

HEALTHY PLACES HEALTHY PEOPLE TOOLKIT

A RESOURCE FOR
THE NAVAJO NATION



Developed in Collaboration With:



<https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/departments/pediatrics/divisions/pps/programs/viva/hphp/>

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Albuquerque, NM



FOREWORD:

Jennifer Denetdale, Ph.d.

“Places have long served as durable symbols of distant events and as indispensable aids for remembering and imagining them.” - Jennifer Denetdale, Reclaiming Diné History, 164

My parents would take us on an impromptu picnic near a canyon where hills beckoned us with their sandy slopes. While mom prepared lunch, we slid on the sand. As teen, although not a steady past time, I learned how to herd sheep. My parents kept sheep and after he retired, dad herded our few sheep full time. He walked to our place in Tohatchi as he followed the sheep and goats. Walking was essential to Diné life.

Walking, then, is time to reflect on the past. Walking inspires and renews a relationship with the natural world. Walking reminds us to be in communication with our bodies and to remember the beings that inhabit our world--plants, animals, trees.

It is a tremendous feat that Eastern Agency communities have endeavored to create walking trails in our own home places. Trails in our own communities encourage us to meet and share, to make these places where we want to be. Creating trails encourages collaboration as a form of community building. Trails are an investment in our future as Diné. Walking is and always has been a staple of Diné life. Congratulations to Eastern Agency communities for creating trails so we remind ourselves that we Walk in Beauty.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND

1.1 Healthy Places– Healthy People	2.
1.2 What communities were involved in the Healthy Places– Healthy People Project.	3.
1.3 Obtaining Chapter Resolutions and approval from the Navajo Nation.....	5.

SECTION 2: WHY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

2.1 What are the benefits of physical activity?	6.
2.2 How much physical activity is recommended?	6.
2.3 Why walk?	7.

SECTION 3: SO, YOU WANT TO BUILD A NEW TRAIL IN YOUR CHAPTER?

4.1 Building a new trail	9.
4.2 Lessons learned from a trail project in Eastern Agency	10.
4.2.a Lessons Learned: Policy	11.
4.2.b Special considerations	13.

SECTION 4: COALITION BUILDING

3.1 What is a coalition?	14.
3.2 How do you build a coalition?	16.
3.3 Including community health representatives in your coalition	17.
3.4 Identifying and utilizing community champions to advance your work	18.

SECTION 5:

HOW TO ACHIEVE A NEW TRAIL AND IMPROVE EXISTING TRAILS IN YOUR CHAPTER

5.1	What is a needs assessment	19.
5.2	How pedestrian friendly is your community?	19.
5.3	Mapping Workshop	20.
5.4	Walkability Workshop	20.
5.4.a	What materials are needed for a walkability workshop?	21.
5.4.b	Steps of a walkability workshop	22.
5.5	Lessons learned from Healthy Places- Healthy People mapping and walkability..	23.

SECTION 6:

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PROMOTING YOUR TRAIL

6.1	The Community Guide: Community Preventative Services Task Force	25.
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SECTION 7:

ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS

7.1	Networking	26.
7.2	Networking events	27.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	29.
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Counselor Trail

WHAT IS A TOOLKIT?

This Toolkit for active living in Navajo communities is the result of collaboration with tribal partners, funders, and community members to carefully document and evaluate Healthy Places— Healthy People. The Healthy Places— Healthy People team is pleased to share the lessons learned, resources, frequently asked questions, locally developed strategies, and other useful information for increasing physical activity in Navajo communities.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND

The University of New Mexico's Prevention Research Center (UNM PRC) developed an evidence-based program to increase physical activity in rural communities in NM. Starting in the small, rural town of Cuba, NM, the program was expanded to other rural communities. Given the success of the program, the PRC was invited to partner with 10 Navajo Chapters (communities) in the Eastern Agency of the Navajo Nation, with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Together, they engaged in a project called Healthy Places— Healthy People (2019-2024).

Healthy Places—Healthy People

The goals of Healthy Places— Healthy People is to promote and increase physical activity by recognizing the importance of place, values, and traditions related to land in Navajo culture. The goal is to identify existing or create new safe, meaningful, and accessible places to be active—such as community trails - and to promote physical activity among community members.

Navajo Action Communities

Tribal resolutions were received from 10 Navajo Chapters that were interested in working with the Prevention Research Center on Healthy Places— Healthy People. Each of these communities has been identified as a Navajo Action Community. These action communities were asked to set up or build on an existing coalition where community leaders and members identify the needs and goals around increasing access and enhancing places to be physically active.

The Prevention Research Center partnered with each Navajo Action Community to identify places to be active, assess the walkability of the community, share strategies that have been successful in other rural communities, and identify resources for local trail building. As a hub of the Eastern Navajo Agency, Crownpoint is an important community for Healthy Places— Healthy People. The Prevention Research Center worked with existing programs in Crownpoint, including: Just Move It (Eli Big Thumb, Coordinator), the Navajo Technical University Project (Daniel Vandever, Volunteer), and Diné College Public Health Program (Mark Bauer, Faculty).

“There is a high prevalence of diabetes and heart risk. Increase and improve physical fitness in the community. One area to focus on is health improvement. The chapter wants physical activity.”

-Community Member



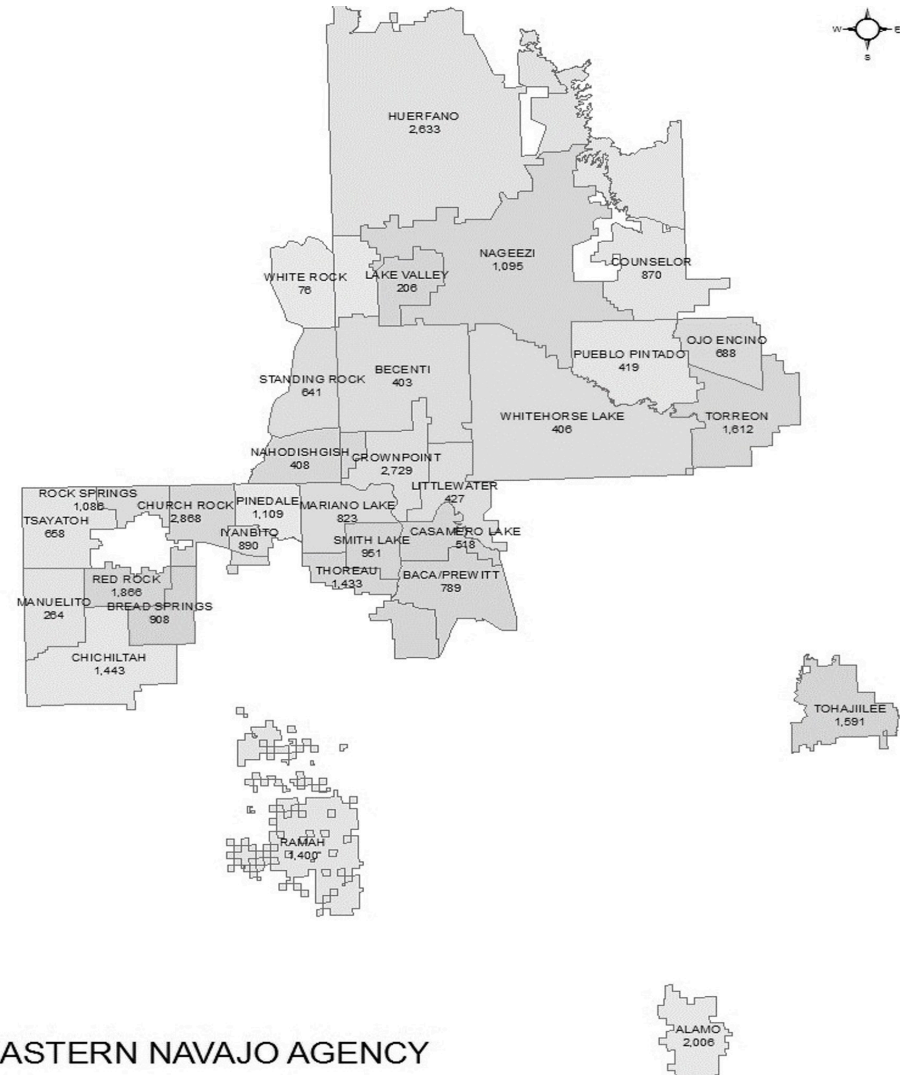
Torreón Trail

WHAT COMMUNITIES WERE INVOLVED IN THE HEALTHY PLACES - HEALTHY PEOPLE PROJECT?

Healthy Places— Healthy People worked with ten action communities. The map below shows the 31 Chapters making up the Eastern Navajo Agency. The Healthy Places— Healthy People project worked with 10 of the 31 Chapters.

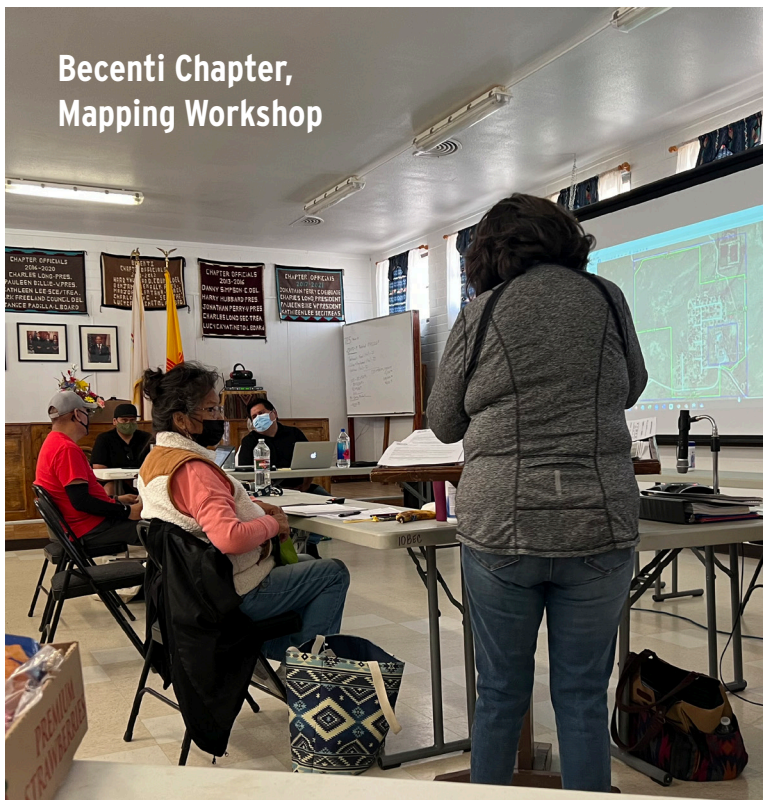
10 Navajo Action Communities

- Kinligaii (Baca/Prewitt): 789 residents
- Tl'óo'ditsin or Jádí hádít'iih (Becenti): 403 residents
- Bilagáannasnééz (Counselor): 870 residents
- T'iis ts'óóz nídeeshgiizh (Crownpoint): 2,729 residents
- Dzil ná'oodilii (Huerfano): 2,633 residents
- Naayízí (Nageezi): 1,095 residents
- Tséch'łzhl bii'tó (Ojo Encino): 688 residents
- Tse'ii'ahi ' (Standing Rock): 641 residents
- To'hajiilee: 1,591 residents
- Na'neelzhiin (Torreon/Star Lake): 1,612 residents



“Wake up early in the morning and run to the east. Currently, no facility to resort to do any type of exercise. CLUPC group needs some help and guidance to start developing a plan. It would be easier to tackle this project if it is a team approach.”

-Community Member



OBTAINING CHAPTER RESOLUTIONS AND APPROVAL FROM THE NAVAJO NATION

Individual Chapters issued resolutions supporting the Healthy Places— Healthy People program to be implemented within their communities, throughout the summer of 2018. For these resolutions to be gained, Healthy Places— Healthy People team members needed to attend Chapter meetings, and eventually request time to present the program to Chapter leaders and community members. The process takes persistence, as the Chapter meetings have strict schedules. It is important to follow up with Chapter leaders and make sure they have access to all pertinent information about the program.

Upon gaining support from the Chapters interested in the program, the Eastern Navajo Agency Council issued a resolution to approve the Healthy Places— Healthy People program to be implemented within Eastern Navajo Chapter communities in the Eastern Agency. This resolution was certified in June of 2018 (See appendix for resolution).

These documents and resolutions must be drafted and obtained to implement a program such as Healthy Places— Healthy People in Navajo Chapters:

- Drafting and sending out **Introductory Letters** explaining the program and inviting chapters to take part in the program.
- Chapter/Community support with a written **Resolution** from each chapter that is interested in participating in the program.
- A **Resolution** from the Navajo Nation supporting the program to take place in Navajo Chapters.
- **Approval** from the Navajo Nation Human Research Review Board.

SECTION 2:

WHY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

What are the benefits of physical activity?

Regular physical activity is associated with numerous physical, mental, and social health benefits:

- Lower risk of diseases such as cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, and type 2 diabetes
- Lower risk for many types of cancers
- Improved physical function
- Lower risk of falls and fall-related injuries (older adults)
- Slowed or reduced weight gain
- Reduced anxiety and risk of depression
- Improved sleep
- Improved quality of life
- Improved cognition (such as attention and memory)
- And more!

How much physical activity is recommended?

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend the following:

- For adults: 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity per week for substantial health benefits. However, any amount of physical activity is associated with some health benefits.
- For children and adolescents (6-17): at least an hour of physical activity a day.





“People motivate you to walk a distance.”

-Community Member

Light-intensity activity:
walking at a slow pace or
doing light household chores.

Moderate-intensity activity:
anything that gets your heart
beating faster; able to talk, but
not sing during the activity.

Vigorous-intensity activity:
unable to say more than a
few words without needing to
pause for a breath.

WHY WALK?

Walking is something that almost everyone can do no matter where they live. Walking can be done safely by people with different physical abilities and conditions. Walking is free and doesn't require any special equipment. The purpose of Healthy Places— Healthy People is to increase physical activity in rural communities by creating and improving safe places to walk and/or run.

Light-Intensity Activity

- Walking is a form of light or moderate-intensity physical activity.
- Light-intensity activity equals to walking at a slow pace (2mph or less) or doing light household chores.

Moderate-Intensity Activity

- Moderate-intensity activity equals to walking briskly (2.5 mph or more) or doing activities such as tennis or yard work, like raking. Physical activity can be achieved in many ways including gardening, yard work, sheepherding, cattle work, chopping wood, cleaning/house chores, and any form of work that has you moving your body for an extended period.
- If you can walk for 30 minutes a day, five days a week, you can easily get the recommended amount of 150 minutes of physical activity per week. The walking does not have to be all at once either.
- You can spread your walks throughout the day and mix up the activities you do. For example, you could go for a quick 5-10-minute walk, then do some household chores or yard work.
- You can get essential life tasks done while staying physically active. Walking is an easy and accessible way for individuals to get the recommended amount of exercise per week while reaping the benefits of physical activity.



SECTION 3:

SO, YOU WANT TO BUILD A NEW TRAIL IN YOUR CHAPTER?

Creating a walking trail in your local Chapter is a great way to increase access to physical activity within your community. The Community Preventive Services Taskforce's *Community Guide* states that—based on strong evidence—creating or improving places to be physically active increases physical activity and improves physical fitness. Not only is walking beneficial for your physical health, it is a way for one to connect with land and nature. The land that surrounds you offers physical and mental health benefits, but it must be utilized and maintained in order to reap those benefits.

Creating or improving a trail in your community can support the overall health of your community while harboring a vital connection to the land that surrounds you.

“The community needs a trail system, a playground where a family can gather. It will be a safe environment for the community.”

-Community Member

<https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/physical-activity-creation-or-enhanced-access-places-physical-activity-combined.html>

BUILDING A NEW TRAIL

Before seeking to create a new trail (walking, biking, etc.) it is important to gain the appropriate and necessary clearances from the pertinent agencies within your Chapter. If you are wanting to create a trail on land that has yet to be developed by the Navajo Nation, you will need a biological clearance with the Navajo Department of Fish and Wildlife, an archaeological clearance with the Historic Preservation Department, and a water quality assessment and consultation with the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency. A checklist for development is listed below as detailed by the General Land Development Department.

GENERAL LAND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
P.O. BOX 69 • ST. MICHAELS, AZ 86511 PHONE: (928) 871-6490 • WWW.GLDD.ORG

**Land Withdrawal Designation:
Checklist for Community and Industrial Development**

Applicant: _____

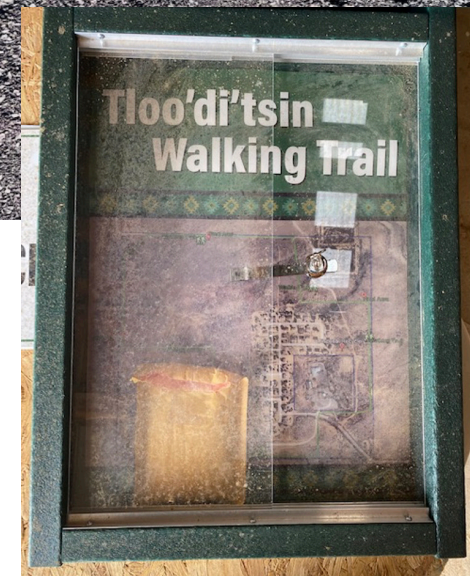
Email Address: _____

Phone: _____

- ☐ **Cover Letter/ Scope of Work**
- Provide the name of the project and define the intent of your proposal
 - Include the total acreage on Tribal Trust and Fee lands
 - Include the construction schedule and where the current term stands (new, renewal, expired, amendment, etc.)
 - Assign who will be responsible for construction, operation, maintenance, upgrade to infrastructure and/or utilities
 - If applicable, include funding sources
- ☐ **GPS Coordinates or Legal Survey**
- Provide the coordinates of each corner and the total acreage of the withdrawn area
 - A legal land survey with the legal description stamped by a Register Land Surveyor
 - For each section indicate the affected acreage
 - Convey ingress and egress of access road(s)
- ☐ **Supporting Chapter Resolution**
- Resolution in support, not approval, of the proposed undertaking from all respective chapters that the project will be constructed in
 - The Chapter Resolution must include legal language that specify the development as either community or industrial. This is required by the Land Withdrawal Designation Regulations. The legal language is found in RDCJN-33-15 Section 7(b)
- ☐ **Grazing Permittee Consent**
- A Field Clearance Checklist listing all grazing permit holders is required. All sections of the Checklist must be filled out to be sufficient
 - Use the Consent Form to gather consent from valid grazing permit holders, the form must be signed by the respective Grazing Official. If there are no valid grazing permittees a signed Consent Form from the Grazing Official is still required

****Submitting the four (4) requirements above will allow you to reserve the area for five (5) years until the environmental documents are provided. The BRCF and CRCF must be submitted to complete the entire land withdrawal process. You may NOT construct, operate and/or maintain during this time period****

Navajo Nation Environmental Compliance Form
(BRCF) from the Navajo Nation Department of Fish &



Baca Prewitt Chapter House Trail and Becenti Signage.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM A SUCCESSFUL TRAIL PROJECT IN EASTERN AGENCY

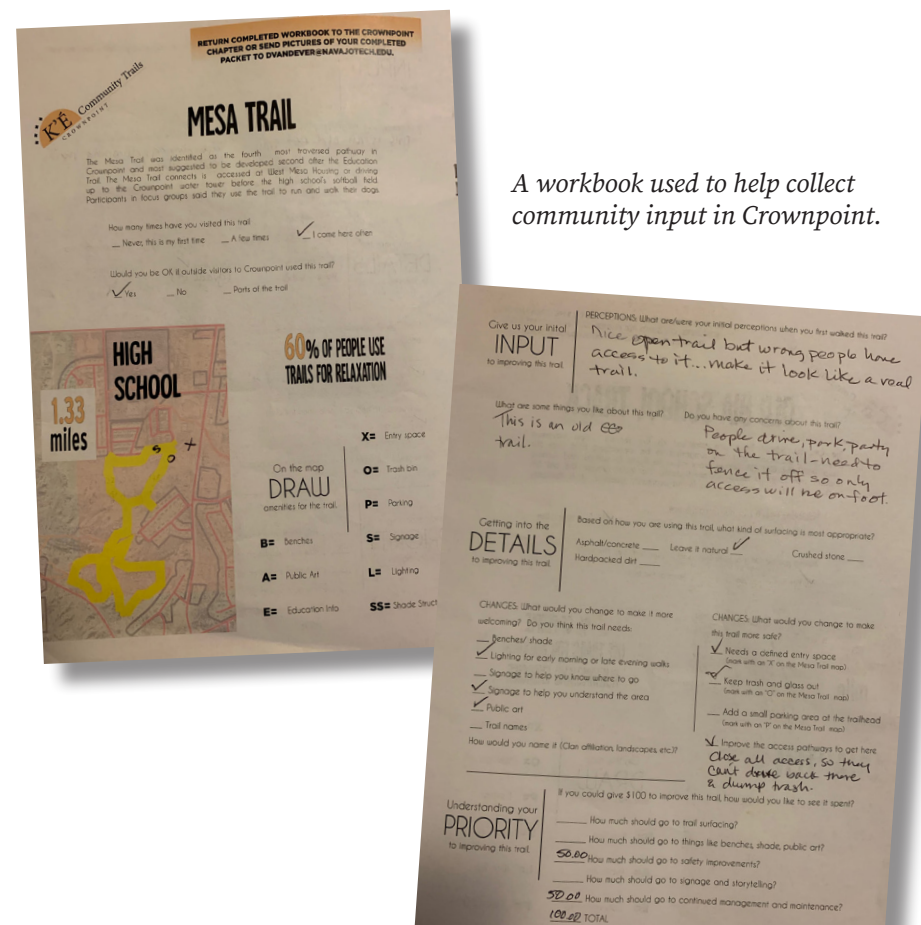
The K'É Community Trails Project in Crownpoint is a three-fold plan of establishing a “safe community-based trail network, maximizing the trail’s functionality to improve health, and address safety and environmental concerns that could be impacted by the development of a trail network.” The comprehensive plan provides a detailed explanation of the process the K'É trails project went through to be successfully completed in Crownpoint.

The process followed a development approach focused on recommendations of Physical Projects, Programming, Promotion, and Policy. Each recommendations helps “ensure the plan operates efficiently and effectively in addressing the trail network’s many needs.”

- The **Physical Projects** recommendation is focused on the physical aspects of trail development including environmental impact, signage, parks, and paths.
- **Programming** is focused on youth involvement in the project, community engagement, health programs that are related to physical activity, and utilizing the history and culture of Crownpoint within signage and programming.
- **Promotion** involves community outreach in the form of events, social media, and other forms of communication to promote the trails to get more people using the trails.
- The fourth and most important recommendation is the **Policy** section. This section outlines the necessary steps a program and coalition must complete to successfully implement a trail project on Navajo land. The Policy recommendation consists of four sections: 1) Chapter Resolution, 2) Land Management Plan, 3) Liability Management Plan, and 4) Youth Conservation Corp.



The K'e Community Trails logo was designed to represent a sunrise since Crownpoint is the capitol of the Eastern Agency of the Navajo Nation. The crosses represent the four sacred mountains of the Navajo Nation, but are also an ode to Spider Woman in hopes of weaving together a cohesive trail network that best serves the Crownpoint community.

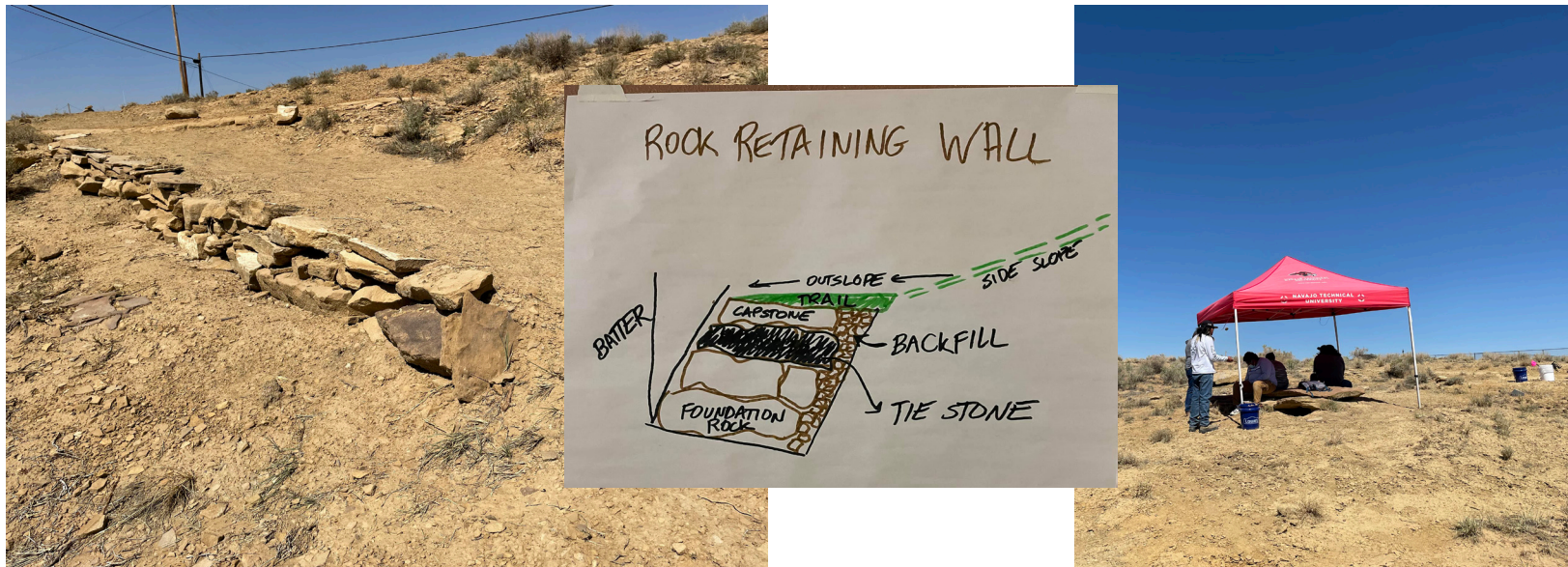


A workbook used to help collect community input in Crownpoint.

3) Liability Management Plan: It is essential and vital that walking trails used by people are safe, accessible, and pose little to no risk for users. To keep liability risk to a minimum, it is necessary to develop a liability management plan. The plan should consist of signage, trail maintenance, lighting (when possible), benches and shade structures, and rules and regulation guidelines prominently posted at trailheads. Rules and regulations are key to “addressing individual liability.” Informational signage ensures that people are aware of potential risks to using the trail, but also ensures that people understand there is a proper etiquette and way to use the trail. Safety also includes ensuring that the trail grades (increased or decreased elevation) are sustainable, up to construction standards, and can be maintained.

4) Youth Conservation Corp.: The K’É Community Trails Project utilized a youth conservation corps in partnership with the Office of Diné Youth (ODY) to employ local youth to help create and maintain the trails network. Healthy Places— Healthy People will similarly recruit students from Diné College and other local youth in different Chapters to help create and improve trails within the ten Navajo Action Communities. Youth play a big part in making sure these trails are successfully used and maintained in the future.

Vandever, Connecting Community, 35.



SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

COMMUNITY LAND USE COMMITTEE (CLUPC)

According to the Navajo Nation Local Governance Act, once a Chapter gains approval from the Navajo Nation and a “resolution stating the Chapter’s desire to develop and implement a comprehensive community-based land use plan, the Chapter shall establish a CLUPC to approve the processes for planning and to oversee planning activities.” This committee is “comprised of voting members of the chapter...” along with subcommittees “comprising of voting and non-voting members” to assist with the process. When you are looking to create or improve a walking trail within your chapter, it is important that you work with the CLUPC to ensure that the work being done follows all the necessary protocols, and that the land being used has been cleared by the proper agencies.

NAVAJO NATION EXTERNAL FUNDING 164 PROCESS

When projects are funded by external sources—like Healthy Places— Healthy People—the Navajo Nation must accept the funds through the 164 Review Process. The 164 Review Process can be found at <https://www.nndcd.org/external-funding-164-review/> and consists of the following steps:

- The project sponsor receives a copy of the funding award letter
- The project sponsor submits a scope of work to the funding source
- The funding source prepares the grant agreement for the Navajo Nation
- The Capital Projects Management Department (CPMD) prepares the 164 Review Package which includes the award letter, grant agreement, scope of work (SOW) for the amount awarded, and a budget for the amount awarded

Review and surname of the 164 package: Submit to the Division of community, Navajo Nation Office of President and Vice President for review, and approval. If your trail project applies for any grants or funding from outside the Navajo Nation, make sure that you complete this process as soon as possible. If you receive an award from an external source, the funds will not be approved by the Navajo Nation until this process has been completed.



The K'é Community Trails Coalition worked closely with CLUPC to identify land most viable for development. Once land was identified, the Coalition collaborated with land owners, such as ODY, to come up with a plan for development. A plan to develop ODY Loop is detailed above.

SECTION 4: COALITION BUILDING

WHAT IS A COALITION?

Navajo Coalition Translation:

Ats' íístah hodilzéełh yinidaha' áahígíí ahił nidaalnishyígíí

Why is a coalition important to build or improve trails?

For a project like Healthy Places— Healthy People to be successful, a strong coalition must be formed between partners who have the same desire to build a healthier community. A coalition is a group of individuals and/or organizations who work together to address issues within a community or communities to achieve a common goal. Coalitions are recognized and supported by the community they are engaging with.

Who can be part of a coalition?

Coalitions consist of community leaders and members, stakeholders and/or policymakers, individuals with different skills, health, mental health, and/or wellness advocates or service providers, and outside organizations that seek to support communities.

For the Healthy Places— Healthy People project, a coalition is formed through the 10 Chapters of the Eastern Navajo Agency (including members and leaders), the Navajo Nation Department of Health, the New Mexico Department of Health, the Navajo Nation Human Research Review Board, Chapter community/senior centers, Diné College, UNM's Prevention Research Center, and IRB, and the CDC. Depending on the project, coalitions will consist of different entities, organizations, and individuals. Active communication between coalition members is essential to achieve the goals of the coalition and community.

“It is difficult for me to take the lead. So, let's get the ball rolling for others to participate in the project. How can we create more support for the people? How can we make those steps happen? We have to build partnerships first before we can jump on to any project.”

-Community Member



Standing Rock CLUPC Meeting



Members of the K'é Community Trails Coalition celebrate the completion of a trailhead sign with a ribbon cutting ceremony in Crownpoint, NM.

COALITION EXPLAINED

Frances Dunn Butterfoss describes a coalition as “a formal alliance of organizations that come together to work for a common goal...They develop an internal decision making and leadership structure that allows member organizations to speak with a united voice and engage in shared planning and implementation activities.”

Coalition members all have the responsibility to maintain a respectful and diverse environment and work together to achieve a common goal. For example, the coalition that is involved in the Healthy Places— Healthy People project has a common goal of creating/improving areas within Navajo Chapters to promote physical activity and community guide recommendations, among community members to improve the overall health of individuals within the 10 Navajo action communities. Coalition members should communicate regularly through attending meetings, generating reports or presentations, or all three.

Successful coalitions practice strong communication, effective problem solving, decision making, and conflict resolution. It is often hard to gather coalition members in one place regularly to effectively communicate progress and barriers to a project. Events like monthly networking meetings are essential to maintain strong coalitions. It is beneficial for all coalition members to have access to meeting notes and recordings when possible because it is likely that not all members will be able to attend all meetings. Having a listserv of coalition members' email addresses is an effective way to provide meeting notes and recordings to ensure all members have access to updates and project information.

Coalitions ensure that the project stays on track from planning to implementation and sustainability. They also ensure that the work of a project such as Healthy Places— Healthy People is divided and supported among different organizations, agencies, and community members.

HOW DO YOU BUILD A COALITION?

1. To build a strong coalition, **there must be a common goal** between individuals, organizations, and agencies. For example, the Healthy Places— Healthy People coalition has a common goal of creating and improving places within Navajo Chapters for individuals to be physically active, with an overall goal to improve the health of community members.
2. Once you have a goal in mind to address issues in your community, you must **identify key individuals, organizations, and government entities to help** you accomplish your goal. A strong coalition will include a variety of individuals and organizations at the local and national levels. Healthy Places— Healthy People has a coalition that works closely with each Navajo Action Community, local community members, and CLUPC. Healthy Places— Healthy People also works with the Navajo Nation Department of Health, New Mexico Department of Health, and was funded by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.
3. If your Chapter is seeking to create or improve a trail, you must identify key stakeholders who will be involved. Once key stakeholders have been identified (Chapter leaders, community members/ volunteers, supporters, and funders), then you must **schedule regular meetings involving each stakeholder**. These meetings should be used to discuss barriers to the project, goals, timeframe of the project, progress, and other pertinent tasks each stakeholder can accomplish.

INCLUDING COMMUNITY HEALTH REPRESENTATIVES IN YOUR COALITION

Community Health Representatives (CHRs) are a great example of coalition members. CHRs work within a specific community, are from the community they work in, work in an organization (IHS), and contribute to the health and safety of the community. The Indian Health Service states CHRs “serve as a link between the clinical setting and the Acultural competence of service delivery. They assist by increasing the health knowledge of patients and communities through a broad range of activities such as transportation to health visits, outreach, community education, informal counseling, social support, and advocacy.”

The CHRs are from the communities they are working in, making them an invaluable resource to a coalition looking to improve the health of a community through evidence-based strategies. CHRs can also provide community members with information about the benefits of physical activity, specifically walking, to help with promoting trails.

Indian Health Service, <https://www.ihs.gov/chr/aboutus/>



Summer youth employees built benches at the Baca Prewitt Chapter House Trail.



IDENTIFYING AND UTILIZING COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS TO ADVANCE YOUR WORK

Community Champions are local community members who volunteer to support projects, like Healthy Places— Healthy People, by being actively engaged in the process of creating and improving trails within a Navajo Chapter Community. They serve as a point of contact for project team members, track the support of the progress of the project, and assist with implementing the project from approval to completion.

The Roles and Responsibilities of Community Champions may include:

1. Identify and meet with community members interested in creating or enhancing places to be physically active.
 - a. Set goals and prioritize projects based on feasibility and impact.
 - b. Work with coalition partners and chapter/ Navajo Nation officials when needed to get approvals.
2. Be the point person to work with coalition partners to get technical assistance (TA) to meet goals and assess progress.
3. Attend and contribute to at least 2 Navajo Action Community Gatherings (with other Community Champions) per year.
4. Attend trainings (online and in-person) on topics such as:
 - a. Create a **logic model** to direct progress and goal setting based on community needs around physical activity
 - b. Learn how to do an impact + feasibility matrix
 - c. Mapping/GIS
 - d. Conduct Walkability assessments in the community
 - e. Write grants to obtain funds for the project
 - f. Build and maintain trails
5. Work with coalition members on summer projects related to Healthy Places— Healthy People in your community/chapter
6. Attend conferences related to this work (for example, New Mexico Public Health Association)



Counselor Chapter House heavy equipment.



To'hajiilee Trail.

SECTION 5:

HOW TO ACHIEVE A NEW TRAIL AND IMPROVE EXISTING TRAILS IN YOUR CHAPTER

WHAT IS A NEEDS ASSESSMENT?

To successfully achieve a project like Healthy Places— Healthy People in your community, you would most likely begin with a **needs assessment**. A needs assessment addresses a rural community's needs by identifying significant health issues within a community. A needs assessment done with members of the project and community will identify where a walking trail is most needed, where it will be most utilized, and where it will create the most impact for creating positive health changes within the community.

Chapter houses, community centers, and senior centers were all places within Healthy Places— Healthy People action communities that were chosen to create and/or improve walking trails to be used by community members. All of these existing structures are known gathering places within the community, and most have already gained the necessary approvals for improving and/or building on Navajo land.

HOW PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY IS YOUR COMMUNITY?

The purpose of a needs assessment for a project like Healthy Places— Healthy People would be to determine how walkable a certain area within the community is. Determining the walkability of an area will involve various members of your coalition completing a number of workshops. A **Mapping Workshop** of the proposed or existing walking area should be completed first to determine where the trail will go or where improvements will be made. A **Walkability Workshop** should be done once mapping has been completed.



A mapping activity with the Standing Rock community.

“Seeing people walking around will motivate you to exercise and run more. Navajo Nation needs to concentrate on the running and walking trails to get the people physically active again.”

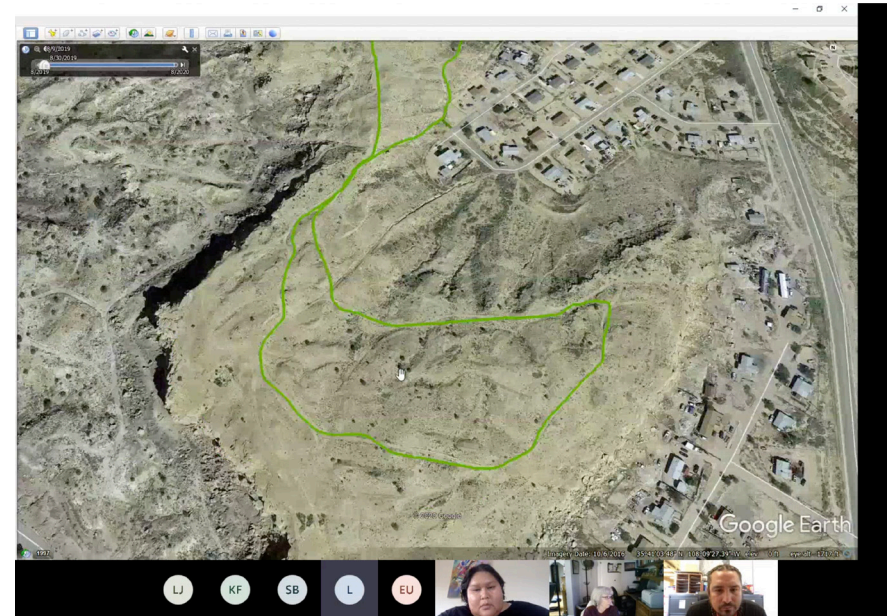
-Community Member

MAPPING WORKSHOP

During mapping workshops, participants were provided with a Google map printout of their community. Participants were asked to draw on the map areas where the proposed trail would go. Participants would then go out and walk the prospected trails. The participants included Chapter house officials, Office of Diné Youth employees, school board members, community members, and Community Land Use Planning Committee members. Mapping provides options for where a prospective trail can be placed. Once the mapping has been completed, walkability assessments can begin. The workshops could be done together or separately.



A mapping activity with Crownpoint youth.



Mapping activities were conducted virtually in Crownpoint once COVID hit the Navajo Nation in Spring 2020.

WALKABILITY WORKSHOP

The purpose of a walkability workshop is to evaluate and discuss a proposed trail's walkability as a community. These workshops aim to engage community members in assessing and improving the walkability of their trails. Walkability is a measure of how conducive an area is for walking and other forms of active transportation. Walkability workshops aim to improve walkability by empowering action communities through social support to identify and address barriers to walking within their Chapter. During walkability assessments, participants were given worksheets (*see appendix walkability workshops*) that listed focus areas to take into consideration when walking the prospective trails. These focus areas included things like safety concerns, feasibility, erosion, and areas of improvement such as benches and signs. The average time to complete a walkability assessment was about 1 and a half to 3 hours. Upon completion of the walking portion, participants would gather to discuss their assessment and come to a consensus about where the prospective trail should be installed.

During a walkability workshop, residents assess pedestrian access in their community and prioritize ways to improve it. Workshops are usually divided into three parts:

- 1. Introduction:** introduction of participants, background and purpose of the workshop, and overview of logistics.
- 2. Assessment/Audit:** participants break into groups to evaluate pre-designated areas using a map and assessment form.
- 3. Discussion:** groups share their findings and decide on a few projects that they would like to focus on.



A Walkability Assessment in Crownpoint identified an obstructed sidewalk due to erosion and overgrowth.

WHAT MATERIALS ARE NEEDED FOR A WALKABILITY WORKSHOP?

- **Invite list** – The list should be individuals that live, work, or play in the community. Individuals from outside agencies can provide valuable assistance and insight; the responsibility of driving change is local. Include decision makers such as elected officials and representatives from city and county planning, engineering, parks and recreation, and public works; local representatives from the Departments of Transportation and Health; staff from nearby land agencies; and individuals who will have unique perspectives on walkability, such as business leaders, senior citizens, youth, or individuals with disabilities.
- **Meeting space**
- **Assessment forms and maps.**
- **Large (~3'x4') maps** that the group can use to identify trouble areas and priorities during the discussion. These are often available at low or no cost from county assessors' offices.
- **Cameras** to document specific locations during the assessment.
- **Tape measures** to measure sidewalk width.
- **Safety vests**
- **Flip chart**
- **Clipboards**
- **Pens/Pencils**
- **Sign-in sheets**

STEPS OF A WALKABILITY WORKSHOP

Steps Before Workshop:

The workshop itself is the tip of the iceberg. Most of the work is done before it starts and after it ends. The most important part is getting as many of the right people in the room as possible.

01

- Identify areas to assess
- Identify individuals to lead each assessment group
- Invite key participants
- Invite the general public

Cont: Step 01

- Create maps and assessment forms
- Secure meeting space
- Solicit donations for snacks/drinks

Steps During the Workshop:

Workshops usually last about 3 1/2 hours. Hold the workshop in a large room where everyone can gather around the tables.

02

- Distribute a sign-in sheet
- Have participants introduce themselves
- Define purpose and goals
- Break into assessment teams

Cont: Step 02

- Walk and assess routes
- Take notes and photos
- Discuss and present findings
- Facilitate discussion on goals, priorities and challenges

Step 3 After the workshop:

This is the most challenging part. Everyone leaves excited and enthusiastic, but without persistent follow-up, it's easy for people to resume their daily routines and slowly lose the initiative to improve the communities' - built environment.

03

- Send thank you notes and reminders
- Create working groups
- Schedule meetings
- Share finished report with elected officials and decision-makers

Be patient, but persistent.
Meaningful change takes time and it takes work.

STEPS OF A WALKABILITY WORKSHOP

1. Steps Before Workshop:

The workshop itself is the tip of the iceberg. Most of the work is done before it starts and after it ends. The most important part is getting as many of the right people in the room as possible.

- Identify areas to assess. These should be places where pedestrian access and safety are essential (e.g. areas near libraries, parks, schools, or senior centers) and/or areas identified as problematic (sites with frequent crashes or “close-calls”).
- Identify individuals who will lead each assessment group. These should be individuals with a particular knowledge of or stake in an area. For example, if assessing the area near a school, invite one of the school’s teachers or administrators to lead that group.
- Invite other key participants
- Invite the general public using a press release, flyers, social media postings, word-of-mouth, etc.
- Create maps and assessment forms to guide groups through their evaluation.
- Secure a meeting space.
- Identify an organization that might be able to donate snacks and/or drinks

2. Steps During the Workshop:

Workshops usually last about 3 1/2 hours. Hold the workshop in a large room where everyone can gather around the tables.

- Have all the participants sign in so that you can follow up with individuals after the workshop
- Have participants introduce themselves
- Define the purpose and goals of the workshop

Steps During the Workshop (continued):

- Break the group into assessment teams. Make sure each team has: - Assessment maps and forms - Camera - Tape Measure - Clipboard - Safety Vests - Pens/pencils
- Teams walk their pre-defined route, responding to assessment form prompts, taking map notes, and photographing important problems or features.
- Teams reconvene to discuss their findings
- Teams present their findings to the group
- Facilitate a discussion on goals, priorities, and challenges. Out of all the information gathered, come up with 3 to 5 attainable goals and assign specific people to lead them.

3. Steps After the workshop:

This is the most challenging part. Everyone leaves excited and enthusiastic, but without persistent follow-up, it's easy for people to resume their daily routines and slowly lose the initiative to improve the communities'-built environment.

- Send thank you notes to all the participants. These can include reminders about projects people said they would work on.
- Create working groups and schedule meetings. Compile a summary report of the workshop and share it with all the participants.
- Share the finished report with elected officials and other decision-makers. The report will also be a useful reference when updating comprehensive plans, infrastructure capital improvement plans, or when applying for funding.

Be patient, but persistent. Meaningful change takes time and it takes work.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM HP-HP MAPPING AND WALKABILITY WORKSHOPS

Mapping and walkability workshops for Healthy Places— Healthy People have taken place after Chapter meetings or community/senior center presentations and events. Since a member of Healthy Places— Healthy People is already attending the meetings, giving presentations, and attending events, it is practical to try to schedule these workshops with community leaders and members on the same day. Although some Chapter meetings and events will have a full schedule and little time to spare, communicating times and days to complete these workshops with Chapter members is a challenging yet essential aspect of completing projects such as Healthy Places— Healthy People.

These workshops will usually include an agenda, a blessing prayer (usually given by someone from the community), introductions, a small background session of the project, a mapping of the proposed trail area, and a walkability assessment of the proposed trail area. Some communities may have several places where they want a proposed trail to be installed. During these workshops, it is important to carefully examine feasibility and impact, and ask questions like: where will the trail be easily accessible and maintained? Where will it be mostly used by members of the community? Is the area safe?



Entrance to the Baca Prewitt Chapter House.

SECTION 6: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PROMOTING YOUR TRAIL

THE COMMUNITY GUIDE: COMMUNITY PREVENTATIVE SERVICES TASK FORCE

The Healthy Places— Healthy People team utilizes the **Community Guide: Community Preventive Services Task Force** as a component for community outreach efforts and as a guideline for evidence-based recommendations to improve physical activity in our action communities. The Community Guide has evaluated the effectiveness of physical activity interventions, including outreach in forms of **social support strategies** in community settings and **community-wide campaigns**, to promote physical activity among community members. When developing evidence-based community outreach interventions, the Healthy Places— Healthy People team aims to find strategies that embody Social Support or Community-Wide Campaign Interventions from the Community Guide.

Social support strategies involve providing support to community members to encourage physical activity in socially engaging ways. These interventions can be effective in increasing physical activity levels in community settings. Examples of social support interventions include walking groups and community-wide campaigns promoting physical activity.

Community-wide campaigns are strategies that involve multiple strategies including social support, risk factor screening, and health education. The Community Guide defines community-wide campaigns as high-visibility efforts to promote physical activity through a variety of different mediums (newspaper, radio, flyers, etc.), to a population. Both social support strategies and community-wide campaigns are effective strategies to promote physical activity in community settings. These findings informed the Healthy Places— Healthy People implemented strategies and changed policies aimed at increasing physical activity levels in our action communities.

“We really need it for our community so our young kids can enjoy it...We can have events to have them walk the trails. That’s what we need.”

-Community Member



Just Move It,
Ojo Encino Trail

SECTION 7: ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS

HOW TO ENGAGE COMMUNITY MEMBERS

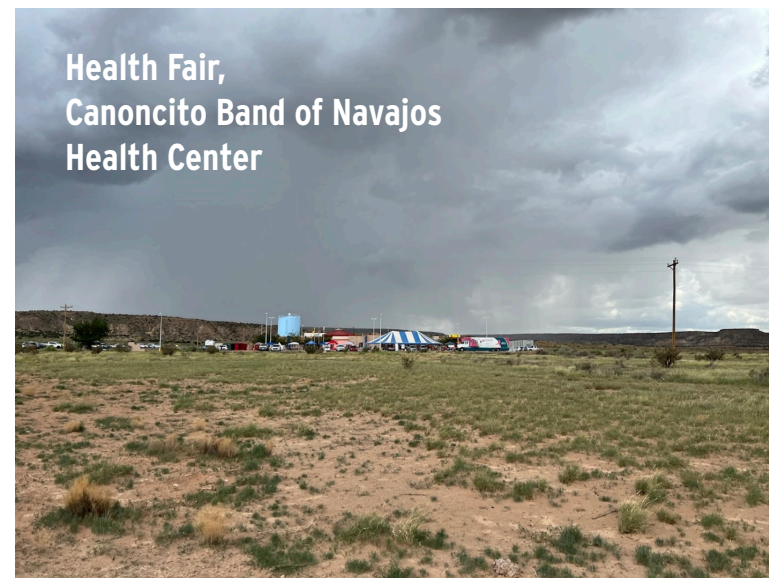
Once trail creation and/or improvements have been completed, it is vitally important that community members use their trails regularly. The purpose of Healthy Places— Healthy People is to promote consistent and regular physical activity through the newly developed or enhanced trails we support rural communities in establishing. Walking regularly is proven to reduce the number of adverse health effects. Getting people to walk and use the trails takes persistence and it helps to engage the community with events centered on walking the trails.

Community-Wide Campaigns help to promote the trail while promoting the benefits of physical activity. The Healthy Places— Healthy People initiative utilizes Community-Wide Campaigns in the form of monthly Networking Events with the 10 Eastern Navajo Chapter Action Communities as part of our community outreach efforts. These events aim to engage community members in education on how physical activity can decrease the prevalence of chronic diseases.



Just Move It,
Becenti Trail

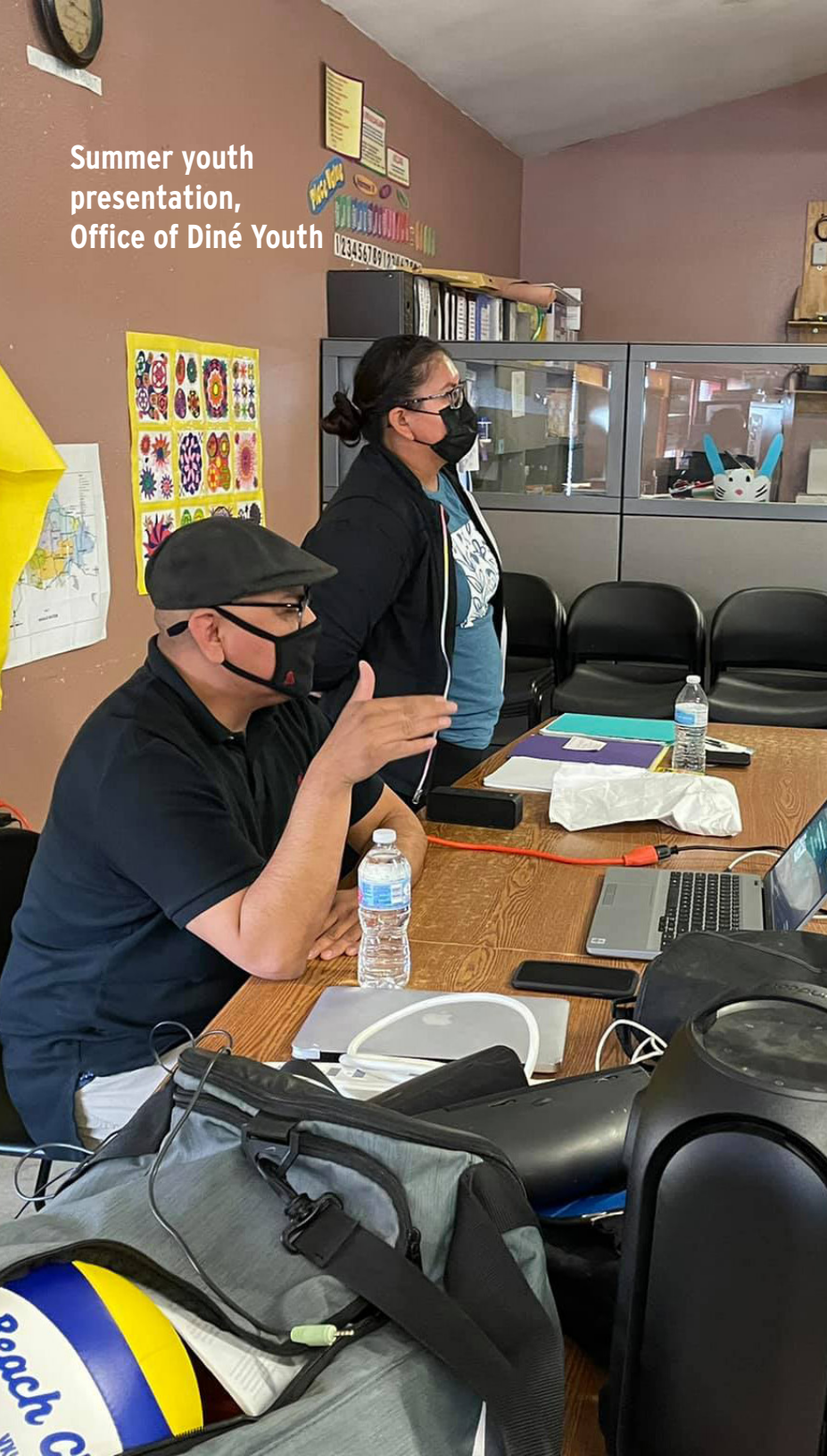
People who walk and get physical activity with others will be more motivated to maintain a physically active lifestyle. When an event takes place on these trails, it is an opportunity for community to walk with their family, friends, and neighbors to gather and motivate each other to walk and use the trail.



Health Fair,
Canoncito Band of Navajos
Health Center

Trails that have been established usually surround or are near gathering places, such as Chapter houses, senior centers, and schools. Holidays provide a great opportunity for community members to create events that get people motivated to spend time with their families walking outside and enjoying the beauty of nature.

Summer youth
presentation,
Office of Diné Youth



NETWORKING

Networking Events involve the following activities:

- **Presentations:** Community members are presented with information on the benefits of physical activity for preventing and managing chronic diseases such as diabetes or heart disease. This information is presented in a culturally appropriate manner and may include traditional Navajo practices that promote physical activity and healthy living.
- **Group Discussions:** Group discussions are facilitated to allow chapter leaders to share their perspectives on physical activity and chronic disease prevention. This provides an opportunity for action community members to share their experiences and ideas for promoting physical activity in their community.

By engaging community members in education on the benefits of physical activity for preventing chronic diseases, the Healthy Places— Healthy People Initiative aims to promote a culture of health and well-being in Navajo communities. By providing culturally appropriate information and facilitating group discussions, the networking events aim to increase awareness of the importance of physical activity and empower community members to act in order to promote physical activity in their community.

Overall, the Healthy Places— Healthy People Initiative's networking events contribute to community outreach by actively engaging community members in the promotion of physical activity such as prevention of chronic diseases.

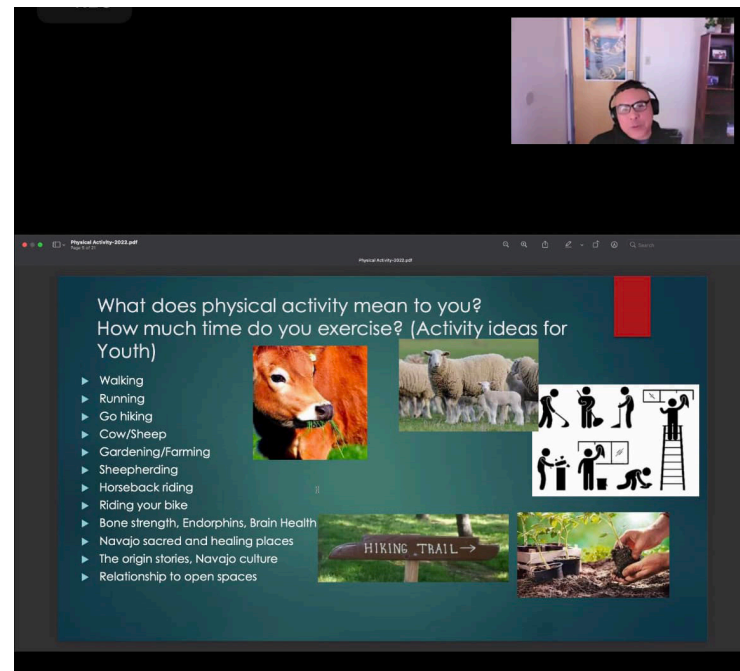
NETWORKING EVENTS

- **Networking Events**

Each Networking Event addresses a different chronic disease with recognition of national health observances displayed on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website.

Below is a sample of topics addressed for each Networking Event conducted by the Healthy Places— Healthy People team:

- **Healthy Heart Month** - February
- **Kidney Disease and Risk Factors** - March
- **Irritable Bowel Syndrome Awareness** - April
- **Arthritis and Stroke Awareness** - May
- **Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month** - June
- **How can Physical Activity Improve your Mental Health** - July
- **Osteoporosis** - August
- **Healthy Aging Month** - September
- **Breast Cancer Awareness Month** - October
- **How can Physical Activity Reduce your Risk for Diabetes** - November



Summer youth employee presentation for Crownpoint Chapter on the benefits of physical activity on mental and brain health.



Diné College students shared presentations relating physical activity to mental health. Presenters shared how physical activity was an important aspect of Diné culture, such as waking up early and running towards the East.

SHARING EXPERIENCES THROUGH NETWORKING MEETINGS

At the Healthy Places— Healthy People monthly networking meetings, each action community is given an invitation to attend, and opportunities to provide updates about the progress of their trails. Updates about recent walkability workshops and assessments provide Chapters with ideas on how to make additional progress or enhancement to their trails. These meetings also provide students from Diné College an opportunity to share information about physical activity in their community and how it is relevant to their culture.

Networking meetings allow the different communities to share their experiences with trail building and sustainability. The communities have time to share what helped facilitate success and what barriers hindered progress. Because Chapters deal with similar barriers such as lack of funding, land clearances, gaining approvals, and access to equipment, it is important that communities share how they overcome those barriers. Each individual Chapter is a unique community that will involve different levels of support. Having the Chapters who are further along in their trail building/improving projects share their experience with other communities who are just starting provides opportunities to learn what works and how to get past barriers.

Guest speakers are occasionally invited to share information about physical activity, trail building, and events. Communities, such as Becenti, Crownpoint, and others hold events on their trails. These events correspond to the Community Guide's recommendation of social support interventions. Social support interventions that create supportive behavioral change has been shown to improve community health.



Tohajiilee Trail.



A view from the Standing Rock walkability assessment.

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Healthy Places-Healthy People (HP-HP) Staff: A Toolkit for Promoting Active Living in Navajo Communities

2019-2024



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