



## **Community Health Briefs** **PowerUp — HealthPartners**

### **Innovation Strategy**

The rate of adult obesity in Minnesota more than doubled in just under two decades, from 10.2 percent in 1990 to 24.7 percent in 2009. Currently 62.8 percent of adults in the state qualify as overweight or obese. Minnesota is projected to have a 15-20 percent growth in obesity-related health care costs by 2030 if the current trajectory continues.

As of 2011, 14 percent of the state’s children ages 10-17 were obese and only 28.7 percent of children ages 6-18 participated in vigorous physical activity every day. Only one in four sixth grade students and one in five high school students in Minnesota’s Washington County was eating at least five fruits and vegetables per day.

HealthPartners’ PowerUp is a community-wide youth health initiative to make better eating and active living easy, fun and popular. PowerUp focuses on children ages 3-11 and the adults who influence their food and physical activity choices, including parents, teachers and organizations that serve youth. PowerUp is a long-term commitment to create change in the St. Croix Valley since 2008 in partnership with schools, businesses, health care, civic groups, families, kids and the entire community.

### **Root Determinants of Health Addressed in This Initiative**

- Diet
- Exercise

### **Program Description**

PowerUp works at multiple levels in a collaborative and comprehensive approach to create community change in the St. Croix Valley region of Minnesota. The program changes the food and physical activity environment to make healthy choices easier to make. This includes providing healthy options at the concessions stand during school and community events, providing free open gym times and developing a toolkit for school environment change.

Targeting changing levels of engagement, PowerUp invites



the entire community to join the shared effort to achieve common goals through leadership, outreach, positive and compelling messages and local partnerships. In addition, PowerUp provides programs to help kids and their families eat better and increase their activity level. These programs have included school fruit and vegetable tracking programs, cooking classes and nutrition information for student athletes. Finally, PowerUp works to integrate the clinical aspect into the organization to provide resources such as fruit and vegetable prescriptions and referrals through clinics and care providers.

## **Results**

PowerUp has established a set of common overall community measures and measures for short, intermediate and long-term time periods. Results will be compared over time by community. Key results include:

### Community Engagement and Change

- Partnerships formed with multiple sectors including schools, faith communities, public health, libraries, parent organizations, health care, food shelves and local businesses and organizations
- More than 30,000 people engage with PowerUp annually
- Free or low-cost open gyms available weekly in partner communities [see Appendix A]
- PowerUp considered important or very important for 98 percent of respondents to a community survey
- Survey data regarding eating and physical activity attitudes and behaviors collected and compared over time

### Schools

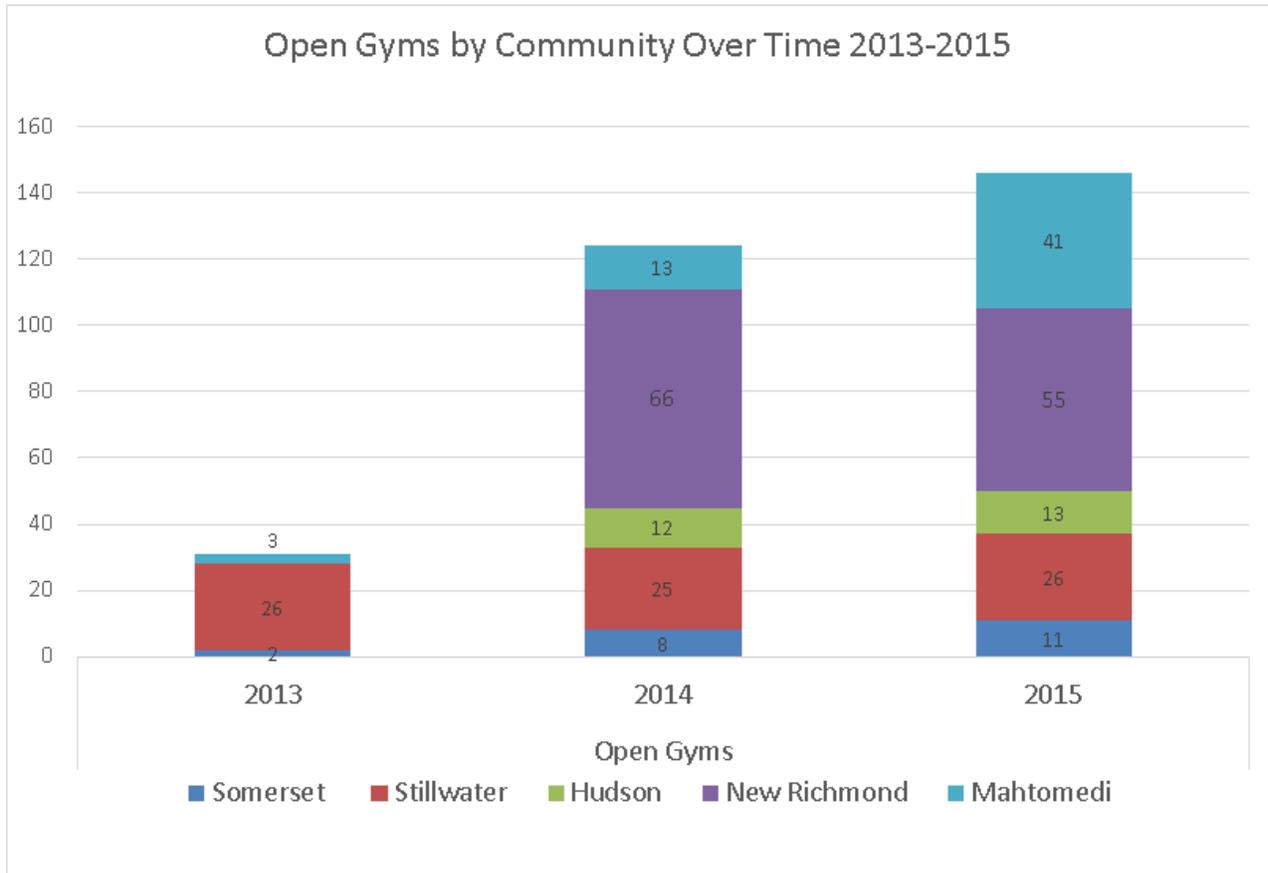
- 10,000 elementary age students reached annually with PowerUp School Challenge
- 85 percent of teachers and 73 percent of parents who returned a survey say the challenge influenced children to eat more fruits and vegetables
- More than 900 students, coaches and parents trained on sports nutrition
- 80 percent of students and 70 percent of parents who returned a survey say they want healthy foods and beverages at event concessions
- School Change Surveys completed and action plans created in four school districts
- School wellness policy changes proposed for one large district

## **Contact Information**

Marna Canterbury, M.S., R.D., Director of Community Health, Lakeview Health, HealthPartners  
[marna.m.canterbury@lakeview.org](mailto:marna.m.canterbury@lakeview.org)

Tom Kottke, M.D., MSPH, Medical Director, Well-Being, HealthPartners  
[thomas.e.kottke@healthpartners.com](mailto:thomas.e.kottke@healthpartners.com) | 952-967-5088

## Appendix A



Graph depicts the increase in free or low-cost open gyms in the St. Croix Valley region from 2013 to 2015.