MECKLENBURG COUNTY
North Carolina
Public Health

Office of Policy and Prevention

Reducing Chronic Disease by Making Healthier Choices Easier

2019 Year in Review

33 POLICY CHANGES

POLICY change is achieved through the adoption of an ordinance, policy, resolution, rule, etc., that focuses on healthy behavior.

For example, we participated in the effort to ban tobacco use by 20,000 workers at Charlotte Douglas International Airport. The policy, which went into effect November 1, 2019, includes all employees: airport staff, contractors, vendors (airlines, restaurants, shops, services, etc.), indoors and outdoors.

73 SYSTEM CHANGES

SYSTEM change occurs when an organization's procedures, processes, or protocols are reframed to support healthy lifestyles.

For example, we revamped our Safe Routes to School Mecklenburg program to better support local elementary and middle schools. Fourteen schools joined our program, making a system change through their commitment to improving opportunities for children to walk, bike, or roll to, from, and at school.

63 ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

ENVIRONMENTAL change occurs when the physical environment is altered or modified to promote health and wellness.

For example, the National Association of Counties (NACo) granted Mecklenburg County a 2019 Achievement Award for our Edible Landscape project. We now have four urban orchards providing access to fresh fruit for more than 25,000 people.

2019 Highlights Include...

TOBACCO-FREE LIVING

We hosted the Duke-UNC **Tobacco Treatment Specialist Training** in Charlotte, with participation by 63 medical and behavioral health professionals.

Nineteen multi-unit housing communities adopted **smoke-free policies.**

We provided updated **tobacco-free signage** to 170 Charlotte-Mecklenburg School (CMS) campuses, and trained more than 250 youth influencers.

ACTIVE LIVING

More than 52,000 people took part in **Open Streets 704** events, which included the implementation of a traffic-calming street mural in the Historic Wilmore neighborhood.

We provided feedback on the City of Charlotte's **School Zone Policy**, which creates a plan for traffic control devices in school zones.

We helped to provide **350 bicycle helmets** to the 16 elementary schools in the Strider Bicycle program, which teaches kids how to safely ride a bicycle.

HEALTHY FOOD SECURITY

Six farmers markets now accept **SNAP/EBT benefits**. Five of those markets participate in **"double bucks,"** doubling SNAP dollars up to $20.

We have **22 corner stores** that meet the North Carolina Healthy Food Retail Designation, offering healthier food choices for the communities they serve.

We installed **10 hydration stations** in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and provided 10 five-gallon jugs at child care centers through our I Heart Water initiative.

In the Office of Policy and Prevention we aim to improve the health of our entire community regardless of race, ability, socioeconomic status, identity or zip code. With health equity as a guiding principle, our work focuses on policy, systems and environmental change initiatives designed to prevent death and disability from chronic disease and injury.

For more information, call 980-314-9065.