



Goal 2:

Promote proper nutrition and healthy body weight for all people in Ramsey County.

Nutrition, Weight and Active Living

Building on Past Successes Related to Nutrition, Weight and Active Living

In Ramsey County, about 1 out of 4 adults is obese, which is a high risk factor for many life-threatening diseases. It will take changes to policy, systems, environments and individual behavior to impact this issue.

How do we decrease the percentage of Ramsey County youth and adults who are overweight or obese? How can people of all ages make informed choices about fruits and vegetables and moderate physical activity? How do we take into account the social and physical determinants of diet and physical activity?

In Minnesota, 36.8 percent of adults were overweight and 25.7 percent were obese in 2011. In Ramsey County in 2010, almost 1 out of 4 adults was obese.

Eating a balanced diet is one of the most important things people can do to maintain and improve their overall health and well-being. Poor eating habits that result in too many calories and not enough nutrients increase the risk for obesity, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, tooth decay, and some cancers.

Lack of physical activity, combined with a poor diet, is the second leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United States and a huge economic burden on the state and county. According to the Minnesota Department of Health, physical activity can prevent many diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, some cancers and obesity, improve moods and help prevent depression and anxiety, and help people feel better, look better, and feel younger, too.

As the health department serving one of the largest and most diverse populations in Minnesota, Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health (SRPCPH) has been working on policy, system and environmental changes to promote healthy eating and physical activity for most of the past decade. Much of this work has been done as part of the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP), which focuses on sustainable changes that support individual choices about health.

Since its inception, the SHIP work has been done in partnership with Ramsey County community leaders and other counties who have a commitment to making the healthy choice the easy choice. This goal area will integrate with and amplify SHIP work for a sustained focus on cross-sector community partnerships on healthy eating and active living.

To help make changes that last, community solutions in this area will consider the social determinants of diet, including:

- Knowledge and attitudes
- Social support
- Societal and cultural norms
- Food and agricultural policies
- Food assistance programs
- Economic price systems

Strategies in this goal area will address both healthy eating and active living and take into consideration key data relevant to diverse adult and youth populations across Ramsey County.

Why This Is A Priority Issue

Some key data points from the Ramsey County Community Health Assessment illustrate why “nutrition, weight and active living” is a priority issue in Ramsey County.

- Fifty-seven percent of Saint Paul residents and 32 percent of suburban residents are “inactive.”
- In the metro area, Ramsey County has the lowest percentage of residents responding that their neighborhood was a very pleasant place to walk.
- Only one fifth of Ramsey County 6th, 9th and 12th graders report consuming the recommended five servings of fruits and vegetables per day.
- Currently, American adults and youth consume an average of 400 calories per day from beverages alone.

What We Will Do About It

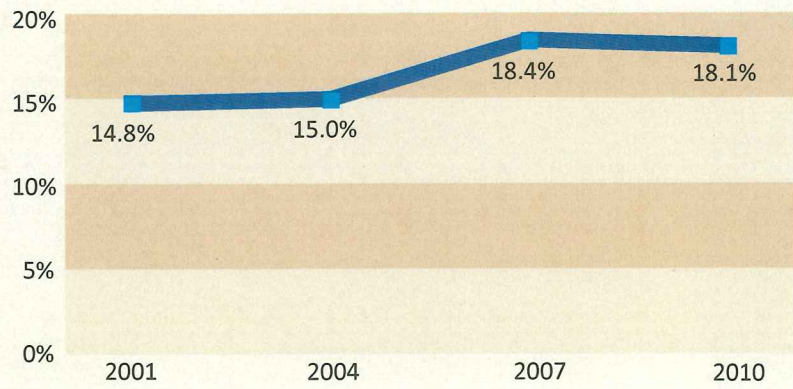
Objective 1. Increase the percentage of Ramsey County 9th graders who eat five or more fruits and vegetables per day from 18 percent to 23 percent by December 2018.

Strategies

- a. Include “MyPlate.Gov” curriculum as a teaching tool in schools so that students will be able to make healthy nutrition choices.
- b. Use media platforms to promote healthy eating (e.g., Public TV, Facebook, Twitter, an “Ask the Expert” interactive website).

Percentage of 9th graders who ate 5+ servings of fruits or vegetables yesterday, Ramsey County

Source: Minnesota Student Survey



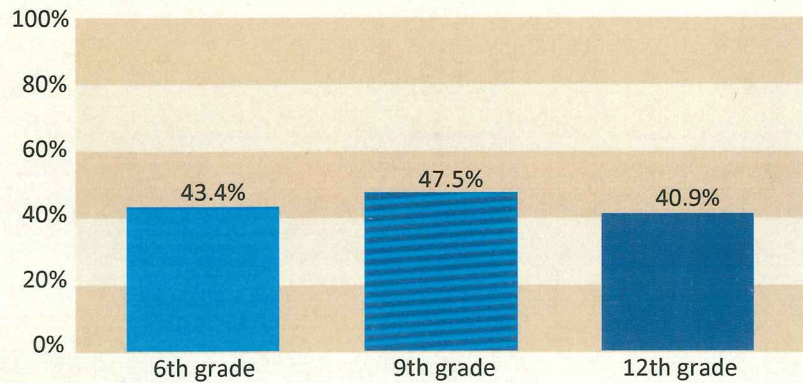
Objective 2. Increase the percentage of Ramsey County 9th graders who get moderate physical activity for 20+ minutes for 5+ days per week from 48 percent to 53 percent by December 2018.

Strategies

- a. Include “MyPlate.Gov” curriculum as a teaching tool in schools so that students will be able to make healthy physical activity choices.
- b. Use media platforms to promote physical activity (e.g., Public TV, Facebook, Twitter, an “Ask the Expert” interactive website).

Students reporting 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on 5+ days in previous week, Ramsey County, 2010

Source: Minnesota Student Survey



Objective 3. Decrease the percentage of Ramsey County 9th graders who are overweight or obese from 25 percent to 20 percent by December 2018.

Strategies

- a. Include “MyPlate.Gov” curriculum as a teaching tool in schools so that students will be able to make good choices to achieve healthy diet and optimal weight.
- b. Collaborate with health care providers to utilize their health data to establish accurate levels of obesity among youth.
- c. Use media platforms to promote healthy diet and optimal body weight (e.g., Public TV, Facebook, Twitter, an “Ask the Expert” interactive website).

Objective 4. Increase the percentage of Ramsey County adults who eat five or more fruits and vegetables per day from 39 percent to 44 percent by December 2018.

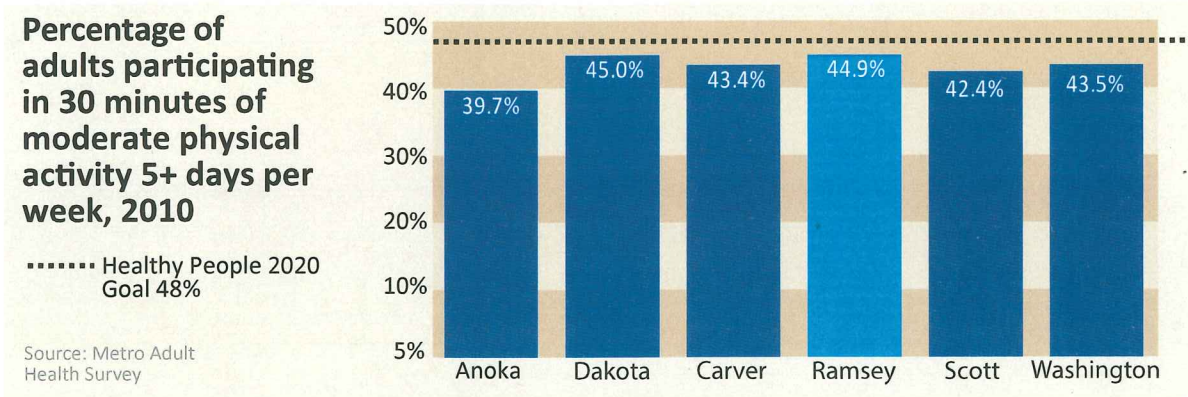
Strategies

- a. Work with cooks/chefs in senior housing to promote good nutrition.
- b. Use media platforms to promote healthy eating (e.g., Public TV, Facebook, Twitter, an “Ask the Expert” interactive website).

Objective 5. Increase the percentage of Ramsey County adults who get moderate physical activity for 30+ minutes for 5+ days per week from 45 percent to 50 percent by December 2018.

Strategies

- a. Use media platforms to promote physical activity (e.g., Public TV, Facebook, Twitter, an “Ask the Expert” interactive website.)



Objective 6. Decrease the percentage of Ramsey County adults who are overweight or obese from 60 percent to 55 percent by December 2018.

Strategies

- a. Use media platforms to promote healthy diet and optimal body weight (e.g., Public TV, Facebook, Twitter, and “Ask the Expert” interactive website).
- b. Collaborate with health care providers to utilize their health data to establish accurate levels of adult obesity at the community level.

