

Howdy Health Team-Based Physical Activity Programs Implementation Guide In – Person Program Events

Goal:

Plan special events that will get participants excited and active, media attention and result in signing up additional members

Best – Practice Activities:

- Select a special starting place or location for the event, like a local mall or business, famous bridge, a community center, park, worksite, school, or courthouse – you need a place that is easy to get to for most people and a place where a lot of people would be anyway, like a mall on Saturday
- Select a location that will allow people to start walking; the mileage walked for kick-off can be added to their first day mileage total
- Decide on the date and time:
 - o Kick-Off: can be on the start date or scheduled before if there is opportunity for media coverage to encourage more people wanting to sign up
 - o Mid-Way: mid-program is an ideal time to motivate and re-energize participants
 - o Celebration: participants have 10 days after the end date to submit final mileage, so if you are offering awards based on mileage, you should wait to host the event until after 10 days
- Other in-person events might include walking groups, activity / workout session, educational sessions, etc.
- Decide who will make contact to secure the event location
- Confirm whether you will need insurance, sanitation stations, portable toilets, permits or police escorts, if a street or highway is involved
- Identify specifically who will help with the event
- Plan for weather (hot, cold, rain, etc.) and alternate activity or date(s)
- Conduct a walk through either the day before or morning to discuss final event logistics and plans
- Plan to have a ‘registration station’ where people can sign up or obtain program information
- Have someone identified to take pictures and plan for a virtual alternative, if needed

Example Event Activities:

- Physical Activity demonstrations:
 - o Warm-up stretches
 - o First mile walk
 - o Any activity equivalent – Zumba, yoga, chair exercises, etc.
- Educational presentations
 - o Physical activity basics
 - o Pedestrian safety for walkers and runners
 - o Bicycle safety for those riding outside
 - o How to choose the right shoes or clothes
 - o Adequate hydration and sun safety
 - o Any other health related topic
- Program specific
 - o What is WAT! / WTTH?
 - o How to track and monitor mileage

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- Locally sponsored program activities – newsletters, communication, themes, t-shirts, challenges / incentives, prizes, and awards, etc.
- Door prizes and incentives
- Exhibits or vendors

In – Person Event Checklist:

- Registration
 - Clip boards with sign-in sheets
 - Pencils, pens
 - Laptop or Tablets
- Presentation
 - A/V System
 - Extension Cords
 - Laptop or Tablets
- Hosting
 - Money box, if needed
 - Change, if needed
 - Point of Sale product i.e., Square
 - Name tags – task force/committee and dignitaries
 - Event materials – pull-up banners, signage, etc.
 - AgriLife Extension tablecloth
 - Bottled water
 - Snacks
 - Tables
 - Camera
 - Internet connection or mobile hotspot, if available
- Program Materials
 - Proclamation, draft available
 - Script, draft available
 - T-shirts, if purchased
 - Prizes, awards, and incentives
 - Tickets and bowl for door prizes, if offered

Sample Event Agenda – Kick-Off Example

30 – 60 Minutes Prior to Start of the Event:

- Ensure that any A/V equipment is working and have fun music to play prior to and during the warmup, walking, cool down, etc. Often if you request a local fitness expert to support this event, they are willing to do this and bring their own music, etc.
- Welcoming task force / committee, dignitaries, volunteers, and participants
- Designate and clearly label in advance where/what the 1-mile walking path will be, if applicable
- If vendors/booths are being offered, ensure they are set up and ready
- If any refreshments are being offered, ensure they are set up and ready
- Have registration tables available for people to sign in at event and receive “door prize” tickets if any items are being awarded throughout the event

Start the Event:

Welcome

If you have any officials or special guests, they can make opening comments and welcome all participants. Local County Agents can also participate in the welcome. Acknowledge any committee/task force members and their organizations as well as any sponsors/donors. Thank everyone for attending the event.

Program Information - What Is Walk Across Texas! or Walk Through Texas History?

Walk Across Texas! Adult (WAT! Adult)

- Eight-week program
- 832-mile goal
- Mileage entry: individual / daily
- Each team member must register and join team
- Each team may have up to 8 team members

Walk Across Texas! Youth (WAT! Youth)

- Eight-week program
- 832-mile goal
- Mileage entry: team / weekly
- Can be coordinated by internal or external clientele
- Unlimited number of youths, adult, or mixed participants per team

Walk Through Texas History (WTTH)

- Four-week program
- Multiple routes (soon) – work as a team to log steps and virtually travel Texas historical routes
- Step entry: individual / daily
- Each team member must register and join team
- Each team may have up to 8 team members

Also, explain the supported methods for tracking and monitoring physical activity for the program. For example, we recognize three main sources of ‘mileage walked’:

1. A measured mile at a track, walking path, trail, treadmill, etc.
2. 2,250 steps measured on a pedometer / activity tracker
3. Activity Equivalents chart

Registration

Explain that all registration will be done through the Howdy Health website at <https://howdyhealth.org/programs/>

It is also recommended that you provide an opportunity for participants at the event to register. If possible, have iPad’s available to set up accounts and teams or to answer questions during the program. Also, be share with all participants when the last day to enter mileage and wrap up forms – 10 days after the program end date.

Prizes, Awards & Incentives

Explain any categories of prizes, awards, or other incentives that will be given during or at the end of the program. Local County Agents and/or the committee/task force should decide in advance what types of prizes, awards, or incentives will be provided in their county.

Below are just a few examples but be creative locally:

- Registration
- Entered 50,000 steps or 7.5 miles per week
- Entered 4 or more days per week
- Best week yet! – step or mileage increase
- Participant feedback – quotes, inspirational team member, brag about a team member, etc.
- Wrap Up Submission
- Individual or Team Mileage

- Most Creative Team Name

First Mile Walk

Explain to participants that to get everyone started on their program goals, everyone is going to walk their first mile together! If possible, try to have a local fitness or kinesiology expert/volunteer available to lead the group in a brief and fun warm-up. We encourage having fun music. Everyone then takes off to complete the first mile walk together. Upon returning from walk, have fitness expert/volunteer lead everyone in a cool down. Be sure to have water available in case people need to re-hydrate and that there are stops available on the route. You may need to have signage or people to help direct participants. For larger groups, we recommend having someone lead and be the 'caboose'.

Highlight Future Events, Activities, and Programs

If the host committee/task force is planning any additional events, activities, and programs be sure to share with participants so they can put on their calendars.

Door Prizes

Again, thank any sponsors for any prizes, incentives, or refreshments you may have available. Draw any tickets if you have door prizes available.

Closing

Remind attendees that if they would like help with registration or program information, they can find a task force member or local County Agent after the event. Thank everyone for coming out and participating- wish everyone the best of luck!

After the Event

- Ensure all A/V equipment is returned
- Ensure all booths/tables are cleared out
- Pick up any signs/flags etc. used to mark up the designated first mile walking path, if needed
- Send thank you notes to all committee/task force members and any sponsors/donors to the event
- Continue meeting regularly with committee/task force
- Send out regular communication to participants

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This information was adapted from a previous developed Walk Across Texas! Implementation Guide and resources provided by Flora Williams, Brazos County Extension Agent. Thank you to the Agents and Extension Staff who reviewed and added to the document during the March 2022 Howdy Health Team-Based Physical Activity Training.