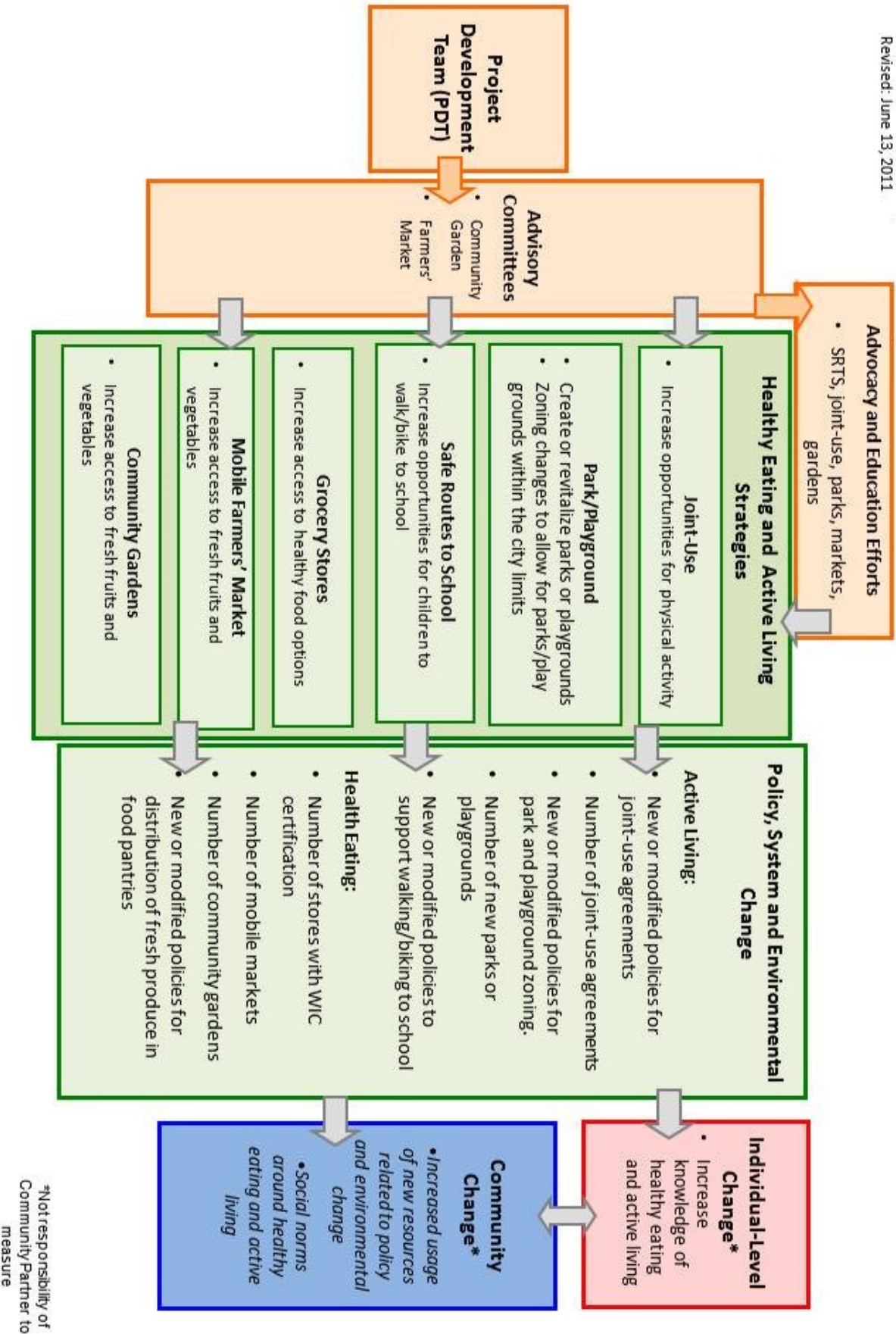
The healthy eating and active living strategies of Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities partnership included:

- **Mobile and Farmers' Market:** To increase access to fresh produce, the partnership collaborated with local farmers and businesses to develop the Cook County Farmers' Market and a mobile farmers' market that would run during the off-season.
- **Community and School Gardens:** The partnership worked with the Cook County School District and local partners to develop or revitalize eight community and school gardens.
- **Parks and Play Spaces:** To increase physical activity opportunities, the partnership focused on developing two play spaces in the community, one in Lenox and one at the Boys and Girls Club.
- **Joint Use Agreements:** The partnership collaborated with Cook County Parks and Recreation Department and Cook County School District to create joint use agreements that would allow the public access to facilities for physical activity.

APPENDIX A: EVALUATION LOGIC MODEL

# Cook County, GA HKHC Logic Model

Cook County Family Connection, Inc.  
 Revised: June 13, 2011



## APPENDIX B: PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY CAPACITY SURVEY RESULTS

To enhance understanding of the capacity of each community partnership, an online survey was conducted with project staff and key partners involved with Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities during the final year of the grant. Partnership capacity involves the ability of communities to identify, mobilize, and address social and public health problems.<sup>1-3</sup>

### *Methods*

Modeled after earlier work from the Prevention Research Centers and the Evaluation of Active Living by Design,<sup>4</sup> an 82-item partnership capacity survey solicited perspectives of the members of the Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities partnership on the structure and function of the partnership. The survey questions assisted evaluators in identifying characteristics of the partnership, its leadership, and its relationship to the broader community.

Questions addressed respondents' understanding of Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities in the following areas: partnership capacity and functioning, purpose of partnership, leadership, partnership structure, relationship with partners, partner capacity, political influence of partnership, and perceptions of community members. Participants completed the survey online and rated each item using a 4-point Likert-type scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree). Responses were used to reflect partnership structure (e.g., new partners, committees) and function (e.g., processes for decision making, leadership in the community). The partnership survey topics included the following: the partnership's goals are clearly defined, partners have input into decisions made by the partnership, the leadership thinks it is important to involve the community, the partnership has access to enough space to conduct daily tasks, and the partnership faces opposition in the community it serves. The survey was open between September 2013 and December 2013 and was translated into Spanish to increase respondent participation in predominantly Hispanic/Latino communities.

To assess validity of the survey, evaluators used SPSS to perform factor analysis, using principal component analysis with Varimax with Kaiser Normalization (Eigenvalue >1). Evaluators identified 15 components or factors with a range of 1-11 items loading onto each factor, using a value of 0.4 as a minimum threshold for factor loadings for each latent construct (i.e., component or factor) in the rotated component matrix.

Survey data were imported into a database, where items were queried and grouped into the constructs identified through factor analysis. Responses to statements within each construct were summarized using weighted averages. Evaluators excluded sites with ten or fewer respondents from individual site analyses but included them in the final cross-site analysis.

### *Findings*

Seven of the project staff and key partners involved with Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities completed the survey. See Partnership and Community Capacity Survey Results starting on page 26.

### References

1. Goodman RM, Speers MA, McLeroy K, et al. Identifying and defining the dimensions of community capacity to provide a basis for measurement. *Health Educ Behav.* Jun 1998;25(3):258-278.
2. Israel BA, Schulz AJ, Parker EA, Becker AB. Review of community-based research: assessing partnership approaches to improve public health. *Annu Rev Public Health.* 1998;19:173-202.
3. Roussos ST, Fawcett SB. A review of collaborative partnerships as a strategy for improving community health. *Annu Rev Public Health.* 2000;21:369-402.
4. Baker E, Motton F. Is there a relationship between capacity and coalition activity: The road we've traveled. American Public Health Association 131st Annual Meeting. San Francisco, CA; 2003.



APPENDIX B: PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY CAPACITY SURVEY RESULTS

## Partnership and Community Capacity Survey Respondent Summary

Community Partnership

**Cook County**

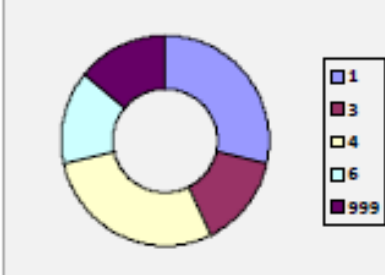
Respondents (n= 7 )

### Respondent Characteristics

Gender		Identified Race/Ethnicity				Identified Role	
Female	4	American Indian or Alaskan Native	2	Hispanic or Latino	0	Community Partnership Lead	3
Male	3	Asian	1	Not Hispanic or Latino	0	Community Partnership Partner	0
No response	0	White	6	Don't know/ Unsure ethnicity	0	Community Leader	1
Age Range		African American/ Black	0	Refused to identify ethnicity	0	Community Member	2
18-25	1	Pacific Islander/ Native Hawaiian	0	Other ethnicity	0	Public Official	1
26-45	0					Other role	1
46-65	3						
66+	3						
No response	0						

### Type of Affiliated Organization

Faith- or Community Based Organization	2	28.6%	(1)
School (district, elementary, middle, high)	0	0.0%	(2)
Local Government Agency (city, county)	1	14.3%	(3)
University or Research/Evaluation Organization	2	28.6%	(4)
Neighborhood Organization	0	0.0%	(5)
Advocacy Organization	1	14.3%	(6)
Health Care Organization	0	0.0%	(7)
Child Care or Afterschool Organization	0	0.0%	(8)
Other	0	0.0%	(10)
No response	1	14.3%	(999)



### Partnership and Community Capacity Data

#### Provision of required space and equipment

Participants provided level of agreement to statements indicating the community partnership provided adequate space, equipment, and supplies to conduct business and meetings.

Strongly agree	53.97%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	41.27%	I don't know	4.76%
Disagree	0.00%	No response	0.00%

#### Partner skills and communication

Participants provided level of agreement to statements supporting partner skills and ability to communicate with and engage multiple types of people (e.g., public officials, community leaders).

Strongly agree	38.96%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	61.04%	I don't know	0.00%
Disagree	0.00%	No response	0.00%

APPENDIX B: PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY CAPACITY SURVEY RESULTS

Community Partnership

Community and community members			
Participants provided level of agreement to statements suggesting the communities are good places to live, and that community members are helpful, can be trusted, and share the same goals or values.			
Strongly agree	48.05%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	46.75%	I don't know	2.60%
Disagree	2.60%	No response	0.00%
Partner and community involvement			
Participants provided level of agreement to statements indicating partners and the community were actively involved in partnership activities, meetings, and decisions.			
Strongly agree	60.00%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	37.14%	I don't know	0.00%
Disagree	2.86%	No response	0.00%
Partner and partnership development			
Participants provided level of agreement to statements suggesting the partnership and its partners seek ways learn, develop, and enhance sustainability.			
Strongly agree	28.57%	Strongly disagree	2.86%
Agree	54.29%	I don't know	5.71%
Disagree	8.57%	No response	0.00%
Partnership structure, organization, and goals			
Participants provided level of agreement to statements suggesting partnership has processes in place related to structure, meeting organization, and goals.			
Strongly agree	73.81%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	23.81%	I don't know	2.38%
Disagree	0.00%	No response	0.00%
Relationship between partners and leadership			
Participants provided level of agreement to statements indicating the leadership and partners trust and support each other.			
Strongly agree	78.57%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	21.43%	I don't know	0.00%
Disagree	0.00%	No response	0.00%
Community members intervene			
Participants provided level of agreement to statements indicating that community members can be counted on intervene in instances where someone is disrespectful, disruptive, or harmful to another community member.			
Strongly agree	23.81%	Strongly disagree	4.76%
Agree	42.86%	I don't know	0.00%
Disagree	28.57%	No response	0.00%
Leadership motivation			

APPENDIX B: PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY CAPACITY SURVEY RESULTS

Community Partnership

Participants provided level of agreement to statements suggesting the leadership is motivated to help others, work with diverse groups, shows compassion, and follows through.			
Strongly agree	82.14%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	17.86%	I don't know	0.00%
Disagree	0.00%	No response	0.00%

<b>Community member and partner participation</b>			
Participants provided level of agreement to statements indicating that community members and partners have opportunities to serve in leadership roles and participate in group decision-making.			
Strongly agree	80.95%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	19.05%	I don't know	0.00%
Disagree	0.00%	No response	0.00%

<b>Involvement in other communities</b>			
Participants provided level of agreement to statements suggesting leadership and partners are involved in other communities and various community groups, and help communities work together.			
Strongly agree	42.86%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	42.86%	I don't know	7.14%
Disagree	7.14%	No response	0.00%

<b>Community member willingness to assist</b>			
Participants provided level of agreement to statements suggesting most community members help neighbors and solve community problems. It also suggested some community members may take advantage of others.			
Strongly agree	67.86%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	32.14%	I don't know	0.00%
Disagree	0.00%	No response	0.00%

<b>Core leadership and leadership skills</b>			
Participants provided level of agreement to statements suggesting the community partnership has a core leadership group organizing efforts, and that leaders have the skills to help the partnership achieve its goals.			
Strongly agree	92.86%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	7.14%	I don't know	0.00%
Disagree	0.00%	No response	0.00%

<b>Partner motivation</b>			
Participants provided level of agreement to statements indicating that partners won't give up in their efforts to create change and increase sense of community through the partnership.			
Strongly agree	33.33%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	61.90%	I don't know	4.76%
Disagree	0.00%	No response	0.00%

<b>Visibility of leadership</b>			
Participants provided level of agreement to statements suggesting the leadership is known in the community and works with public officials.			
Strongly agree	71.43%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	28.57%	I don't know	0.00%
Disagree	0.00%	No response	0.00%

APPENDIX B: PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY CAPACITY SURVEY RESULTS

Community Partnership

Leadership lives in the community			
Participants provided level of agreement to a statement indicating that at least one member of the leadership resides within the community.			
Strongly agree	100.00%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	0.00%	I don't know	0.00%
Disagree	0.00%	No response	0.00%
Leadership has a respected role in the community			
Participants provided level of agreement to a statement that suggests at least one member of the leadership team has a respected role in the community.			
Strongly agree	85.71%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	14.29%	I don't know	0.00%
Disagree	0.00%	No response	0.00%
Community partnership initiatives are known			
Participants provided level of agreement to a statement suggesting that community members are aware of the partnership's initiatives and activities.			
Strongly agree	42.86%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	42.86%	I don't know	14.29%
Disagree	0.00%	No response	0.00%
Division of resources			
Participants provided level of agreement to a statements suggesting that resources are equally divided among different community groups (e.g., racial/ethnic, lower income).			
Strongly agree	28.57%	Strongly disagree	0.00%
Agree	71.43%	I don't know	0.00%
Disagree	0.00%	No response	0.00%

**APPENDIX C: COOK COUNTY HEALTHY KIDS, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP LIST**

<b>Members of the Partnership</b>	
<b>Organization/Institution</b>	<b>Partner</b>
Business/Industry/Commercial	Adel Chamber of Commerce Adel News-Tribune B.J.'s Produce of Tifton Cook County Chamber of Commerce Memorial Hospital of Adel Silverwood Farm Trust Bank WALB-Albany News
Civic Organizations	Adel Cook Chamber of Commerce Boys and Girls Club of the Greater Cook County Area Cook County 4-H Club Cook County Citivan Club Cook County Exchange Club Cook County Kiwanis Club Future Farmers of America
College/University	Valdosta State University
Government Organizations	City of Cecil City of Adel Cook County Board of Commissioners City of Lenox Cook County Parks and Recreation Department Cook County Health Department
Other Community-Based Organizations	Georgia Family State Connection First Assembly of God House of Grace* Cook County Family Connection* House of Grace Homeless Shelter
Schools	Cook County Schools Cook Head Start Cook County Board of Education

\*Lead agencies

APPENDIX D: SOURCES AND AMOUNTS OF FUNDING LEVERAGED

Sources of Revenue			
Community Partnership	Cook County		
Resource source	Year	Amount	Status
<b>Business</b>			
Other	2012		Annual total
		\$400.00	Accrued
Sum of revenue generated by resource source		\$400.00	
<b>Individual/private donor</b>			
Other	2012		Annual total
		\$100.00	Accrued
		\$500.00	Accrued
Sum of revenue generated by resource source		\$600.00	
<b>Local government</b>			
Other	2012		Annual total
		\$15,000.00	Accrued
Sum of revenue generated by resource source		\$15,000.00	
<b>State government</b>			
Matching funds	2010		Annual total
		\$20,000.00	Accrued
Sum of revenue generated by resource source		\$20,000.00	
<b>Foundation</b>			
HKHC funds	2009		Annual total
		\$4,971.68	Accrued
		\$6,095.29	Accrued
		\$4,462.39	Accrued
		\$1,850.00	Accrued
		\$9,000.00	Accrued
		\$9,133.92	Accrued
		\$52,264.00	Accrued

APPENDIX D: SOURCES AND AMOUNTS OF FUNDING LEVERAGED

Resource source	Amount	Status
2010		Annual total
		\$92,222.00
	\$6,100.00	Accrued
	\$9,504.00	Accrued
	\$8,150.00	Accrued
	\$6,782.00	Accrued
	\$52,264.00	Accrued
	\$850.00	Accrued
	\$1,850.00	Accrued
	\$6,722.00	Accrued
2011		Annual total
		\$90,000.00
	\$5,565.00	Accrued
	\$56,510.00	Accrued
	\$7,625.00	Accrued
	\$4,660.00	Accrued
	\$3,000.00	Accrued
	\$5,640.00	Accrued
	\$7,000.00	Accrued
2012		Annual total
		\$90,000.00
	\$5,565.00	Accrued
	\$5,640.00	Accrued
	\$2,000.00	Accrued
	\$4,660.00	Accrued
	\$8,000.00	Accrued
	\$56,510.00	Accrued
	\$7,625.00	Accrued
Other		
2013		Annual total
		\$450,000.00
	\$450,000.00	Accrued
Sum of revenue generated by resource source	\$809,999.28	
Non-profit organization	Year	
Matching funds		
2010		Annual total
		\$22,040.00

APPENDIX D: SOURCES AND AMOUNTS OF FUNDING LEVERAGED

Community Partnership		Cook County	
Resource source	Amount	Status	
	\$14,640.00	Accrued	
	\$2,000.00	Accrued	
	\$5,400.00	Accrued	
2011		Annual total	\$22,040.00
	\$20,040.00	Accrued	
	\$2,000.00	Accrued	
2012		Annual total	\$59,080.00
	\$20,040.00	Accrued	
	\$2,000.00	Accrued	
	\$20,040.00	Accrued	
	\$15,000.00	Accrued	
	\$2,000.00	Accrued	
Other		Annual total	\$15,000.00
	\$15,000.00	Accrued	
2012		Annual total	\$4,100.00
	\$4,000.00	Accrued	
	\$100.00	Accrued	
Sum of revenue generated by resource source	\$122,260.00		
School		Year	
Matching funds		Annual total	\$3,600.00
2010		Annual total	\$3,600.00
	\$3,600.00	Accrued	
2011		Annual total	\$13,600.00
	\$10,000.00	Accrued	
	\$3,600.00	Accrued	
2012		Annual total	\$20,000.00
	\$10,000.00	Accrued	
	\$10,000.00	Accrued	
Other		Annual total	\$4,000.00
2012		Annual total	\$4,000.00
	\$4,000.00	Accrued	



APPENDIX D: SOURCES AND AMOUNTS OF FUNDING LEVERAGED

Community Partnership	Cook County		
Resource source		Amount	Status
Sum of revenue generated by resource source		\$41,200.00	
Other	Year		
	Matching funds		
	2011		Annual total \$30,000.00
		\$30,000.00	Accrued
	2012		Annual total \$60,000.00
		\$30,000.00	Accrued
		\$30,000.00	Accrued
Sum of revenue generated by resource source		\$90,000.00	
Grand Total			\$1,099,459.28

**APPENDIX E: FARMERS' MARKET ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT**

**APPENDIX F: PARKS AND PLAY SPACES ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT**

**APPENDIX G: PARKS AND PLAY SPACES DIRECT OBSERVATION**

# **Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities**

## **Farmers' Markets Environmental Audit**

### **Summary Report**

Prepared by Transtria LLC



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## Background

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities (HKHC) is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) whose primary goal is to implement healthy eating and active living policy, system, and environmental change initiatives that can support healthier communities for children and families across the United States. Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities places special emphasis on reaching children who are at highest risk for obesity on the basis of race/ethnicity, income, and/or geographic location. For more information about HKHC, please visit [www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org](http://www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org).

Cook County, GA was selected as one of 49 communities to participate in HKHC, and Cook County Family Connection, Inc. is the lead agency for their community partnership, *Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities*. Cook County has chosen to focus its work on healthy eating and active living strategies, including: community gardens, farmers' markets, parks and playgrounds, Safe Routes to School, and joint-use.

Transtria LLC, a public health evaluation and research consulting firm located in St. Louis, Missouri, is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to lead the evaluation and dissemination activities from April 2010 to March 2014. For more information about the evaluation, please visit [www.transtria.com/hkhc](http://www.transtria.com/hkhc). A supplementary enhanced evaluation component focuses on six cross-site HKHC strategies, including: park renovations, street design renovations, farmers' markets, corner stores, physical activity standards in childcare settings, and nutrition standards in childcare settings. Communities are trained to use two main methods as part of the enhanced evaluation, direct observation and environmental audits. Tools and training are provided by Transtria staff (see [www.transtria.com/hkhc](http://www.transtria.com/hkhc)).

In order to better understand the impact of their work in farmers' markets, representatives of Cook County chose to participate in the enhanced evaluation data collection activities. Cook County chose to collect data on farmers' markets using environmental audits.

## Methods

The Farmers' Market Environmental Audit Tool was modified from three existing environmental audit tools including the Farmers' Market Vendor Evaluation (created by Monika Roth), Farmers' Market Evaluation, Mystery Shopping-Farmers' Market (created by [marketumbrella.org](http://marketumbrella.org)), and Nutrition Environment Measurement Survey-NEMS (created by Glanz et al.). Environmental audits assess the presence or absence of different features as well as the quality or condition of the physical environment. The tool captures overall market operations (e.g., months, days and hours of operation, accessibility, government nutrition assistance programs), vendor display areas (e.g., space and equipment), product signage and pricing (e.g., clear signs, unit and price labeled, discounts for larger sales), frozen/canned fruits and vegetables (e.g., quantity and variety of frozen or canned fruits and vegetables), other foods (e.g., availability of healthier options and foods with minimal nutritional value) and the availability, pricing, quality, and quantity of fresh fruits and vegetables.

The audit tool was completed for the Cook County Farmers' Market located in downtown Adel. An Evaluation Officer from Transtria LLC trained partnership staff on proper data collection methods using the tool. Data collection was completed on October 13 and October 27, 2012. Transtria staff performed data entry and validation, including double data entry to ensure accuracy of the data. Agreement of data entry was 99.5% and all errors were fixed.

## Results

### *Operations*

The Cook County Farmers' Market was open 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM on the second and fourth Saturday of each month from May to October. The market featured legible signs, an accessible entrance and room to maneuver around. No amenities were present (e.g., seating, ATM, information booth, market maps), nor were events or activities posted. No signs were present identifying if the market accepted WIC, SNAP, EBT, or other discount payment options.

### *Vendor Characteristics*

On both audit days, there were three to four vendors present at the market, with one or two selling fresh produce. The vendor display areas were reported as being adequate size, stable, well-organized, and clean. None of the vendors had visible signs with the farmers' or businesses' names.

### *Product Signage*

On October 13, a lot (>25%) of vendors identified products by name, had clear signage documenting price, and unit prices were labeled appropriately. On October 27, it was reported that a few of the vendors (1-25%) identified products by name, had clear signage documenting price, and units prices were labeled appropriately. On both days, all vendors provided proper product labeling.

### *Customer Service*

On both audit days it was reported that a lot (>25%) of vendors practiced safe and hygienic food handling; they were courteous and made eye contact with customers; stood to encourage sales; and appeared neat and clean. A lot of vendors provided customers with bags for purchased products and encouraged customers to feel or smell products. Only a few vendors provided free recipes with product purchase.

### *Availability of nutrient-dense and minimally nutritious foods*

The availability of canned fruit and vegetables varied. On October 13, the market had canned vegetables, but did not carry canned fruits. On October 27, the market carried only canned fruits. A variety of other foods were offered at the market including, pecans (shelled or unshelled), zucchini relish, salty foods, sweet foods, and regular to high-fat prepared meals (sausages, hot dogs). No frozen desserts or ice cream treats were present, but lemonade prepared on-site was provided to patrons for free.



Figure 1: Fresh produce at the Cook County Farmers' Market

### *Availability and quality of fresh produce*

Fresh produce available at the market included one type of fruit (apples) and eight types of vegetables (i.e., collard greens, green peppers, summer squash, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, mustard greens, zucchini squash, and pumpkins). The largest quantity (10+) of fresh produce available were apples with a slightly smaller amount (3-9) of tomatoes and summer squash. Less than three green peppers, sweet potatoes, and pumpkins were present. The quality of fresh apples and all eight fresh vegetables was rated as 'good'. The market also sold plants (i.e., annuals, citrus trees, pecans, mums, roses) for \$3.00 per pot. Neither the quality nor quantity of the plants was recorded.



Figure 2: Fresh produce at the market

### *Cost of produce*

Prices varied at the Cook County Farmers' Market. Apples were priced at \$0.50/each. Green peppers were the lowest priced vegetable at the market (\$0.10/each). Pumpkins were also sold individually, at \$2.00 each. Collard greens and mustard greens were both sold by the bunch, ranging in price from \$3.00 to \$2.00, respectively. Three vegetables were sold by the basket; sweet potatoes (\$2.00), summer squash (\$3.00), and tomatoes (\$2.00). Discrepancy existed around the price of zucchini; it was recorded as 2/\$1.00 or \$2.00/basket. See Table 4 for more details about produce pricing.

### **Key Takeaways**

- Cook County Farmers' Market was open on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday from May through October in the mornings and afternoons.
- One to two vendors sold fresh produce.
- A variety of vegetables (collard greens, green peppers, summer squash, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, mustard greens, zucchini squash, and pumpkins) were sold at the market.
- The quality of fresh produce was rated as 'good'.
- Vendors practiced safe food handling, were courteous, and provided bags for purchases.
- There were no signs showing that WIC, SNAP, EBT, or other discount payment options were accepted by the produce vendors.

**Appendix A: Tables**

**Table 1: Overall Market Information**

Characteristics Found	Cook County Famers' Market Audit Day 1	Cook County Farmers' Market Audit Day 2
<i>Overall Market</i>		
Months of operation: May	x	x
Months of operation: June	x	x
Months of operation: July	x	x
Months of operation: August	x	x
Months of operation: September	x	x
Months of operation: October	x	x
Frequency of operation: Twice per month	x	x
Days and hours of operation: Saturday	x	x
Market is open on Saturday morning	8:00 AM	8:00 AM
Market is open on Saturday afternoon	noon	noon
Features: Accessible entrance	x	x
Features: Room to maneuver around market	x	x
Features: Legible signs to identify market	x	x
<i>Vendor Characteristics</i>		
Number of vendors who sell goods at the market	3-4	3-4
Number of vendors who sell fresh produce at the market	1-2	1-2
Adequate size for displays	x	x
Efficient use of display spaces	x	x
Stable displays	x	x
Clean and well-organized displays: A lot of vendors	x	x
<i>Product Signage and Pricing (For Fresh Fruits/Vegetables Only)</i>		
Products identified by name: Few vendors		x
Products are identified by name: A lot of vendors	x	
Clear signs document the price: Few vendors		x
Clear signs document the price: A lot of vendors	x	
Units prices appropriately labeled: Few vendors		x
Units prices appropriately labeled: A lot of vendors	x	
Proper product labeling as required by law	x	x



**Table 1 Continued: Overall Market Information**

Characteristics Found	Cook County Farmers' Market Audit Day 1	Cook County Farmers' Market Audit Day 2
<i>Customer Service</i>		
Safe and hygienic food handling: A lot of vendors	x	x
Courteous to customers: A lot of vendors	x	x
Make eye contact/greet customers: A lot of vendors	x	x
Standing to encourage sales: A lot of vendors	x	x
Appearance is neat/clean: A lot of vendors	x	x
Bags for purchased products: A lot of vendors	x	x
Free recipes with purchase: None	x	
Free recipes with purchase: Few vendors		x
Free taste tests, samples of products: A lot of vendors	x	x
Customers encouraged to feel/smell products: A lot of vendors	x	x
Business cards/farm flyers available for customers: None		x
Business cards/farm flyers available for customers: A lot of vendors	x	
<i>Sales and Handling</i>		
Calculator: A lot of vendors	x	x
Cash box: A lot of vendors	x	x

**Table 2: Foods with Minimal Nutritional Value**

Product	Quantity		Unit/Price	Audit Day
	A lot	Few		
Potato chips/Corn chips/Popcorn	x		\$0.50	Day 2
Regular to high-fat prepared foods (sausage)	x		\$3.00	Day 2
Regular to high-fat prepared foods (hot dog)	x		\$2.00	Day 1, Day 2
Cakes/Cookies/Quick Breads/Doughnuts		x	\$0.25	Day 1
Soda/sugar sweetened beverages	x		Free	Day 1

**Table 3: Nutritious Canned/Frozen Produce**

Product	Quantity		Unit/Price	Audit Day
	A lot	Few		
Canned/ready to eat fruits		x	\$5.00/half pint	Day 1
Canned/ready to eat vegetables	x		\$5.00/12 oz.	Day 2
Nuts/seeds/legumes	x		\$9.00 (shelled)	Day 2
			\$5.00 (un-shelled)	
Other healthier foods: canned zucchini relish	x		\$8.00/12 oz.	Day 1, Day 2

**Table 4: Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Availability across All Vendors**

Produce Item	Cook County Farmer's Market			
	Price	Unit	Quality	Quantity
<i>Fruits:</i>				
Apples	\$0.50	each	good	A lot
<i>Vegetables:</i>				
Collard Greens	\$3.00	bunch	good	N/A
Green peppers	\$0.10	each	good	few
Summer squash	\$2.00	basket*	good	some
Sweet potatoes	\$2.00	basket*	good	few
Tomatoes	\$3.00	basket**	good	some
Mustard Greens	\$2.00	bunch	N/A	N/A
Zucchini Squash***	\$0.50	each	good	
Zucchini Squash***	\$2.00	basket	good	
Plants (annuals, citrus trees, pecans, mums, roses)	\$3.00	each	N/A	N/A
Pumpkin	\$2.00	each	good	few-some****

\* wrote basket, but recorded "4" which indicates "bunch"

\*\* wrote basket, but each auditor recorded a different code (2, 3, and 4)

\*\*\* disagreement between Day 2 auditors over price, unit and quantity

\*\*\*\* disagreement about quantity

**Table 5: Characteristics *not* Found**

<i>Overall Market</i>	<i>Sales and Handling</i>
Security features (security guard(s) and/or security cameras)	Certified scale
Licenses/permits displayed	Cash register
Seating	Receipts provided
Events/activities	
ATM	<i>Foods with Minimal Nutritional Value</i>
Information booth/table	Sherbet/frozen yogurt/popsicles/shaved ice/snow cones
Market maps	Ice cream
Signage indicating that the market accepts WIC/SNAP/EBT	Cakes/cookies/quick breads/doughnuts
Signage indicating that the market accepts other discounts	Candy/chocolate
	Soda/sugar sweetened beverages
<i>Vendor Characteristics</i>	Sugared juices
Tent/canopy	Alcohol
Visible signs with farmers'/businesses' names	
Tents and/or signs tied down	<i>Nutritious Canned/Frozen Produce</i>
Power cords taped down	Canned/ready to eat fruits
	Frozen fruits
<i>Product Signage and Pricing</i>	Frozen vegetables
Signs for discounts on larger sales	100% juice
	Whole grains
<i>Customer Service</i>	Low-fat or non-fat dairy foods
Cooking demonstration	Lean meats/fish/poultry
Business cards/farm flyers	Low-fat prepared foods

# **Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities**

## **Parks and Play Spaces Environmental Audit**

### **Summary Report**

Prepared by Transtria LLC



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## BACKGROUND

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities (HKHC) is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) whose primary goal is to implement healthy eating and active living policy, system, and environmental change initiatives that can support healthier communities for children and families across the United States. HKHC places special emphasis on reaching children who are at highest risk for obesity on the basis of race/ethnicity, income, and/or geographic location. For more information about HKHC, please visit [www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org](http://www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org).

Cook County, GA was selected as one of 49 communities to participate in HKHC, and Cook County Family Connection, Inc. is the lead agency for their community partnership, *Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities*. Cook County has chosen to focus its work on healthy eating and active living strategies, including: community gardens; Safe Routes to School; joint-use; parks and playgrounds; and farmers' markets.

Transtria LLC, a public health evaluation and research consulting firm located in St. Louis, Missouri, is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to lead the evaluation and dissemination activities from April 2010 to March 2014. For more information about the evaluation, please visit [www.transtria.com/hkhc](http://www.transtria.com/hkhc). A supplementary enhanced evaluation component focuses on six cross-site HKHC strategies, including: park renovations, street design renovations, farmers' markets, corner stores, physical activity standards in childcare settings, and nutrition standards in childcare settings. Communities are trained to use two main methods as part of the enhanced evaluation, direct observation and environmental audits. Tools and training are provided by Transtria staff (see [www.transtria.com/hkhc](http://www.transtria.com/hkhc)).

In order to better understand the impact of their work in parks and recreation, representatives of Cook County chose to participate in the enhanced evaluation data collection activities. Cook County chose to collect data on parks and recreation using environmental audits.

## METHODS

The Parks and Play Spaces Environmental Audit Tool was used to collect data (see appendix). This tool and protocol were adapted from the Physical Activity Resource Assessment and the BTG-COMP Park Observation Form 2012. An Evaluation Officer from Transtria LLC trained members of Cook County's community partnership on proper data collection methods using the tool.

Environmental audits assess the presence or absence of different features as well as the quality or condition of the physical environment. This tool captures the setting, accessibility, vending machines, signage, barriers to entry, playground features (swings/slides/monkey bars/sandboxes/ground games), sports and recreation features (fields/courts/pools/tracks/trails), aesthetic features and amenities, trash and vandalism.

In this case, the audit tools were completed for two parks in Cook County. The first park, Swings with Wings, was assessed one time. The second park, Lenox, was assessed before and after infrastructure changes occurred. Data was collected at Swings with Wings on March 16, 2013 by two auditors. The pre-audits at Lenox Park were completed by four auditors on September 16 and 17, 2012. The post-audits at Lenox Park were completed by four auditors between October 28 and November 5, 2012. The last post-audit was completed on March 16, 2013 by two auditors. Transtria staff performed data entry and validation. Double data entry was

performed to ensure accuracy of data. Agreement of data entry was 100% and all errors were fixed.

## **OVERALL RESULTS**

### **Setting and accessibility**

Lenox Park and Swings with Wings were multi-feature publically accessible parks, located outdoors. Swings with Wings was adjacent to a school, Horizon Academy.

Swings with Wings had a lighted parking area on-site and on-street parking next to the play space. Lenox Park did not have any parking features. During the pre-audit, Lenox Park had multiple dirt/grass entrances, but they were not level. In addition, the park was noted to have a deep drainage ditch around the perimeter, making it difficult for wheelchairs and strollers to access. During the post-audit, Lenox Park was accessible to individuals using wheelchairs and strollers. Swings with Wings did not have wheelchair or stroller accessible entrances.

Neither of the parks had a sidewalk on the street leading to the park entrance. There were no bike lanes, sharrows, or bike signage on adjacent streets at either of the parks. Bus or transit stops were also absent on adjacent streets. Both parks lacked crosswalks at all intersections next to the play space. No restrooms, portable toilets, showers, or locker rooms were present at the parks.

### **Vending machines**

There were no vending machines in either of the parks during the audit periods.

### **Signage and barriers to entry**

Neither of the parks had posted hours of operation. Only Swings with Wings had signage that indicated the park or play space name. Swings with Wings had a gate or fence partially restricting access to the play space, but neither of the parks had a locked fence or other physical barrier surrounding the perimeter. There were no entrance fees required to access either of the parks.

### **Playground features**

There were playground features present in both Swings with Wings and Lenox Park. Swings with Wings featured six toddler swings and monkey/climbing bars. The surface at Swings with Wings was grass/dirt. During the pre-audit, Lenox Park had six youth swings and the surface was composed of grass/dirt. There were no toddler swings, slides, monkey/climbing bars, or other climbing features. At the time of the post-audit, there were two to three slides, monkey/climbing bars, and three to four other climbing features. No changes were made to the youth swings. The surface of the playground was changed to woodchip/mulch.

### **Sports and recreation features**

Auditors indicated that Lenox Park had two basketball courts during both the pre- and post-audits. Both of the courts were reported to be in average/good condition and both had lighting present. Auditors recorded that the courts were not regulation size and did not have markings (key, three-point line). Swings with Wings did not have any sports or recreation features.



## **Aesthetic features and amenities**

Benches and shade trees were present at both parks and were reported to be in average/good condition. Both pre- and post-audits at Lenox Park indicated that there was a green space, trash containers, and grills/fire pits, all in average/good condition. Swings with Wings had none of the aforementioned amenities, but did have a water feature and picnic tables. Both features were in average/good condition. A few features were not present at either park, including drinking fountains, picnic shelters, and a fruit and vegetable garden.

## **Trash and vandalism**

No garbage or litter was present at Swings with Wings or Lenox Park during the pre-audit. Conversely, garbage/litter was present at Lenox Park during the post-audit. No broken glass, graffiti, alcohol or other drug use evidence, or sex paraphernalia were present at either park.

## **RESULTS BY INDIVIDUAL PARK**

### **Swings with Wings**

#### Setting and accessibility

Swings with Wings was a multi-feature publically accessible park in an outdoor setting located near the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Cook County and next to the Horizon Academy, Adel area. Lighted parking was available on-site in addition to on-street parking next to the play space. Although Swings with Wings had signage indicating the park name, the hours of operation were not posted. There was a gate or fence partially restricting access to the play space at this park but the fence did not have a lock. No restrooms were present at the park.

#### Playground features

The park had playground equipment, including six toddler swings and one monkey bar climbing feature. The playground area had a surface consisting of grass/dirt.

#### Sports and recreation features

Swings with Wings had no sports or recreation features (fields, courts, trails).

#### Aesthetic features and amenities

A water feature, benches, picnic tables, and shade trees were present and reported as being in good condition (see Figure 1). No trash containers, drinking fountains or shelter areas were present.



Fig. 1: Shade trees in Swings with Wings Park

## Trash and vandalism

There was no evidence of garbage, broken glass, graffiti, alcohol or other drug use, or sex paraphernalia at this park.

## **PRE/POST RESULTS**

### **Lenox Park**

#### Setting and accessibility

Lenox Park was a multi-feature publically accessible park in an outdoor setting. During the pre-audit, Lenox Park was not accessible for wheelchairs or strollers. However, the post-audit revealed that the park was accessible. The park had signage indicating the park name, although the hours of operation were not posted. No restrooms were present at this park.

#### Playground features

The playground featured six youth swings during both audit times.

Characteristics highlighted in the post audit were the addition of slides (2-3), monkey/climbing bars (1), and other climbing features (3-4). The playground surface also changed from grass/dirt to woodchip/mulch.

#### Sports and recreation features

There were two lighted basketball courts at Lenox Park during both audit times. Auditors recorded that the courts were not regulation size and did not have markings (key, three-point line).



Fig. 2: Basketball Courts in Lenox Park

#### Aesthetic features and amenities

Green space, benches, shade trees, grills/fire pits, and trash containers were present and reported to be in good condition. No drinking fountains or shelter areas were present.

#### **Key Changes in Lenox Park**

- Entrances were made accessible for wheelchairs/strollers.
- Slides, monkey bars, and other climbing features were added to the play space.
- The playground surface was updated from grass to woodchips.

#### Trash and vandalism

No garbage or litter was present at Lenox Park during the pre-audit. Conversely, garbage/litter was present during the post-audit. There was no evidence of garbage, broken glass, graffiti, alcohol or other drug use, or sex paraphernalia at this park.

## Appendix A

**Table 1: Park Characteristics**

Park Characteristics	Lenox Park Pre-Audit	Lenox Park Post-Audit	Swings with Wings
<b>Setting</b>			
Multi-feature publically accessible park	X	X	X
Adjacent to a school			Horizon Academy
<b>Accessibility</b>			
Parking area on-site			X
Lighted parking area			X
On-street parking next to play space			X
Wheelchair or stroller can easily enter space		X	
<b>Signage and barriers to entry</b>			
No posted park hours of operation	X	X	X
Signage that indicates the park or play space name			X
Gate/fence partially restricting access to play space			X
<b>Playground features</b>			
Toddler swings	0	0	6
Youth swings	6	6	0
Slides	0	2-3	0
Monkey/climbing bars	0	1	1
Other climbing feature	0	3-4	0
Surface	grass/dirt	woodchip/mulch	grass/dirt

**Table 1 Continued: Park Characteristics**

<b>Park Characteristics</b>	<b>Lenox Park Pre-Audit</b>	<b>Lenox Park Post-Audit</b>	<b>Swings with Wings</b>
<b>Sports and recreation features</b>			
Courts, basketball only	2	2	
Courts, basketball with lighting	2	2	
<b>Aesthetic features and amenities</b>			
Green space, average/good condition	X	X	
Water feature, average/good condition			X
Benches, average/good condition	X	X	X
Picnic tables, average/good condition			X
Trash containers, average/good condition	X	X	
Grills/fire pits, average/good condition	X	X	
Shade trees, average/good condition	X	X	X
<b>Trash and vandalism</b>			
No garbage/litter present	X		X
A little/some garbage/litter		X	
No broken glass present	X	X	X
No graffiti/tagging present	X	X	X
No evidence of alcohol or other drug use	X	X	X
No sex paraphernalia present	X	X	X

**Table 2: Park Characteristics *not* Present**

<p><i>Accessibility</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sidewalk on street leading to entrance</li> <li>Bike lane, sharrow, or bike signage on adjacent street</li> <li>Bus/transit stop on adjacent street</li> <li>Crosswalks present at adjacent intersections</li> <li>Restroom/portable toilet</li> <li>Shower/locker room</li> </ul> <p><i>Vending machines</i></p>	<p><i>Signage and barriers to entry</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entrance fee</li> <li>Locked fence or other physical barrier around the perimeter</li> </ul> <p><i>Aesthetic features and amenities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drinking fountains</li> <li>Shelters</li> <li>Fruit and vegetable gardens</li> </ul>
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# Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities

## Parks and Play Spaces Direct Observation

### **Summary Report**

Prepared by Transtria LLC



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## **BACKGROUND**

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities (HKHC) is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) whose primary goal is to implement healthy eating and active living policy, system, and environmental change initiatives that can support healthier communities for children and families across the United States. Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities places special emphasis on reaching children who are at highest risk for obesity on the basis of race/ethnicity, income, and/or geographic location.

Cook County, GA was selected as one of 49 communities to participate in HKHC, and Cook County Family Connection, Inc. is the lead agency for their community partnership, *Cook County Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities*. Cook County has chosen to focus its work on community gardens, farmers' markets, parks and playgrounds, Safe Routes to School, and joint-use. Transtria LLC, a public health evaluation and research consulting firm located in St. Louis, Missouri, is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to lead the evaluation and dissemination activities from April 2010 to March 2014. For more information about the evaluation, please visit [www.transtria.com](http://www.transtria.com).

In order to better understand the impact of their work in parks and play spaces, partnership representatives chose to participate in the enhanced evaluation data collection activities. This supplementary evaluation focuses on the six cross-site HKHC strategies, including: parks and play spaces, active transportation, farmers' markets, corner stores, physical activity standards in childcare settings, and nutrition standards in childcare settings. Communities use two main methods as part of the enhanced evaluation, direct observation and environmental audits. Cook County chose to collect data on parks and play spaces using the direct observation method.

## **METHODS**

### **Parks and Play Spaces Direct Observation**

The parks and play spaces direct observation tool was adapted from the System for Observing Play and Leisure Activity (SOPLAY) and System for Observing Play and Recreation in Communities (SOPARC) tools, protocols, and operational definitions. Direct observation is a method used to assess individuals' behaviors in their natural setting. An Evaluation Officer from Transtria LLC trained representatives of Cook County's community partnership on proper data collection methods using the tool.

Data were collected between September 16, 2012 and April 12, 2013 at Lenox Park and Swings with Wings. Pre- and post-data was collected for Lenox Park. The pre-test observations were collected between September 16 and 19, 2012 between 9:48 AM and 6:36 PM over a total of 3 days. The observations were conducted by 3 different observers for 24 minutes per park per day. Post-test observations were collected between October 18, 2012 and April 12, 2013 between 9:57 AM and 5:54 PM over a total of 22 days. The observations were conducted by 4 different observers for 23 to 24 minutes per park per day. Cross-sectional data was collected at Swings with Wings from March 16 to April 12, 2013 between 9:15 AM and 4:34 PM over a total of 17 days. The observations were conducted by 2 different observers for 24 minutes per park per day.

For the duration of each observation period, observers scanned the play space for one minute and recorded observations for one minute. Each observation represents an individual's activity level in the area at the specified time. Because individuals may have exited and re-entered the



area during observation periods, the individuals observed in each time period were not the same. This method allowed observers to capture overall changes in activity level as time lapsed, but it did not allow observers to record individual behavior changes.

During the scan, the observer completed the observation tool by tallying children in the designated area by age group (i.e., preschool = 3-5 years; elementary school = 6-10 years; middle school = 11-14 years; high school = 15+ years) and activity level (i.e., sedentary, moderate, or very active behaviors).

- **Sedentary** behaviors are defined as activities in which children are not moving (e.g., standing, sitting, playing board games).
- **Moderate** intensity behaviors require more movement but no strenuous activity (e.g., walking, biking slowly).
- **Very active** behaviors show evidence of increased heart rate and inhalation rate (e.g., running, biking vigorously, playing basketball).

Observers also reported the activity codes for the children in the designated area, including:

No Identifiable Activity	Aerobics	Baseball/Softball	Basketball
Dance	Football	Gymnastics	Martial Arts
Racquet Sports	Soccer	Swimming	Weight Training
Playground Games	Walking	Jogging/Running	None of the Above
		Volleyball	Biking

The activity code “No Identifiable Activity” was used to indicate no movement. The activity code “None of the Above” was used when an individual was engaging in an activity not included in the other activity codes.

In addition to recording individuals’ activity levels, observers created maps of the parks. The maps included a form for the setting, location, type of park area, condition of the area, any permanent modifications (the specific permanent alterations present that assist children in participating in physical activity such as lines painted on courts or basketball poles and nets; this does not include temporary improvements such as chalk lines and portable nets.), the presence of overlap modifications (e.g., the space has multiple improvements that overlap but cannot be used simultaneously such as a space that is used for both volleyball and basketball), and the surface type (e.g., gravel, grass).

One Transtria staff member entered the data and a second Transtria staff member conducted validity checks on 10% of observations (i.e., every tenth observation) to ensure accuracy and validity of the data. Of the 10% checked, no errors were found among the 728 observations (100% correct).

## RESULTS

### Parks and Play Spaces Direct Observation

Direct observations were conducted at Lenox Park and Swings with Wings. All data, including pre- and post-test, were collected between September 16, 2012 and April 12, 2013. Children’s activity levels were collected over a total of 728 one-minute time periods. A total of 286 observation periods were collected across 17 days at Swings with Wings. Children’s activity levels were collected over a total of 442 observation periods at Lenox Park. The number of pre-

test observation periods at Lenox Park was 104 across 3 days and post-test observation periods totaled 338 across 25 days.

Rate of Activity

For the 728 observation periods, there were a total of 165.8 activity counts per hour; the 165.8 counts reflect children’s activity levels at a particular moment in time as opposed to unique individuals observed. A person counted during the first minute of scanning is also counted during the fifth minute of scanning, if that person is still in the area. It is likely that the unique number of individuals observed in the area is a small fraction of the number of activity counts recorded for each site.

In order to better compare the data collected at the four sites, the rate of activity (activity counts per hour) was calculated for each site.

$$\frac{\text{Number of activity counts}}{\text{Total number of observation periods}} \times 60 \text{ (minutes per hour)}$$

Observers rated children’s and adult’s activity levels in the parks; no adolescents were present during the audits.

*Overall*

Overall, Lenox Park post-test had the greatest number of observation periods (n = 338), but, Swings with Wings had the largest number of activity counts (n = 120.0) among the 286 observation periods at the park. Activity counts at Lenox Park post-test were 31.4. Lenox Park pre-test had the lowest number of activity counts (n = 14.4) and observation periods (n = 104). Across all age groups, over half (62%) of the activity counts were sedentary, with 34% moderate and 15% very active (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Activity Count Rates by Age and Activity Level per Hour**

Park	Sedentary (%)	Moderate (%)	Very Active (%)	Total (%)
<b>Lenox Park Pre-Test</b>				
Children	1.7 (12%)	1.2 (8%)	0.0 (0%)	2.9 (20%)
Adults	9.2 (64%)	2.3 (16%)	0.0 (0%)	11.5 (80%)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>11.0 (76%)</b>	<b>3.5 (24%)</b>	<b>0.0 (0%)</b>	<b>14.4 (100%)</b>
<b>Lenox Park Post-Test</b>				
Children	0.0 (0%)	0.0 (0%)	6.4 (20%)	6.4 (20%)
Adults	21.7 (69%)	3.4 (11%)	0.0 (0%)	25.0 (80%)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>21.7 (69%)</b>	<b>3.4 (11%)</b>	<b>6.4 (20%)</b>	<b>31.4 (100%)</b>
<b>Swings with Wings</b>				
Children	55.4 (46%)	49.7 (41%)	19.1 (16%)	105.1 (87%)
Adults	14.9 (13%)	0.0 (0%)	0.0 (0%)	14.9 (13%)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>70.3 (59%)</b>	<b>49.7 (41%)</b>	<b>19.1 (16%)</b>	<b>120.0 (100%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>103.0 (62%)</b>	<b>56.6 (34%)</b>	<b>25.5 (15%)</b>	<b>165.8</b>

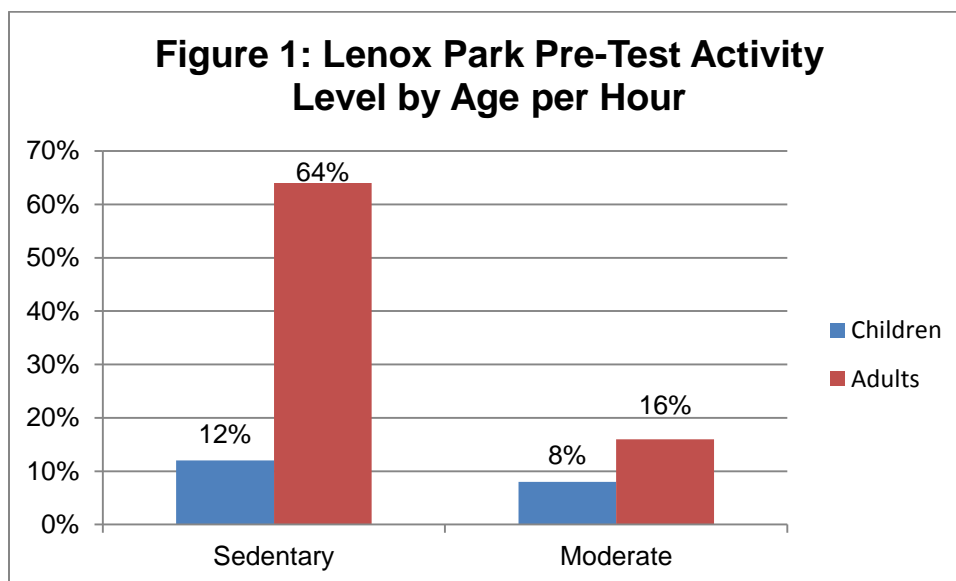
Activity levels of children differed greatly from adults. Children were engaged in sedentary (35%), moderate (31%), and very active (34%) behavior in nearly the same proportion (see Table 2). Among adults, behavior was mostly sedentary (89%) and the remainder was moderate (11%). No adults were reported to be very active (0%).

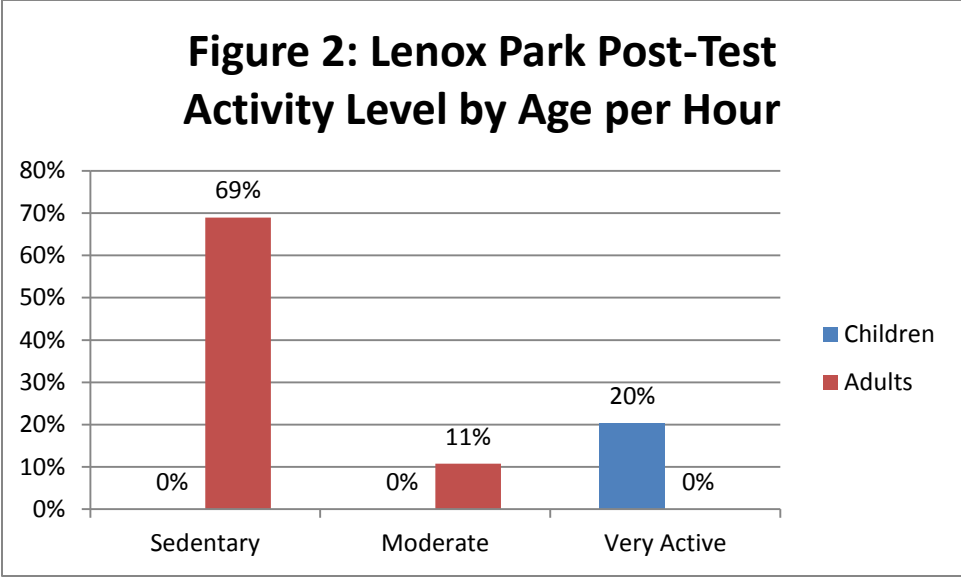
**Table 2: Activity Count Rates by Age per Hour Combined**

Age	Sedentary (%)	Moderate (%)	Very Active (%)	Total (%)
Children	57.1 (35%)	50.9 (31%)	55.1 (34%)	163.1 (76%)
Adults	45.8 (89%)	5.7 (11%)	0.0 (0%)	51.5 (24%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>102.9 (48%)</b>	<b>56.6 (26%)</b>	<b>55.1 (26%)</b>	<b>214.5</b>

*Lenox Park (pre/post)*

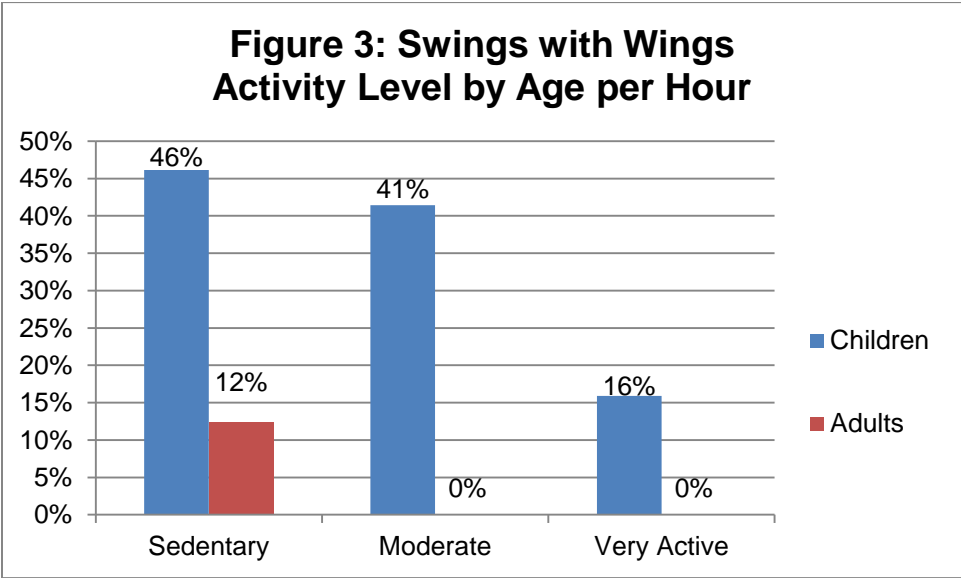
The highest proportion of activity levels among both children and adults during the pre-test was sedentary (76%), followed by moderate (24%). No children or adults were engaged in very active behavior (see Figure 1). Adults comprised a higher number of activity counts (n=11.5) than children (n=2.9). Similar to the pre-test, the highest proportion of activity levels among both age groups was sedentary (69%). However, the post-test at Lenox Park revealed an increase in very active behavior; from 0% in the pre-test to 20% in the post-test. This increase is among children only; no adults were rated as very active (see Figure 2). No children were rated as sedentary or moderate.





*Swings with Wings*

Over half (59%) of the activity levels among both children and adults at Swings with Wings were sedentary (see Figure 3). Moderate and very active levels were observed similarly (26%) in both age groups.



*Comparison*

The number of activity counts among children and adults at Lenox Park pre- and post-test to Swings with Wings was inversely proportioned. For instance, adults comprised 80% of the activity counts at Lenox Park pre- and post-test; children comprised 20%. At Swings with Wings, children comprised 88% of the activity counts, while adults comprised a mere 12%.

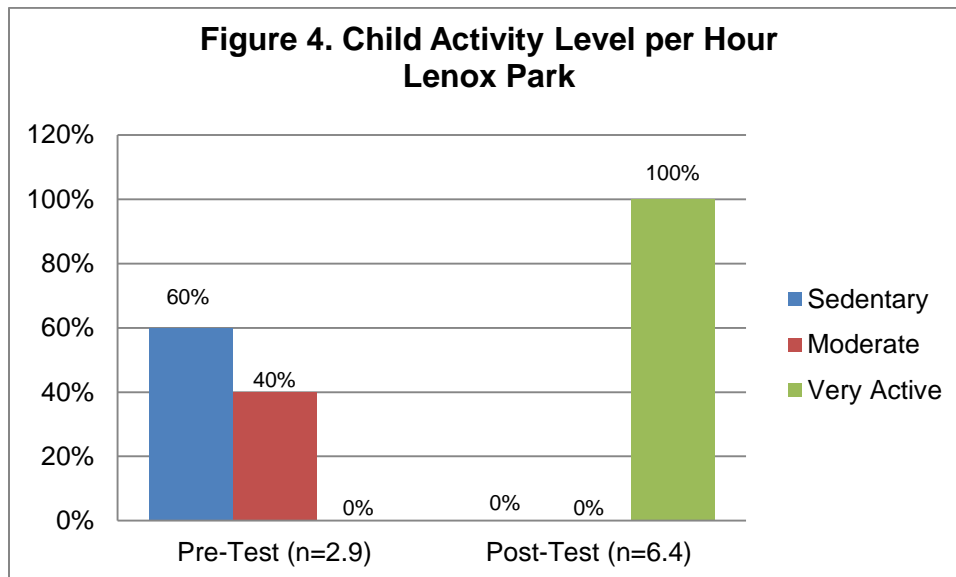
### Activity Rate Comparison by Age

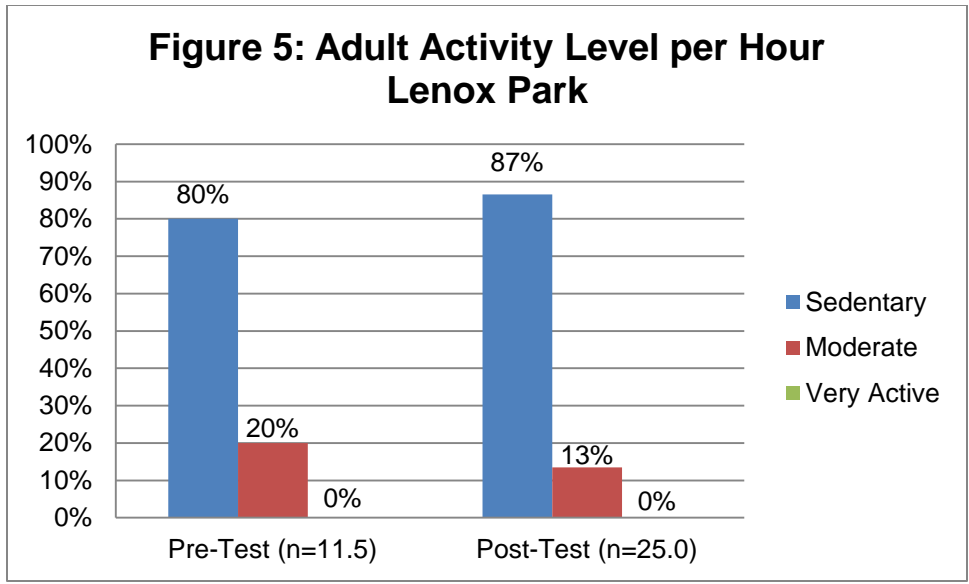
Differences emerged in the children's activity levels for each site (see Figures 4 and 5).

#### *Lenox (pre/post)*

Children Children at Lenox Park were solely engaged in very active behavior during the post-test. Activity levels during the pre-test did not include very active behavior. Sedentary behavior was seen the most (60%) and moderate behavior comprised the remainder (40%). Additionally, there was an increase (55%) in activity counts among children from the pre-test (n = 2.9) to the post-test (n = 6.4).

Adults There were no very active adults observed at Lenox Park. During the pre-test, adults were observed in sedentary behavior (80%) more than moderate (20%). Similarly, adults were observed in sedentary behavior (87%) more than moderate (13%) in the post-test. The number of activity counts among adults increased from the pre-test (n = 11.5) to the post-test (n = 25.0) by more than half (55%).

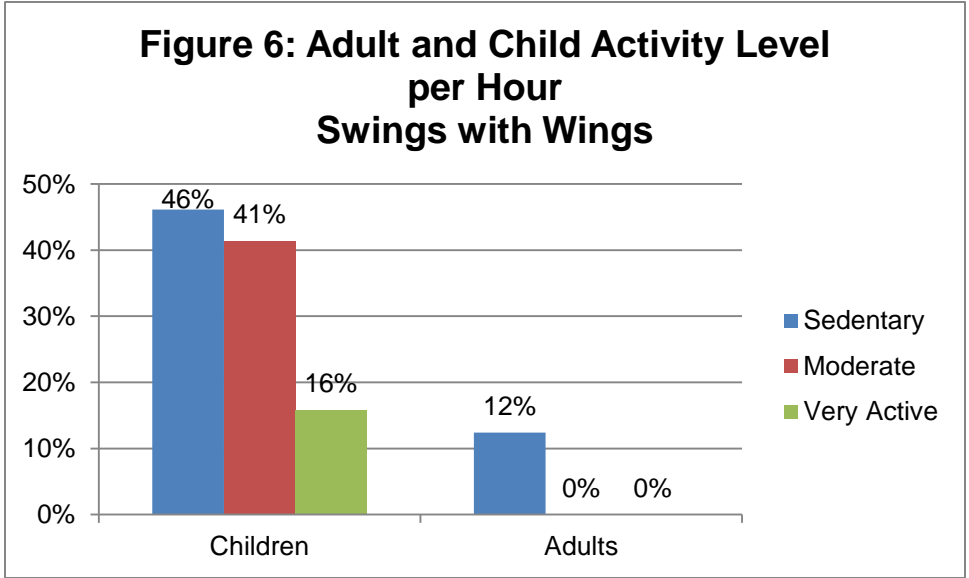




*Swings with Wings*

Children Sedentary activity (53%) was seen the most among children at Swings with Wings, followed closely by moderate activity (47%). The remaining observations were very active (18%). The number of children’s activity counts per hour (n = 105.1) was 75% more than the amount of adult’s activity counts (n = 14.9).

Adults The only activity level observed among adults at Swings with Wings was sedentary, comprising 100% of the observations (see Figure 6).



## Comparison

During the Lenox Park post-test, children were observed in very active behavior only (100%), while the majority of adults were observed being sedentary (87%). At Swings with Wings, children were observed in very active behavior only 18% of the time. When comparing adult observations at Lenox Park post-test to observations at Swings with Wings, behavior among adults is similar; the majority of adults were observed in sedentary behavior (100%).

### Types of Activities by Age

Data collectors recorded the types of activities observed over all 728 periods using specific activity codes (see Table 3).

#### *Lenox Park (pre/post)*

The activity code, walking, was observed in both children and adults in the pre-test. In addition to walking, children were observed participating in other activities, including playground games, while adults were observed participating in other activities not specifically captured.

Contrary to the pre-test, there was no activity code that was observed among both age groups during the post-test. Adults were observed participating in a wider variety of activities than children, including: basketball, no identifiable activity, none of the above, and walking. Children were observed participating in other playground games and in other activities not specifically captured.

#### *Swings with Wings*

Children and adults were not observed participating in any of the same activities at Swings with Wings. Children were solely observed participating in other playground games, while adults participated in activities not specifically captured.

**Table 3: Activity Codes for Observations**

Activity	Lenox Park Pre-Test		Lenox Park Post-Test		Swings with Wings	
	Children	Adults	Children	Adults	Children	Adults
<b>Basketball</b>	absent	absent	absent	present	absent	absent
<b>No identifiable activity</b>	absent	present	absent	present	absent	present
<b>None of the above</b>	absent	absent	absent	present	absent	present
<b>Other playground games</b>	present	absent	present	absent	present	absent
<b>Walking</b>	present	present	absent	present	absent	absent

## Comparison

The range of activity codes was greatest among adults. They were observed participating in four activities, including: basketball, walking, none of the above, and other activities not specifically captured.

## Key Takeaways

### Overall

- Children and adolescents were present during the observations, no adolescents were present.
- Children were engaged in sedentary (35%), moderate (31%), and very active (34%) behavior in nearly the same proportion across both parks.
- The majority of behavior observed among adults was sedentary (89%) across parks.

### Pre/Post Lenox Park

- Post-test results at Lenox Park indicate an increase (20%) in very active behavior among children and a decrease in sedentary and moderate activity levels.
- The number of activity counts increased by 55% from the pre- (n = 14.4) to post-test (n = 31.4) at Lenox Park.
- Walking was the only activity observed in both age groups during the Lenox Park pre-test. No similar activities were observed during the post-test.
- Adults participated in a wider variety of activities during the Lenox Park post-test.

### Swings with Wings

- Children comprised the majority (76%) of the observations at Swings with Wings.
- Over half (59%) of the activity levels among both children and adults at Swings with Wings were sedentary. Moderate and very active levels were observed similarly (26%) in both age groups.



