Incentive Policies to Encourage Physical Activity and Healthy Eating

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METHODS

Study Purpose

1.) Describe the prevalence of local land use policies that incentivize the development of park and recreation areas, open space, and sidewalks as a means to promote physical activity.

2.) Describe the prevalence of local policies that address fresh food financing or incentive policies as a means to promote healthy eating.

INSTRUMENTS

Bridging the Gap is a nationally recognized research program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation dedicated to improving the understanding of how policies and environmental factors influence diet, physical activity and obesity among youth, as well as youth tobacco use. Bridging the Gap is a joint project of the University of Illinois at Chicago’s Institute for Health Research and Policy and the University of Michigan’s Institute for Social Research. For more information, visit www.bridgingthegapresearch.org

RESULTS

Physical Activity Incentive Results

- 2 jurisdictions incentivized healthy food access through financial incentives.
- 3 jurisdictions incentivized healthy food access through financial incentives.

Any active living financing/incentive policies

Food Policy Incentive Results

- Only 3 jurisdictions incentivized healthy food access.
- 2 jurisdictions incentivized healthy food access through financial incentives.

Any active living financing/incentive policies

CONCLUSION

- Data from this study suggests that jurisdictions are more likely to incorporate incentives that facilitate active living environments in their land use and zoning policies than incentives that address healthy food access.
- The National Physical Activity Plan recommends incentives as a way to increase active transportation and physical activity. Some strategies suggest incentives for projects that create active transportation networks that not only include roadways but also pedestrian/bike accommodation but also networks for trails and multi-use pathways.