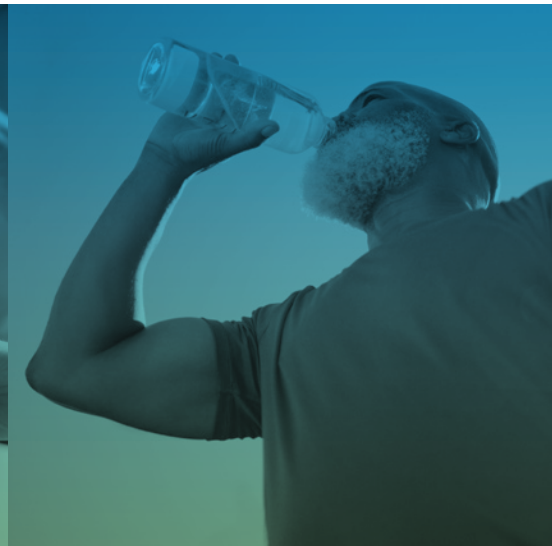


# TOOLKIT FOR CREATING A HEALTHY ALABAMA COMMUNITY

*Ideas to help communities THRIVE!*





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# A New Way to Look at Healthy Communities

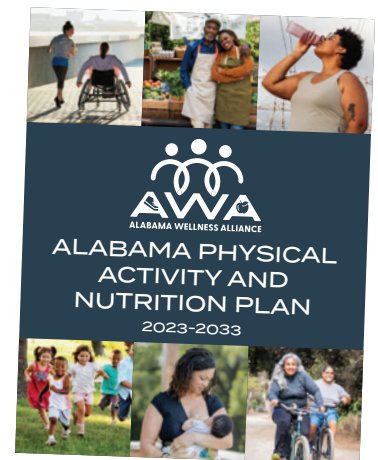
Thriving communities support their members in achieving healthy behaviors. This is accomplished by providing opportunities for safe physical activity, breastfeeding, and access to nutritious foods that are convenient for all members of the community. Communities should focus on implementing policies, systems, and environmental changes that support healthy lifestyles. Community leaders and stakeholders play a critical part in making sure there are resources and opportunities for healthy, active lifestyles. When local governments create active environments to support healthy choices, community members will engage in healthy behaviors and live longer, happier lives.

The Healthy Alabama Communities (HAC) Designation program was developed to assist communities and community leaders in identifying and implementing policy, system, and environmental changes to improve the health of all community members.

## Alabama Physical Activity and Nutrition Plan

The Alabama Physical Activity and Nutrition Plan (ALPAN) recommends policies, programs, and initiatives to support physically active lifestyles and nutritious food choices. State and local leaders, members and leaders of community groups, coalitions, and individuals working to improve physical activity and nutrition opportunities in Alabama may use the plan to:

- Lead changes in policies, systems, and environments.
- Promote development, dissemination, and utilization of resources.
- Encourage healthy lifestyles across the life span.
- Identify strategies to improve personal health.
- Live active and healthy lives within communities.



Communities can use ALPAN to guide decisions that help create healthy opportunities and environments. The HAC Designation Program utilizes ALPAN as a roadmap to facilitate change. ALPAN provides recommendations needed to improve physical activity, breastfeeding, and nutrition in communities. It is also used to assist communities in qualifying for the HAC designation. Developed by the Alabama Wellness Alliance, ALPAN contains evidence-based physical activity and nutrition strategies to improve health using collaborative and consistent approaches.



The HAC toolkit is designed to share resources and ideas to help communities discover ways to make improvements that will facilitate healthy behaviors. It also assists communities that want to complete the HAC designation. These recommendations were pulled from ALPAN and point communities in the right direction towards progress.

*\*There is no obligation to use these specific ideas. Feel free to utilize other resources that support your action plan to create a healthier community.*

### **Ideas to Implement Recommendations that:**

**Improve Physical Activity Access/Opportunities**

**Improve Breastfeeding Access/Opportunities**

**Improve Nutrition Access/Choices**





## Ideas to Improve Physical Activity Access/Opportunities

### 1. Wayfinding Signage

Wayfinding signage provides information to direct people to specific places like local attractions and businesses. It makes it easier for them to walk or bike somewhere safely and comfortably. It increases activity while driving people to locations that benefit businesses and community development.

Move More North Carolina: A Guide to Wayfinding

[eatsmartmovemorenc.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/MoveMoreNC\\_WayfindingGuide\\_LowRes.pdf](https://eatsmartmovemorenc.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/MoveMoreNC_WayfindingGuide_LowRes.pdf)

Wayfinding and Signage Systems for Communities

[publications.ca.uky.edu/sites/publications.ca.uky.edu/files/LA4.pdf](https://publications.ca.uky.edu/sites/publications.ca.uky.edu/files/LA4.pdf)

Neighborhood Wayfinding Assessment – A Pocket Guide

[nationalcenterformobilitymanagement.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Wayfinding\\_Pocket\\_Guide.pdf](https://nationalcenterformobilitymanagement.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Wayfinding_Pocket_Guide.pdf)

### 2. Parks and Trails for Hiking, Biking, and Walking

Parks, trails, and other outdoor public spaces provide unique opportunities for physical activity while giving individuals a chance to enjoy their local, natural resources and scenery.

Alabama's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

[adeca.alabama.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021-Alabama-SCORP.pdf](https://adeca.alabama.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021-Alabama-SCORP.pdf)

Creating Parks and Public Spaces for People of All Ages

[aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2018/parks-and-public-places-PDF-download.html](https://aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2018/parks-and-public-places-PDF-download.html)

100 Alabama Miles Challenge

[100alabamamiles.org](https://100alabamamiles.org)

### 3. Social Marketing Campaign

Social marketing is a method of communication that uses multiple channels to systematically share informative messages. A community-wide social marketing campaign can bring visibility to the importance of physical activity and influence large audiences at one time.

Active People, Healthy Nation

[cdc.gov/active-people-healthy-nation/php/about/index.html](https://cdc.gov/active-people-healthy-nation/php/about/index.html)

Move Your Way

[health.gov/moveyourway](https://health.gov/moveyourway)

For Every Body Campaign

[alabamapublichealth.gov/awa/every-body.html](https://alabamapublichealth.gov/awa/every-body.html)

## 4. Early Child Care Enhancements

Child care providers should conduct developmentally appropriate physical activities with young children and infants. This can be accomplished using assessment tools and resources that support physical activity strategies in early child care settings.

Alabama Healthy Kids, Healthy Future

[alabamapartnershipforchildren.org/our-work/alabama-healthy-kids-healthy-future](http://alabamapartnershipforchildren.org/our-work/alabama-healthy-kids-healthy-future)

Go Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (Go NAPSACC)

[gonapsacc.org](http://gonapsacc.org)

Physical Activity Learning Session (PALS)

[healthykidshealthyfuture.org/trainers/pals](http://healthykidshealthyfuture.org/trainers/pals)

Alabama Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS)

[alabamaqualitystars.org](http://alabamaqualitystars.org)

## 5. Worksite Wellness

A worksite wellness program that builds physical activity into the workday benefits employees as well as employers. Activity at work can increase productivity and boost morale creating a culture of health at work.

DeskFit

[nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/hq\\_deskfit\\_booklet\\_6.10.2020.pdf](http://nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/hq_deskfit_booklet_6.10.2020.pdf)

Live HealthSmart Alabama – Physical Activity

[uab.edu/livehealthsmartal/services/physical-activity](http://uab.edu/livehealthsmartal/services/physical-activity)

## 6. Walk to School Day

A Walk to School Day event is a great way to celebrate the joy of walking to school safely within your community. It pulls together community leaders, students, school staff, and families to draw attention to the benefits of walking.

Walk, Bike, & Roll to School

[walkbiketoschool.org](http://walkbiketoschool.org)

How to Plan a Walk to School Day Event

[ncdot.gov/divisions/integrated-mobility/safety/Documents/planning-walk-to-school-event.pdf](http://ncdot.gov/divisions/integrated-mobility/safety/Documents/planning-walk-to-school-event.pdf)

## 7. Walk Audit

Conducting a walkability audit is a great start to helping communities make the necessary policy, system, and environmental changes needed to allow individuals to walk easily and safely to increase physical activity.

All About Walk Audits: Success Stories and an Opportunity for Funding

[americawalks.org/all-about-walk-audits](http://americawalks.org/all-about-walk-audits)

AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit

[aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/aarp-walk-audit-tool-kit.html](http://aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/aarp-walk-audit-tool-kit.html)

## 8. Point of Decision Prompts

Signs or reminders can be used to nudge people towards making decisions that facilitate physical activity. It is an easy, low-cost method of prompting one to choose being active.

### Prompts to Encourage Physical Activity

[cdc.gov/physical-activity/php/strategies/encouraging-physical-activity.html](https://cdc.gov/physical-activity/php/strategies/encouraging-physical-activity.html)

### Stairwell Message Signs

[cdc.gov/physical-activity/php/stairwell-prompts/signs.html](https://cdc.gov/physical-activity/php/stairwell-prompts/signs.html)

## 9. Complete Streets

Complete Streets is an approach to road design that takes into consideration people, not just automobiles. It guides a city or community to make simple changes that accommodates all modes of transportation – cars, bicycles, and pedestrians/joggers.

### Huntsville's The Big Picture – Complete Streets Policy

[bigpicturehuntsville.com/policies/complete-streets](https://bigpicturehuntsville.com/policies/complete-streets)

### No car? No problem! Bringing Complete Streets to Birmingham

[states.aarp.org/alabama/working-together-to-bring-complete-streets-to-birmingham](https://states.aarp.org/alabama/working-together-to-bring-complete-streets-to-birmingham)

## 10. Physical Activity Fundraiser

Be strategic with fundraising efforts and provide an opportunity for participants be active. A fundraiser that includes physical activity will be fun, interactive, and still bring in dollars.

### Keeping the Fun in Fundraising While Complying with Alabama School Fundraising Policy

[alabamapublichealth.gov/npa/assets/funinfundraising.pdf](https://alabamapublichealth.gov/npa/assets/funinfundraising.pdf)

### Action for Healthy Kids Tip Sheet – Healthy Fundraisers

[actionforhealthykids.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Healthy-Fundraisers-Tip-Sheet-1.pdf](https://actionforhealthykids.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Healthy-Fundraisers-Tip-Sheet-1.pdf)

### Get Fit for St. Jude

[fundraising.stjude.org/site/TR?fr\\_id=157663](https://fundraising.stjude.org/site/TR?fr_id=157663)

## 11. Shade Structures

Adding shade to outdoor spaces enhances enjoyment and comfort for those using the space for activity. Shade structures can be added to playgrounds, parks, and zoos to prolong enjoyment and protect users from ultraviolet rays and heat.

### American Academy of Dermatology Association - Shade Structure Grants

[aad.org/public/public-health/shade-structure-grants](https://aad.org/public/public-health/shade-structure-grants)

### Shade Adds Value to Your Park

[nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2023/june/shade-adds-value-to-your-park](https://nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2023/june/shade-adds-value-to-your-park)

### Throwing (Good) Shade for Placemaking

[sociallifeproject.org/shade-trees-awnings-placemaking](https://sociallifeproject.org/shade-trees-awnings-placemaking)



## Ideas to Improve Breastfeeding Access/Opportunities

### 1. BF Friendly Child Care Centers

Child care providers can help moms breastfeed longer by following best practices that support them in child care centers. Simple strategies can be implemented to help moms continue giving their baby breastmilk after returning to work.

Supporting Breastfeeding Families in Early Care and Education (ECE) Programs

[cdc.gov/obesity/strategies/early-care-education/pdf/breastfeed-ece-082022-508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/strategies/early-care-education/pdf/breastfeed-ece-082022-508.pdf)

Healthy Kids, Healthy Future - Be a Champion for New Mothers

[healthykidshealthyfuture.org/5-healthy-goals/support-breast-feeding](https://healthykidshealthyfuture.org/5-healthy-goals/support-breast-feeding)

Alabama Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Certification

[aces.edu/blog/topics/parenting/alabama-breastfeeding-friendly-child-care-certification](https://aces.edu/blog/topics/parenting/alabama-breastfeeding-friendly-child-care-certification)

### 2. Worksite Support/Space Accommodations

When breastfeeding moms return to work, they often find it difficult to continue. Women should have adequate space and time for pumping breast milk in the workplace so there is no interruption to breastfeeding their baby.

Office on Women's Health – Supporting Nursing Moms at Work

[womenshealth.gov/supporting-nursing-moms-work](https://www.womenshealth.gov/supporting-nursing-moms-work)

Supporting Breastfeeding in the Workplace

[asphn.org/resource\\_files/657/657\\_resource\\_file2.pdf](https://www.asphn.org/resource_files/657/657_resource_file2.pdf)

Pregnant and Postpartum Workers: Know Your Rights!

[abetterbalance.org/pregnant-postpartum-workers-know-your-rights](https://abetterbalance.org/pregnant-postpartum-workers-know-your-rights)

### 3. Social Marketing Campaign

Social marketing is a method of communication that uses multiple channels to systematically share informative messages. A community-wide social marketing campaign can bring visibility to the importance of breastfeeding and influence large audiences at one time.

It's Only Natural

[womenshealth.gov/its-only-natural/partner-resources/infographic-text](https://www.womenshealth.gov/its-only-natural/partner-resources/infographic-text)

WIC Breastfeeding Support – Social Media Toolkits/Messages

[wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/social-media-messages](https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/social-media-messages)



## 4. Peer Support Program

A peer support program encourages and gives assistance to pregnant and breastfeeding women by walking with them through the process so they're successful. It is led by a peer from the community who is breastfeeding themselves or has done so in the past.

Alabama Cohosh Collaborative

[alabamacohosh.org/resource-list](http://alabamacohosh.org/resource-list)

Alabama WIC Breastfeeding Resource Guide 2023-24

[alabamabreastfeeding.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/FHS.WIC\\_BreastfeedingResourceGuide.0923na-1.pdf](http://alabamabreastfeeding.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/FHS.WIC_BreastfeedingResourceGuide.0923na-1.pdf)

## 5. BF Friendly Environment/Spaces

Public spaces should be designed to welcome breastfeeding and eliminate barriers that prevent breastfeeding. There are simple solutions that a community can use to help moms feel more at ease breastfeeding when out in public.

Breastfeeding-Friendly Public Spaces – A Toolkit for Local Governments

[interiorhealth.ca/sites/default/files/PDFS/breastfeeding-friendly-public-spaces-toolkit.pdf](http://interiorhealth.ca/sites/default/files/PDFS/breastfeeding-friendly-public-spaces-toolkit.pdf)

Creating Breastfeeding Friendly Public Spaces

[bit.ly/breastfeedinginpublicspaces](http://bit.ly/breastfeedinginpublicspaces)

## 6. Baby Café

A Baby Café is a free, informal space that offers a network of support for breastfeeding moms and their family members. In a Baby Café they receive resources, education, and time to connect with other moms who are also breastfeeding.

Baby Café USA

[babycafeusa.org](http://babycafeusa.org)

[babycafeusa.org/newbabycafe.html](http://babycafeusa.org/newbabycafe.html)

Alabama Breastfeeding Committee

[alabamabreastfeeding.org/lactation-locations](http://alabamabreastfeeding.org/lactation-locations)

## 7. Baby-Friendly Hospital

A Baby-Friendly Hospital is dedicated to making sure moms and babies are successful with breastfeeding and promoting mother-baby bonding immediately after birth.

Alabama Breastfeeding Committee

[alabamabreastfeeding.org/baby-friendly-hospitals](http://alabamabreastfeeding.org/baby-friendly-hospitals)

Baby-Friendly USA Designation Process

[babyfriendlyusa.org/for-facilities/designation-process](http://babyfriendlyusa.org/for-facilities/designation-process)



## Ideas to Improve Nutrition Access/Choices

### 1. Nutrition Guidelines

Nutrition guidelines increase the availability of healthier choices in venues where meals, snacks, and beverages are served such as worksites, concession stands, public parks, and hospitals. Guidelines establish nutrition criteria that help individuals easily make food and beverage choices that are healthier.

#### A Roadmap for Comprehensive Food Service Guidelines

[cspinet.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/resource/Roadmap\\_for\\_Comprehensive\\_FSG\\_5-6-21.pdf](https://cspinet.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/resource/Roadmap_for_Comprehensive_FSG_5-6-21.pdf)

#### Food Service Guidelines

[cdc.gov/nutrition/php/food-service-guidelines](https://cdc.gov/nutrition/php/food-service-guidelines)

#### Healthy Vending Machine Program and Healthy Checkout Program – Good Choice

[alabamapublichealth.gov/npa/good-choice.html](https://alabamapublichealth.gov/npa/good-choice.html)

### 2. Farm to School

Farm to School brings local producers and schools together so that students are exposed to the delicious taste of homegrown food. Participating schools are reimbursed for serving Alabama grown products and have access to educational resources for teachers to support Farm to School activities.

#### Farm to School Network

[farmtoschool.org](https://farmtoschool.org)

#### Alabama Farm to School Program

[agi.alabama.gov/fts/about-farm-to-school](https://agi.alabama.gov/fts/about-farm-to-school)

#### Farm to School Planning Toolkit

[fns.usda.gov/f2s/farm-school-planning-toolkit](https://fns.usda.gov/f2s/farm-school-planning-toolkit)

### 3. Social Marketing Campaign

Social marketing is a method of communication that uses multiple channels to systematically share informative messages. A community-wide social marketing campaign can bring visibility to the importance of having access to and consuming healthy foods and influence large audiences at one time.

#### National Nutrition Month

[eatright.org/about-national-nutrition-month](http://eatright.org/about-national-nutrition-month)

#### Have a Plant- National Fruits and Veggies Month Toolkit

[fruitsandveggies.org/nfvmtoolkit/nfvmtoolkit-social-media](http://fruitsandveggies.org/nfvmtoolkit/nfvmtoolkit-social-media)

#### For Every Body Campaign

[alabamapublichealth.gov/awa/every-body.html](http://alabamapublichealth.gov/awa/every-body.html)

### 4. Fruit and Vegetable Programs

Fruit and vegetable programs, like produce prescriptions and voucher incentives, help increase produce consumption. These programs improve access to fruits and vegetables and make them more affordable which in turn, positively impacts local farmers.

#### Strategies for Fruit and Vegetable Voucher Incentives and Produce Prescriptions

[cdc.gov/nutrition/php/public-health-strategy/voucher-incentives-produce-prescriptions.html](http://cdc.gov/nutrition/php/public-health-strategy/voucher-incentives-produce-prescriptions.html)

#### Rural Produce Prescription Toolkit

[bit.ly/ruralproduceprescriptiontoolkit](http://bit.ly/ruralproduceprescriptiontoolkit)

#### Components of Fruit and Vegetable Programs

[cdc.gov/nutrition/php/incentives-prescriptions/essential-components.html](http://cdc.gov/nutrition/php/incentives-prescriptions/essential-components.html)

### 5. Double Up Food Bucks/Healthy Fluid Milk Incentive Program

A Double Up Food Bucks program increases access to fresh fruits and vegetables for families receiving SNAP benefits. For each dollar of SNAP benefits spent on fresh fruits and vegetables, Double Up Food Bucks will match it with a dollar incentive for more fruits and vegetables. Similarly, a Healthy Fluid Milk Incentive program provides additional dollars for low fat milk to SNAP recipients.

#### Double Up Food Bucks Alabama

[hsi.auburn.edu/au-dufb/index.php](http://hsi.auburn.edu/au-dufb/index.php)

#### Double Up Alabama

[foodbanknorthal.org/programs/doubleupbucks](http://foodbanknorthal.org/programs/doubleupbucks)

#### Attracting SNAP Customers to Your Farmers' Market

[fns.usda.gov/snap/attracting-snap-customers](http://fns.usda.gov/snap/attracting-snap-customers)

#### Add Milk! Healthy Fluid Milk Incentive

[hsi.auburn.edu/au-addmilk](http://hsi.auburn.edu/au-addmilk)

## 6. Food Pantries

Starting a food pantry is one way to provide relief to those who are food insecure. By offering healthier items in the pantry, participants go home with foods that nourish and decrease hunger.

How to Start a Food Pantry – Food Bank of North Alabama

[foodbanknorthal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/How-to-Start-a-Food-Pantry-Part-1.pdf](https://foodbanknorthal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/How-to-Start-a-Food-Pantry-Part-1.pdf)

Little Free Pantry

[littlefreepantry.org](https://littlefreepantry.org)

School Food Pantry Program

[feedingamerica.org/our-work/hunger-relief-programs/school-pantry](https://feedingamerica.org/our-work/hunger-relief-programs/school-pantry)

## 7. Community Gardens/Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

Community gardens increase access to nutritious food and create a sense of purpose, engagement, and unity for members. Local fruits and vegetables can be distributed through CSA which supports farmers within the community. These locally grown food sources can fill gaps for families who face food insecurity.

A Guide to Starting a Community Garden – Alabama Cooperative Extension System

[aces.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/UNP-2193-A-Guide-to-Starting-a-Community-Garden.pdf](https://aces.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/UNP-2193-A-Guide-to-Starting-a-Community-Garden.pdf)

Community Gardens – The Wellness Coalition

[thewellnesscoalition.org/gardens](https://thewellnesscoalition.org/gardens)

A Healthier You with Community Gardens – Nutrition and Aging Resource Center

[acl.gov/sites/default/files/nutrition/HealthierYouWithCommunityGardens.pdf](https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/nutrition/HealthierYouWithCommunityGardens.pdf)

Farm Food Collaborative – Food Bank of North Alabama

[foodbanknorthal.org/programs/ffc](https://foodbanknorthal.org/programs/ffc)

The ABCs of CSAs in Huntsville, Madison, and North Alabama – Rocket City Mom

[rocketcitymom.com/blog/2023/03/12/the-abcs-of-csas-in-huntsville-madison-and-north-alabama](https://rocketcitymom.com/blog/2023/03/12/the-abcs-of-csas-in-huntsville-madison-and-north-alabama)

## 8. Healthy Food Retail

Many rural communities do not have adequate grocery stores or other options for food. They're considered to be a food desert and when a food desert exists, a community often relies on less healthy selections from gas stations or convenient stores. Healthy food retail initiatives can help retailers offer better choices of nutrient dense foods.

Healthier Food Retail – An Action Guide for Public Health Practitioners

[cdc.gov/nutrition/media/pdfs/Healthier-Food-Retail-guide-508.pdf](https://cdc.gov/nutrition/media/pdfs/Healthier-Food-Retail-guide-508.pdf)

Stock Healthy, Shop Healthy

[extension.missouri.edu/programs/stock-healthy-shop-healthy](https://extension.missouri.edu/programs/stock-healthy-shop-healthy)

Good Choice - Alabama Healthy Checkout Program

[alabamapublichealth.gov/npa/checkout.html](https://alabamapublichealth.gov/npa/checkout.html)

## General Resources

**ALProHealth Guidebook** – assists communities to plan for and implement policy, system, and environmental interventions that promote healthy food access and active transportation.

[aces.edu/blog/topics/health/alprohealth-guidebook](https://aces.edu/blog/topics/health/alprohealth-guidebook)

**Reaching People with Disabilities through Healthy Communities - Inclusive Healthy Communities Model** – promotes disability inclusion strategies and make healthy living easier for all people across community sectors.

[cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/reaching-people.html](https://cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/reaching-people.html)

**The CDC Guide to Strategies to Increase Physical Activity in the Community** – provides guidance for program managers and policy makers on selecting strategies to increase physical activity in a community.

[cdc.gov/diabetes/news/media/pdfs/CDC-guide-strategies-increase-physical-activity.pdf](https://cdc.gov/diabetes/news/media/pdfs/CDC-guide-strategies-increase-physical-activity.pdf)

**Designing Activity-Friendly Communities** – provides information on how to create environments that are easier for people to walk or bike.

[cdc.gov/physical-activity/features/designing-activity-friendly-communities.html](https://cdc.gov/physical-activity/features/designing-activity-friendly-communities.html)

**The CDC Guide to Strategies to Support Breastfeeding Mothers and Babies** – gives guidance on how to select strategies to support breastfeeding mothers and increase breastfeeding rates.

[cdc.gov/breastfeeding/pdf/BF-Guide-508.PDF](https://cdc.gov/breastfeeding/pdf/BF-Guide-508.PDF)

**The CDC Guide to Strategies to Increase the Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables** – provides guidance on how to select strategies that can increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables.

[cdc.gov/obesity/downloads/fandv\\_2011\\_web\\_tag508.pdf](https://cdc.gov/obesity/downloads/fandv_2011_web_tag508.pdf)

**Partner Program** – offers resources to help a community with walking and cycling as a mode of active transportation in communities.

[apartnerprogram.com/resource-tools.html](https://apartnerprogram.com/resource-tools.html)





## Potential Barriers and Solutions to Implementing Change

As a community begins the journey towards creating a healthier place to live for its residents, frequently, there are challenges to think through. There may be significant barriers to implementing change such as:

- Limited Funding
- Limited Knowledge/Training/Expertise
- Limited Educational Resources
- Limited Buy-In/Support

The HAC Designation Program is designed to reduce barriers for communities. The program offers a network of partners that will provide support and assistance in making meaningful changes. Training, resources, expertise, and the potential for grant opportunities are the strength of the program and participating communities will be able to access these tools.

In addition, social determinants of health can greatly impact health outcomes. Social determinants of health are outside circumstances that individuals do not often have control over such as education, housing, transportation, healthcare services, and economic stability. A successful community will take these things into account when creating a plan of action for better health. Learn more at [cdc.gov/public-health-gateway/php/about/social-determinants-of-health.html](https://cdc.gov/public-health-gateway/php/about/social-determinants-of-health.html).

# BECOME A HEALTHY ALABAMA COMMUNITY

Communities participating in the Alabama Communities of Excellence (ACE) program are also eligible to become designated as a Healthy Alabama Community (HAC).



## STEPS TO RECEIVE DESIGNATION AS A HAC:

1. Complete ACE application and all steps required for ACE acceptance.
2. Community assessment is completed and areas for improvement are identified.
3. ACE community creates a strategic plan that includes action items for Quality of Life (Amenities/Aesthetics and Healthcare). The healthcare portion must address at least two of the following priority areas:
  - Improve Physical Activity Access/Opportunities
  - Improve Breastfeeding Access/Opportunities
  - Improve Nutrition Access/Choices
4. The Alabama Physical Activity and Nutrition State Plan (ALPAN) is utilized to guide and inform decisions by communities on goals/objectives/recommendations to select in the priority areas to achieve the HAC designation.
5. Complete a plan of action and submit to HAC staff for review and approval to begin the process for becoming a HAC
6. Before implementation, the eligible community participates in training on strategies that will assist in meeting recommendations to improve nutrition, physical activity, and/or breastfeeding access and opportunities.
7. Each community will have up to three years to complete its recommendations and be recognized. See requirements for awarding of designation below.

### Healthy Alabama Community Designation Requirements:

- Complete a total of 5 Recommendations in, at least 2 out of 3 Priority Areas.

These are the minimum requirements for the designation; however, more recommendations can be completed if desired.

## HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR HAC:

ALPAN - [alabamapublichealth.gov/awa/alpan.html](http://alabamapublichealth.gov/awa/alpan.html)

HAC Toolkit - [healthyalcommunities.org](http://healthyalcommunities.org)

NPA website - [alabamapublichealth.gov/npa](http://alabamapublichealth.gov/npa)

ALProHealth Guidebook - [aces.edu/blog/topics/health/alprohealth-guidebook](http://aces.edu/blog/topics/health/alprohealth-guidebook)

CDC Prevention Strategies and Guidelines - [cdc.gov/obesity/resources/strategies-guidelines.html](http://cdc.gov/obesity/resources/strategies-guidelines.html)





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