



Live HealthSmart Alabama Playbook



SAMPLE

A GUIDE TO
**MAKING GOOD
HEALTH SIMPLE**
IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

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Hello.

Live HealthSmart Alabama (LHSA) is working to make good health simple by changing Alabama's Policies, Systems, and Environments to support healthy choices.

This playbook will guide your community in planning and implementing initiatives that positively impact health. The UAB Live HealthSmart team will provide technical assistance and support you throughout implementation.

This playbook outlines the process of identifying community needs, engaging community members, and transforming plans into action. The steps in this Playbook are Live HealthSmart Alabama's best practices and will help your community navigate its efforts while allowing for flexibility to make the process unique to your community's needs.

The longtime partnership between UAB, the City of Birmingham, and communities throughout our state is at the heart of our shared progress and success. Live HealthSmart Alabama is a shining example of that. It is all about making good health simple, with people working together to make their neighborhood an even better place to live, work, study, and raise families.

RAY L. WATTS, M.D.
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BACKGROUND



The Challenge

When it comes to health indicators, Alabama ranks among the lowest in the U.S. These health statistics raise grave concerns for the well-being of our citizens. They also point to serious economic and social issues, as health affects employment and productivity and can have a profound impact on economic development efforts. Although increases in obesity and diabetes are observed across the US, the trend is particularly noticeable in the South. Since 2012, obesity and diabetes in Alabama increased from 32.0% to 36.3% and from 11.8% to 14.1%, respectively.¹ By reversing these negative health trends, we will serve as a model for other states.

The Solution

Live HealthSmart Alabama is a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach that brings together academic partners, businesses, healthcare and insurance providers, local and state governments, faith-based organizations, and community stakeholders in a coordinated effort to improve Alabama's health. The movement, Live HealthSmart Alabama (LHSA), is making targeted Policy, System, and Environment (PSE) changes that facilitate physical activity, good nutrition, and prevention/wellness, leading to improved chronic disease outcomes.

Goals

10-YEAR GOAL: *Decrease the incidence of chronic diseases.*



**REDUCE OBESITY FROM
36.3% TO 33%**



**REDUCE HIGH BLOOD
PRESSURE FROM
41.9% TO 34.7%**



**REDUCE DIABETES
FROM 14.1% TO 11.4%**



**REDUCE HIGH
CHOLESTEROL
37.2% TO 35.4%**

¹<https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/about/index.htm#:~:text=Chronic%20diseases%20are%20defined%20broadly,disability%20in%20the%20United%20>

5-YEAR OBJECTIVE: *Improve physical activity, nutrition, and prevention and wellness by 2025.*



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:
REDUCE THE % OF ADULTS
WHO REPORT NO LEISURE
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OR
EXERCISE IN 30 DAYS FROM
32% TO 29%



GOOD NUTRITION:
INCREASE THE DAILY
CONSUMPTION OF FRUITS
FROM 1.2 TO 1.4 AND OF
VEGETABLES FROM 1.8 TO 1.9



**PREVENTION AND
WELLNESS:** REDUCE
SMOKING FROM
20.9% TO 17.5%



HOSPITALIZATIONS:
REDUCE PREVENTABLE
HOSPITALIZATIONS FROM
62 TO 55.3/1,000

3-YEAR STRATEGY: *Make Policy, System, and Environment changes by 2023.*

- Implement PSE changes to the built environment (such as streets, roads, and sidewalks) to facilitate the physical activity objective
- Implement PSE changes to the food environment (food access and quality) to facilitate the good nutrition objective
- Implement PSE changes to health systems to facilitate the prevention and wellness objective

Making Good Health Simple

Living a healthy life is more complicated than it needs to be for many Alabamians. Advice to eat better, be more active, and get appropriate screenings may seem straightforward, but for a number of people, there are barriers that must be overcome. Many of these barriers are classified as “social determinants of health.”

Social Determinants of Health

Social determinants of health are characteristics of the physical, social, and economic environment where people live, work, play, and worship that can impact the health status and quality of life of community members. Examples of social determinants of health include environmental pollution, access to green space, education, income, unsafe neighborhoods, racism, safe housing, healthy food options, and transportation services. The presence or absence of these conditions can make it easier or more difficult to make healthy choices. For example, residents that live in areas with limited access to affordable and

nutritious food are less likely to have healthy food options, which raises the risk of obesity and diabetes. Acting on advice to eat healthy can be a challenge in these areas. Something more needs to be done to help residents lead healthy lives. Changing the policies and systems that contribute to lack of quality food access can make it easier for residents to live healthier lives and contribute to eliminating health disparities.¹

Another example is blight. Blight is a comprehensive term that encompasses anything in the physical environment that is in deteriorated condition. For example, blight can be litter, abandoned buildings, or dilapidated structures. Blight can be easily observed by touring communities and taking note of blight prevalence.² Studies have shown that communities with pervasive blight are associated with negative health outcomes, such as increased stress levels, social isolation, and low adoption of healthy behaviors. Eliminating blight can, therefore, encourage residents to spend more time outdoors, which increases physical activity, social interactions, and satisfaction with living conditions.

Addressing Chronic Diseases

LHSA is focused on reducing rates of chronic disease in our state. Chronic diseases are health conditions that are persistent for a long time (1 year or longer) and require ongoing medical attention to manage. The most common chronic diseases are heart disease, obesity, cancer, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes. While risk behaviors such as smoking, poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, and excessive alcohol consumption contribute to chronic disease, social determinants can play a large role in how easy or difficult it is to change habits.

While promotion of healthy behaviors can lower the rate of chronic diseases among a population, it is important to create a context in which healthy behaviors are a convenient and easy choice. Additionally, increased access to routine preventive and medical care, including age-appropriate health screenings, can lower the possibility that chronic diseases both develop or progress to undesired outcomes.³ Therefore it is important to not only encourage individual behavior change, but also to create neighborhoods, communities, and institutions which encourage and support healthy living. This playbook will help you do that in your community so that we can reduce our rates of obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol and lift Alabama out of the bottom 10 in health rankings.



¹ <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/social-determinants-health>

² https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/89491/2017.04.03_urban_blight_and_public_health_vprn_report_finalized.pdf

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/about/index.htm#:~:text=Chronic%20diseases%20are%20defined%20broadly,disability%20in%20the%20United%20States.>

OVERVIEW OF STEPS



- 1 *Identify a champion*
- 2 *Establish a community coalition*
- 3 *Conduct a community assessment*
- 4 *Assess the Built Environment*
- 5 *Develop a community action plan*
- 6 *Create a work plan and budget*
- 7 *Identify partners and funding sources*
- 8 *Create and implement a sustainability and maintenance plan*
- 9 *Create and implement a tailored messaging and marketing plan*
- 10 *Identify and award designations*

*The Live HealthSmart Alabama
playbook is a compilation of information
gathered from decades of research and
serving the community. We are excited
to share this knowledge with you, so you
too can make good health simple.*

MONA FOUAD, M.D.,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
LIVE HEALTHSMART ALABAMA

1 Identify a Champion

Every project needs a champion – someone who will make sure it happens. A community champion is a person who takes on an issue or project and is committed to raising awareness and support for it and working to ensure its success.

A meticulous and systematic assessment should be completed to select the correct individual. The process is described below.



Start Here



End

The community champion can come from a variety of backgrounds representing all range of ages, cultures, genders, and professions such as: individuals (natural community leaders), service providers (healthcare, retirement communities, nursing homes), educators, community-minded groups (professional associations, community associations, faith groups, youth organizations).

After identifying a potential community champion, make sure the individual has the key qualities you need.

Community Champion Key Qualities:

- Strong Relationship with the community being served
- Desire to help the community
- Empathy
- Persistence
- Creativity and resourcefulness
- Personal strength and courage
- Respectfulness
- Agrees to work within LHSA standards and ethics principles
- Willingness to be trained by LHSA
- Willingness to perform the common activities of a LHSA community

Responsibilities of a Community Champion:

- Leading community coalition meetings
- Making decisions (with community's input) on initiatives
- Coordinating implementation efforts to ensure they are completed
- Being the "face" and spokesperson of the initiative
- Engaging potential partners and funders
- Providing continuous leadership, visibility and accountability to ensure program is making positive progress
- Identifying and connecting with community stakeholders and faith-based organizations
- Hosting monthly community stakeholder meetings
- Driving community adoption and participation in established programming

The next step is to assess the readiness to dedicate time to lead the LHSA movement. Once these steps are clear training should be scheduled and completed.

Step One Checklist

Identify a champion

- ☐ **Identify funding for community champion**
- ☐ **Recruit natural community leaders**
- ☐ **Complete Key Qualities Checklist for all candidates**
- ☐ **Select best candidate**
- ☐ **Train champion to lead the LHSA effort**
- ☐ **Champion begins work**

2 Create a Community Coalition

With the champion identified, the next step is to create a community coalition to get the work done. A coalition is a group of individuals and/or organizations with a common interest who agree to work together toward the mission of LHSA. The coalition will support decision-making and implementation.

Tips for

BUILDING THE COALITION:

Putting together a core group:

- Start with well-known and trusted community members
- Contact people in agencies and organizations most affected by social determinants of health
- Talk to influential people with broad social networks

Defining the key structures, functions, and relationships of the coalition:

- Establish the vision, mission and objectives
- Establish the basic governance and operating rules of the coalition
- Solidify the coalition leadership and membership
- Determine the coalition's strategic and action plans, both short-and longer-term
- Identify the coalition's funding
- Communicate the accomplishments of the coalition to encourage public support

RECRUIT MEMBERS TO THE COALITION

Membership of the coalition should be broad and should include the following:

| Coalition Members | Category | Reasoning |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Residents and Stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those most affected by Social Determinants of Health • Formal and informal helpers who can identify and eliminate barriers | These are the people who have a stake in the success of a coalition's efforts and are most affected by what the coalition may do |
| Business and Industry | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction Companies • Advertising/PR • Grocery Stores • Healthcare Providers • Other Local Employers | These leaders can influence community opinion, provide connections to resources and expertise and have a stake in ensuring the health of their employees |
| Community Opinion Leaders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clergy • Business or civic leaders • Informal, respected leaders | These leaders can influence large groups of the community, as others find them credible and respect their voice |
| Policy Makers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local political leaders • State representatives | Their input and engagement can influence policy that impacts health choices |