



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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GOVERNOR

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**DOH AND MAUI COUNTY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND NUTRITION
COALITION SPONSOR ACTIVE LIVING COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS
ON MAUI, MOLOKA'I, AND LANA'I**

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) Healthy Hawai'i Initiative (HHI) and the Maui County Physical Activity and Nutrition Coalition will host Active Living Community Workshops in five locations across Maui County. Three workshops are scheduled for the Wailuku/Kahului area, one in Lana'i City, and one on Moloka'i.

Active living communities are designed to provide opportunities for people of all abilities to engage in routine daily physical activity and have access to healthy and affordable foods. Active living is promoted by having bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly designs, mixed-use developments, recreational facilities, and schools located in walkable neighborhoods.

National guidelines recommend that adults should engage in a minimum 30 minutes of physical activity per day, and children should engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day.

In 2007, about 26,000, or 24.1 percent of adults in Maui County were considered obese. Among regions within Maui County, Moloka'i had the highest rate of adult obesity at 35.4 percent. In the same year, about 13,000, or 12.1 percent of adults in Maui County were physically inactive, with higher rates of inactivity occurring in the Lahaina/Wailuku and Upcountry/Hana regions.

Numerous studies show that people in activity-friendly environments are more likely to be physically active during leisure time and on a regular basis. For example, those who live in neighborhoods with a mix of shops and businesses within walking distance have a 35 percent lower risk of obesity.

“Environmental factors have a strong influence on healthy behaviors,” stated Director of Health Chiyome Fukino, M.D. “The design of our communities holds potential for addressing many of Hawai‘i’s public health concerns, including obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, asthma, injury, and depression.”

Last year, DOH and Mark Fenton, a nationally recognized expert in walkable, bicycle-friendly community policies and designs and their public health impacts, worked with communities on the Big Island. As a result of his presentations and the work of the Hawai‘i County Planning Department, the concepts of complete streets and appropriate zoning to support connected communities, safe pedestrian and bike-friendly paths and multiple modes of transportation has been incorporated into the county’s Community Development Plans.

In March of this year, DOH and Fenton conducted a series of Active Living Community Workshops along the Leeward Coast of O‘ahu where one of the recommendations included developing a bicycle and pedestrian path that would extend from Nanakuli to Kaena Point. DOH and Fenton also provided “train the trainer” sessions as part of an effort to expand the outreach within the local community.

Nalani Aki, Healthy Hawai‘i Initiative community programs coordinator, worked closely with Fenton over the course of the last year and participated in the train the trainer workshops. With Fenton’s support, Aki will lead the Maui County Workshops scheduled for June.

“Community design is one of the keys to a healthier, active community,” stated Aki. “In the Active Living Community Workshops, our goal is to provide reasonable, low-cost, and high-impact ideas for implementing changes in our island communities.”

The DOH has been working closely with the Maui County Physical Activity and Nutrition Coalition to promote workshops through schools, churches, community agencies, and businesses. The workshops are a part of the continuing effort of the DOH to engage the community in increasing opportunities for healthy living. The public is encouraged to attend the following workshops:

- June 2, 2008, 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., Cameron Center Auditorium
- June 2, 2008, 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., Cameron Center Conference Room 1 & 2
- June 3, 2008, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., Pomaikai Elementary School
- June 4, 2008, 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., Lana‘i Senior Center
- June 5, 2008, 2:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m., Moloka‘i Queen Liliuokalani Children’s Center

For more information or to sign up for a workshop call Sandra McGuiness at 572-1782 (on Maui) or Heidi Hansen-Smith at (808) 586-4495 (on O'ahu). The Active Living Community Workshops are part of the Healthy Hawai'i Initiative's social-ecological approach that reduces the burden of chronic disease in Hawai'i by encouraging physical activity, healthy eating and living tobacco free. For more information on the Healthy Hawai'i Initiative visit www.healthyhawaii.com.

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