

# A participatory regional partnership approach to promote nutrition and physical activity in rural Missouri through environmental and policy change

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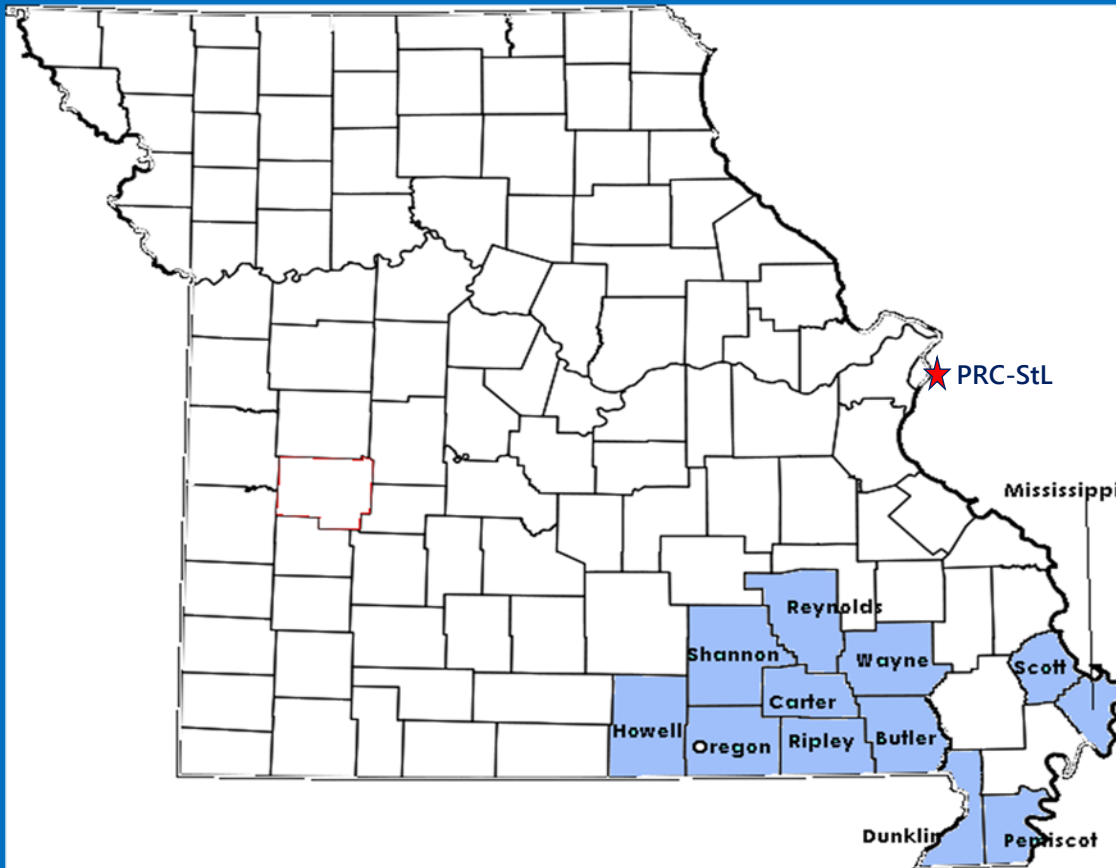
**PREVENTION RESEARCH CENTER** *in St. Louis*  
*Promoting Healthy Communities*

Healthier   
Communities

# History of the Prevention Research Center in St. Louis

- Chronic diseases account for most premature deaths
- Increase dissemination of evidence based interventions
- Academic and community partners
- Implement environmental and policy changes

# PRC-StL Partnership Counties in Southern Missouri



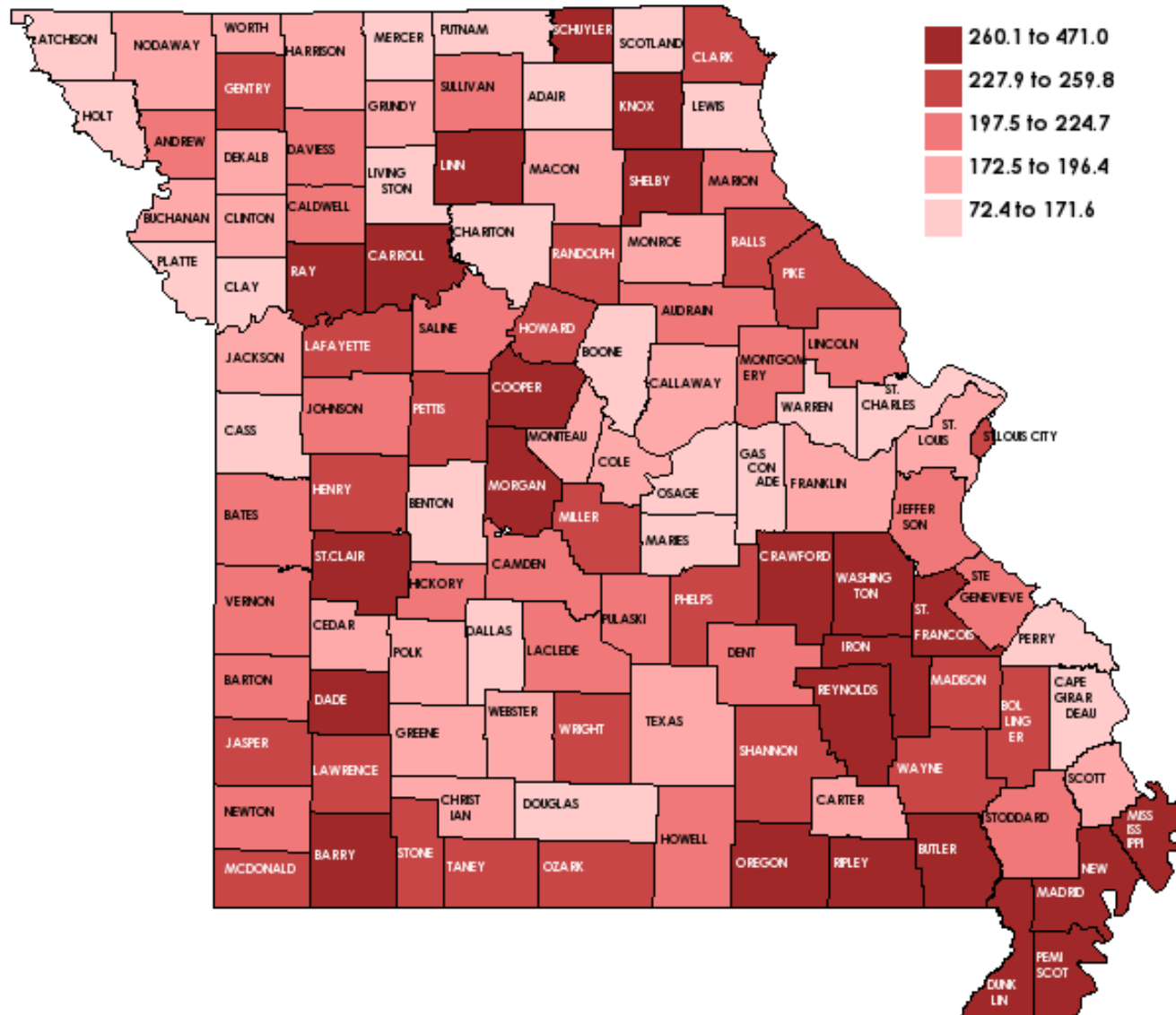
County	Population size
Butler	43,083
Carter	6,291
Dunklin	31,712
Howell	40,393
Mississippi	14,282
Oregon	10,996
Pemiscot	17,823
Reynolds	6,599
Ripley	14,032
Scott	39,290
Shannon	8,297
Wayne	13,404

# Chronic Disease - Deaths: Residents of Missouri

Year=2013

Cause of Death: Heart disease

☐ Quintile Map



Rates are per 100,000

Age adjustment uses year 2000 standard population

@ Rate considered unstable, numerator less than 20

# Key informant interviews: lessons learned

- Size of rural populations
- Human capital
- Broad-based partnership to leverage regional resources to improve policy and environmental changes

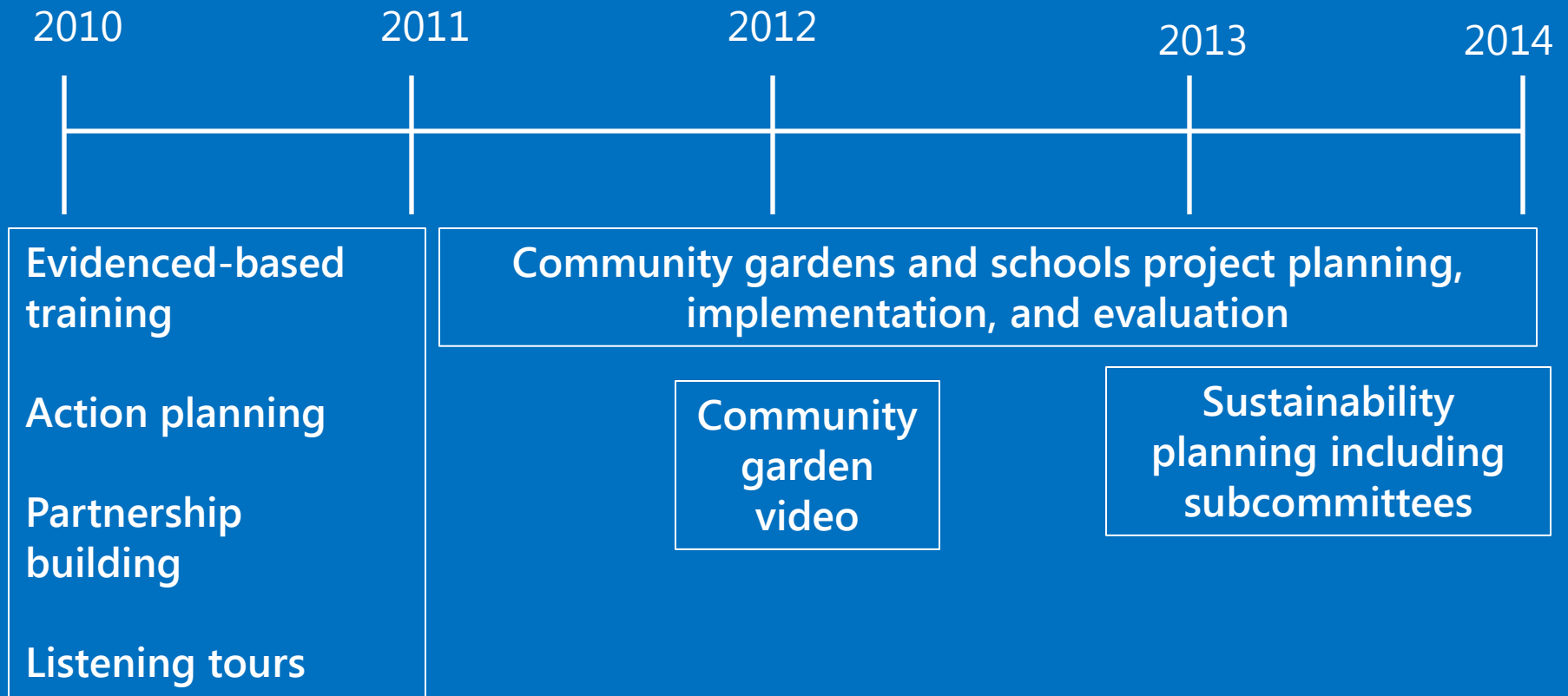
# Healthier Missouri Communities

Programmatic objective : Implement environmental and policy interventions to promote physical activity and healthy eating across southeast Missouri.

Partnership objective: Develop a regional partnership with representation from the 12 counties to design, implement, and evaluate interventions to promote these behaviors.



# Healthier MO Timeline



# Partnership Methods

- **Evidence-Based Training**

- Community members participated in evidence-based decision-training
  - Focused on evidence-based public health and CBPR
- Academic partners engaged community partners to assess feasibility and importance of interventions

- **Partnership Building**

- Introduced regional approach
- Partners engaged in the design, implementation and evaluation of intervention



# Partnership Methods

- **Action Planning and Implementation**
  - Community gardens and school-wellness identified as foci
  - Partnership principles identified
  - Listening tours
  - Subcommittees
    - Gardens
    - Schools

## Healthier MO Partnership Principles

### 1. Develop and maintain trust

- Be accountable (say what you're going to do and do what you say).
- Be honest, open, and respectful. If you state something as a fact, be sure it is a fact.
- Stick to the agenda.
- Make sure you have clear communication – be careful with emails (things can get lost or misinterpreted in emails).
- Get feedback from other perspectives.
- Assume good intentions of our partners (don't assume negatives).

### 2. Provide shared leadership

- Facilitator guides group and helps to pull out ideas and keeps group focused.
- Participants give ideas.
- To be a member you must have passion for project.
- There are multiple people at community level.
- The leadership/facilitators need to have passion for project.
- We need to have knowledge of each members' strengths and play off those strengths.
- We need long term relationships.
- We need opportunities for community members to play role of facilitator.

### 3. Develop processes for shared power and influence

- Everyone needs the power to speak and share their experiences with the group – face to face is best.
- Everybody feels welcome and all perspectives, although may be different, are welcome.
- Does not always have to be the same people – maybe a co-chair from a Health Health Coalition or a Community Garden rep.
- If new people rotate into meetings, people should be informed, welcomed and feel part of the process.
- Note taking and distribution of notes is important.
- Need vision and mission written down.

# Community Gardens

- Garden Resources
- Garden Training
- Regional funding approaches



# Community Gardens: Key Lessons

- **Individual**
  - Enhanced knowledge and skills
- **Interpersonal**
  - Energizing for “struggling local efforts” and an opportunity to learn from diverse members
- **Community level**
  - Logistics of sharing physical resources
  - Evaluation of community gardens
- **Contextual factors**
  - Differences by community and region in terms of what works

# School Wellness

Environment or policy change in a school or classroom that incorporated physical activity



Environment or policy change in a school district that incorporated physical activity



High School After-School Activity Club



Elementary School Brain Breaks



Elementary School Learning Lab

**Poplar Bluff Walking Trails**  
Newly added to four Elementary Schools:  
Lake Road, Eugene Field, Oak Grove, O'Neal

Open to the public on nights and weekends!!!

**POPLAR BLUFF PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Walking trails are being installed to encourage increased physical activity throughout the school day.

Let's continue to do our part in lowering childhood obesity in Missouri.

Brisk walking for 30 minutes a day can:

- Lower your risk for Diabetes and Heart Disease
- Relieve stress
- Be a fun activity for the family

For more information contact:

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Or talk with your school principal

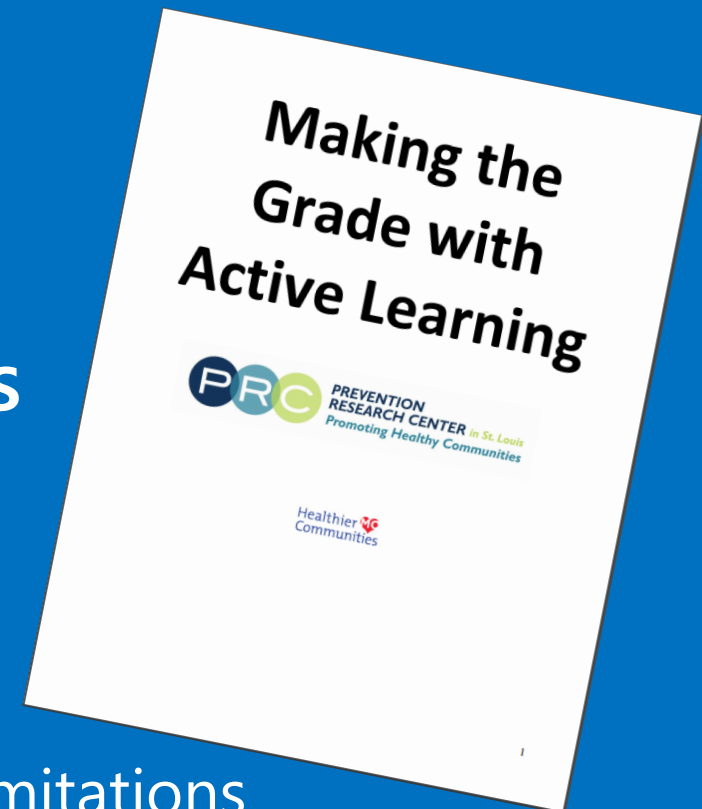
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Healthier Missouri Communities (representatives from Butler County Health Department, Missouri Extension, Howell County School District, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, and Butler County Community Resource Council), Prevention Research Center in StL, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta



Playground equipment  
Tracks at all elementary schools

# School Wellness: Key Lessons

- **Individual level**
  - Gauge teacher interest
  - Provide knowledge and skills for successful implementation
- **School level**
  - Develop peer support
  - Identify mission of the institution
- **Intervention Characteristics**
  - Give it time to work
  - Allow adaptations
- **Contextual factors**
  - Revisit policy opportunities and limitations





# Regional Partnership: Key Benefits

- Building relationships and a network
- Sharing commitment - travel and time
- Sharing best practices
- Disseminating information beyond the partnership
- Attracting regional partners moving forward



# Regional Partnership: Key Challenges

- Sharing information with local community
- Continuing commitment of time, travel, and engagement (e.g., data collection)
- Investing the time needed for collective decision making and building relationships

# Regional Partnership: Sustainability

- **Funding**
  - Reimbursement for mileage
  - Identifying, writing, and managing regional grants or other funding sources
  - Competing organizational priorities
- **Sharing resources**
  - Information as valuable as money



# Regional Partnership: Sustainability

- **Leadership and staffing**
  - Person to lead and facilitate
  - Limitation of organizations on time
- **Member engagement**
  - Keeping members engaged despite the distance and lack of funding
  - Getting members to do work
  - Foundation for working together is strong

# Regional Partnership: Sustainability

- **Process and structure**
  - Communication – when and how
  - Defining roles
  - Decision-making
  - Agenda setting
- **Social ties**
  - Funding or not people like coming because they like the people
  - Face to face meetings are important to build relationships

# Impact of the partnership

- **Gardens**

- Improved and increased community gardens
- Increased access and knowledge of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Participants reported eating more fruits and vegetables

- **Schools**

- Installed walking tracks and play equipment
- Decreased student sedentary behavior and increased vigorous behavior
- Increased student focus and engagement and decreased classroom behavioral problems

# Acknowledgements

## PRC-StL Team

Amy Estlund  
Pamela Hipp  
Freda Motton  
Linda Dix  
Ross Brownson  
Beth Baker  
Imogene Wiggs

## Regional Team

Partners from Butler,  
Carter, Dunklin, Howell,  
Mississippi, Oregon,  
Pemiscot, Scott,  
Shannon, Reynolds,  
Ripley and Wayne

This research was supported by Cooperative Agreement Number U48/DP001903 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Prevention Research Centers Program.