

History of the Muskingum County Wellness Coalition

The Muskingum County Wellness Coalition began in the 1990's as the Healthy Hearts Coalition. Membership is open to any agency or individual who is interested in encouraging community changes that improve the health of individuals. Current agency members include Genesis HealthCare System, Zanesville-Muskingum County Health Department, Muskingum Valley Park District, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Girl Scouts, PRO-Muskingum...Families and Children First, Muskingum Family Y, American Cancer Society, Northside Pharmacy, OSU Extension, City of Zanesville, Starlight School, The Fieldhouse, Brighton Presbyterian Church, YES Muskingum.

The mission of the coalition is to be “dedicated to educating and promoting healthy lifestyle choices for Muskingum County residents”. Over the years, the coalition hosted a variety of professional education programs for medical providers, school cooks, teachers and business leaders. Topics for these programs included childhood obesity, high blood pressure, Ounce of Prevention for medical offices, school wellness policy development and CATCH for school personnel and menu ideas and nutrition for school food service staff. Over the past year, special emphasis was provided to encourage schools to complete the CDC's School Health Index, an environmental and systems assessment of school health programs and policies.

In 2007, the Coalition officially became the Muskingum County Wellness Coalition in order to create a more focused approach on chronic disease prevention. The Coalition has worked over the last past six months to create an action plan to reduce the obesity rate in Muskingum County.

Partial funding for the Coalition and various activities are funded by the Cardiovascular Health Grant, the Community Obesity Prevention Grant and the Child and Family Health Services Grant from the Ohio Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Both projects are initiatives of the Office of Healthy Ohio at the Ohio Department of Health.