

## **Henderson County receives Eat Smart Move More grant to help citizens eat healthy and be active**

Press Release

September 21, 2007

Henderson County is receiving a state *Eat Smart, Move More...NC* grant to fund local healthy eating and physical activity projects.

The Henderson County Department of Public Health has received a grant to support schools as a place where adults model healthy behaviors for children. To encourage healthy behaviors, on-site fitness classes, health screenings and wellness education classes will be held for school employees. These activities will be implemented through collaboration between the Health Department, Henderson County Public Schools, YMCA, Partnership for Health, Henderson County Cooperative Extension Service, Park Ridge Hospital, and Pardee Hospital.

The first session of fitness classes taught by YMCA instructors, will begin at Atkinson Elementary this fall. Activities will continue throughout the school year with walking challenges and various education sessions. In the spring, on-site classes will begin at Hendersonville Middle School. These on-site, after-school sessions will improve access to physical activity for school employees. Research has found that people will become more physically active when there is improved access to physical activity combined with health behavior education sessions and information.

Twenty-one projects across the state are being funded by \$320,000 in special grants from the N.C. Division of Public Health. The money is in support of the statewide *Eat Smart, Move More...NC* initiative and aids local health departments in their efforts to create communities where healthy eating and physical activity are the norm, rather than the exception.

North Carolina was recently ranked as 17<sup>th</sup> in the nation in adult obesity in a national report. More alarming is the state's ranking of 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation in overweight adolescents. The percentage of children and adults who are overweight or obese rises each year and despite advances in medicine, the current generation of children may be the first to live shorter lives than their parents.

The competitive Eat Smart, Move More Community Grant program is combating this problem by providing support to local health departments and their community partners for developing policy and environmental changes in their communities that make it easier for North Carolinians to become more physically active, make healthier food choices, and achieve a healthy weight.

All the funded projects are described on the *Eat Smart, Move More...NC* Web site at [www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com](http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com).

For more information on Henderson County's project, contact Linda Charping, Health Education Director at (828) 694-6063, or [charping@hendersoncountync.org](mailto:charping@hendersoncountync.org).