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News

ACHIEVE aims for more active, healthy lifestyles

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A Lake County General Health District community initiative has unveiled a new website designed to provide tools, resources and information to help residents live a more active, healthy lifestyle.

The initiative is called Action Communities for Health, Innovation and EnVironmental Change, or ACHIEVE.

The website is www.lakecountyohio.gov/achieve.

It includes links to dozens of websites that address combating chronic disease through physical activity and nutritious eating.

A comprehensive inventory of local recreation areas was prepared and is now accessible through the web mapping portion of the new ACHIEVE website.

All recreation facilities in Lake County are layered on top of an interactive digital map.

Clicking on a facility name opens up a link to that facility's website where one can investigate all of the activities, programs and other information.

For example, if someone knew they would be spending a Friday evening in Painesville, they could visit the website and easily find all the nearby golf courses, bowling alleys and parks, said Tori Luyster, a health educator with the Health District.

"The website is a place for information and ongoing events they can be involved in, in Lake County," she said.

"A recreational map is on there and it's a one-stop shop in Lake County and you can pull up that map and pull up any recreational opportunity that they want to do."

The ACHIEVE initiative's ultimate goal is to strive to implement policy and environmental change in four sectors, which consist of work sites, schools, community institutions that offer human services and the community-at-large, Luyster said.

An example of policy change that has improved people's health is the Ohio smoke-free law that bans smoking in public buildings, she said.

"As a result, fewer people are breathing in second-hand smoke," Luyster said.

"Many others have quit because it's harder to smoke."

In terms of environmental change, that means altering the physical or social environments where people spend time.

"An example would be putting fruit in a staff lunch room," Luyster said.

"That physically alters the environment and encourages people to pick up fruit."

Funding for the initiative came from an \$85,000 grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The money will fund the initiative for at least three years and officials will look for ways to sustain the program longer if possible, Luyster said.

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