LEAP

lifetime eating and physical activity practices

PROGRESS REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LIFETIME EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PRACTICES

Developing routine healthy eating and active living practices continues to challenge many communities across the United States.

In North Carolina, Greensboro and Guilford County are regularly recognized among cities and counties experiencing:

- **high rates of food insecurity**,

- **diet-related illness**, and

- **low rates of access to healthy food and physical activity**.

Lifetime Eating and Physical Activity Practices (LEAP) focuses on initiating **community-based conversations** around individual and social determinants of food and physical activity choices in Greensboro and Guilford County.

In partnership with UNC Greensboro, Cone Health, and the Guilford County Department of Health and Human Services, LEAP promotes collaboration among a broad range of community partners to **coordinate data and build networks** in order to improve eating and physical activity practices in our city and county.

This executive summary of the LEAP Progress Report outlines work conducted thus far, as well as key priorities and recommendations.

PROCESS

Starting in January 2017, LEAP initiated a process to engage community partners in **identifying and integrating community-level data** around healthy eating and physical activity practices in Greensboro and Guilford County.

With strategic funding through a UNC Greensboro seed grant, LEAP members established multiple points of contact with community members, city and county agencies, health professionals, and researchers.

LEAP worked to create the following community-based networks:

Community Advisory Committee (CAC)
A broad spectrum of individuals and organizations committed to advising the general scope and direction of LEAP efforts.
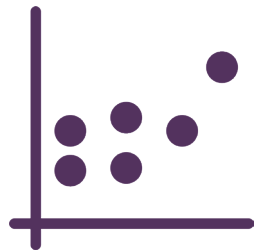
Data Advisory Committee (DAC)
An intentionally-recruited set of researchers and organizational representatives committed to working with data. DAC members worked to identify and integrate existing data and developed recommendations for collecting community-level data.

Community Action Networks (CANs)
Groups of individuals and organizations committed to translating community-level data into improved healthy eating and physical activity practices. CAN members worked around specific focus areas including early childhood and birth moms and K-12 education opportunities.

Between May 2017 and May 2018, LEAP organizers engaged these groups in a series of meetings to **prioritize community-level data needs**. The work culminated in a summit, which served to confirm consensus on six health-data priorities.

OUTCOMES AND LEAP DATA PRIORITIES

As an extension of the work from our community partners, LEAP has identified the following **six priority areas for community-level data** on healthy eating and physical activity practices:

Eating Practices

Individual and family-level data regarding regular and routine eating behaviors. Data includes what (choices, types), how much (quantity), how often (frequency), and why people in Guilford County eat and drink.

Physical Activity Practices

Individual and family-level data regarding regular and routine physical activity behaviors. Data includes how (activity type), how much (activity intensity and duration), how often (frequency), and why people in Guilford County move.

Barriers to Healthy Eating and Physical Activity

Individual, community, and social-level data regarding what prevents people in Guilford County from engaging in healthy eating and physical activity practices. Data includes access to neighborhood resources, knowledge of available resources, and social determinants of health.

Food and Physical Activity In/Security

Community and social level data regarding the availability and affordability of local resources. Data includes food insecurity and food hardship rates as well as transportation access and social support networks.

Food and Physical Literacy

Individual and community-level data that focuses on knowledge and skills for practicing healthy eating and physical activity habits. Data includes knowledge and ability to translate healthy eating and physical activity advice into everyday practices.

Self-Efficacy

Individual and family-level data that focuses on the confidence and capacity that people in Guilford County have to change their practices.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

From the iterative process involving our broad range of partners, LEAP created a set of recommendations and next steps. These recommendations and next steps focus on establishing regular and routine systems to collect data and translate results into healthy eating and active living resources for Greensboro and Guilford County. Some of the key recommendations and next steps include:

Focus on data gaps.

Partners identified key gaps in data regarding the *sources* of food and physical activity for people living in Greensboro and Guilford County. In other words, where do people actually purchase food and engage in physical activity? A key priority is to begin filling those gaps with local data and stories.

Develop a community board.

Although LEAP engaged a broad range of stakeholders, partners recognized a need to develop a more formalized structure to ensure community participation and leadership. We recommend establishing a Community Board to advise LEAP, advocate for local priorities, and initiate and secure points of contact from multiple constituencies across Greensboro and Guilford County.
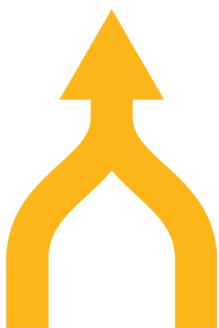
Address both individual behaviors *and* social determinants of health.

Many health efforts prioritize *either* individual behaviors or social determinants of health, but participants across LEAP meetings noted how communities and agencies need an understanding of *both* how individuals make changes *and* how their choices are often constrained by larger factors.