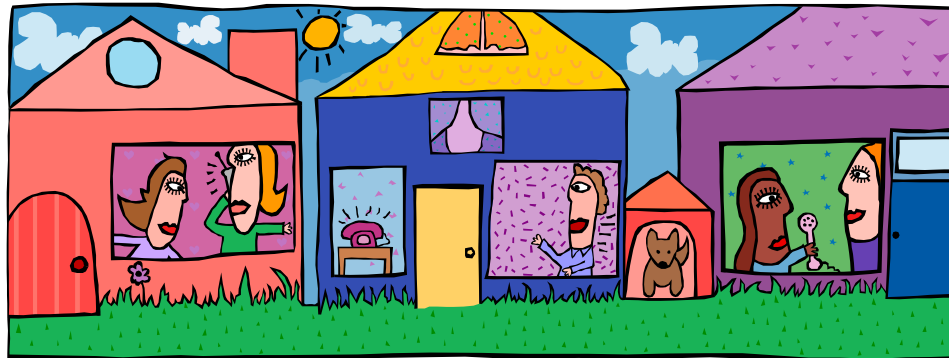# Your Health Matters:
Growing Active, Healthy Communities

5: Community Assessments

Community Assessments: Learning Objectives

- Identify ways to determine gaps and assets which influence physical activity and healthy eating in your community.

Power of a Community Assessment

- Assessments identify areas to:
  - Improve a policy
  - Change a system
  - Enhance the environment
- Multiple assessments can better examine an issue and involve the community in:
  - Helping to collect data
  - Helping to generate meaning
  - Helping to share findings and create action plans
- Assessments can be targeted to specific "problem areas."

Lack of physical activity and healthy eating in communities

- We know our own perception but we need to look and listen for others' perceptions.
  - Observations
  - PhotoVoice
  - Vending Machine Assessment
  - Walkability/Bikeability Audits
  - Discussion Groups
  - Surveys

Observations

- Allows you to gather clues and generate conclusions about specific places or experiences

PhotoVoice

- Combines photography with grassroots social action

- Youth and adults represent their community or point of view by taking photographs and adding text to describe their photographs

- A showcase of the best photos happens where community members can talk and decide to start making positive community change

Physical activity in your community is…

"Exercise can be fun. This park is all the way downtown and is locked up most of the time. I want there to be a fun park like this that isn't locked up by my house."

Site:_____ **Vending machine number:**_____

Observer's name:_____

Date (mo/day/year):_____/_____/_____   **Type of machine:** ❑ **Food**   ❑ **Beverage**

MANDATORY		FILL IN WHICHEVER IS MISSING FROM PHOTO			
Row #, starting from top (top row=1)	Item #, from left (left most item=1)	Product Name & Type (e.g., 100% whole grain, low sugar)	Brand	Size (include units)	Price
Notes:					

Walkability/Bikeability Assessment

- Designed to assess pedestrian facilities, destinations, and surroundings along or near a walking or biking route and identify improvements to make the route more attractive or useful

Tools for Walkability/Bikeability Assessment

Walkability Checklist

How walkable is your community?

Take a walk with a child and decide for yourselves.

Everyone benefits from walking. These benefits include: improved fitness, cleaner air, reduced risks of certain health problems, and a greater sense of community. But walking needs to be safe and easy. Take a walk with your child and use this checklist to decide if your neighborhood is a friendly place to walk. Take heart if you find problems, there are ways you can make things better.

Getting started:

First, you'll need to pick a place to walk, like the route to school, a friend's house or just somewhere fun to go. The second step involves the checklist. Read over the checklist before you go, and as you walk, note the locations of things you would like to change. At the end of your walk, give each question a rating. Then add up the numbers to see how you rated your walk overall. After you've rated your walk and identified any problem areas, the next step is to figure out what you can do to improve your community's score. You'll find both immediate answers and long-term solutions under "Improving Your Community's Score…" on the third page.

Federal Highway Administration · National Highway Traffic Safety Administration · SafeRoutes · Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center

Bikeability Checklist

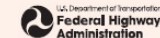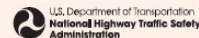### How bikeable is your community?

Riding a bike is fun!

Bicycling is a great way to get around and to get your daily dose of physical activity. It's good for the environment, and it can save you money. No wonder many communities are encouraging people to ride their bikes more often!

Can you get to where you want to go by bike?

Some communities are more bikeable than others: how does yours rate? Read over the questions in this checklist and then take a ride in your community, perhaps to the local shops, to visit a friend, or even to work. See if you can get where you want to go by bicycle, even if you are just riding around the neighborhood to get some exercise.

At the end of your ride, answer each question and, based on your opinion, circle an overall rating for each question. You can also note any problems you encountered by checking the appropriate box(es). Be sure to make a careful note of any specific locations that need improvement.

Add up the numbers to see how you rated your ride. Then, turn to the pages that show you how to begin to improve those areas where you gave your community a low score. Before you ride, make sure your bike is in good working order, put on a helmet, and be sure you can manage the ride

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration · Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center · Federal Highway Administration

Discussion Groups

- These small groups of 8-10 people gather information and opinions of the participants and are guided by a trained facilitator.

Surveys

- Postal
- Telephone
- Face-to-face
- Web-based
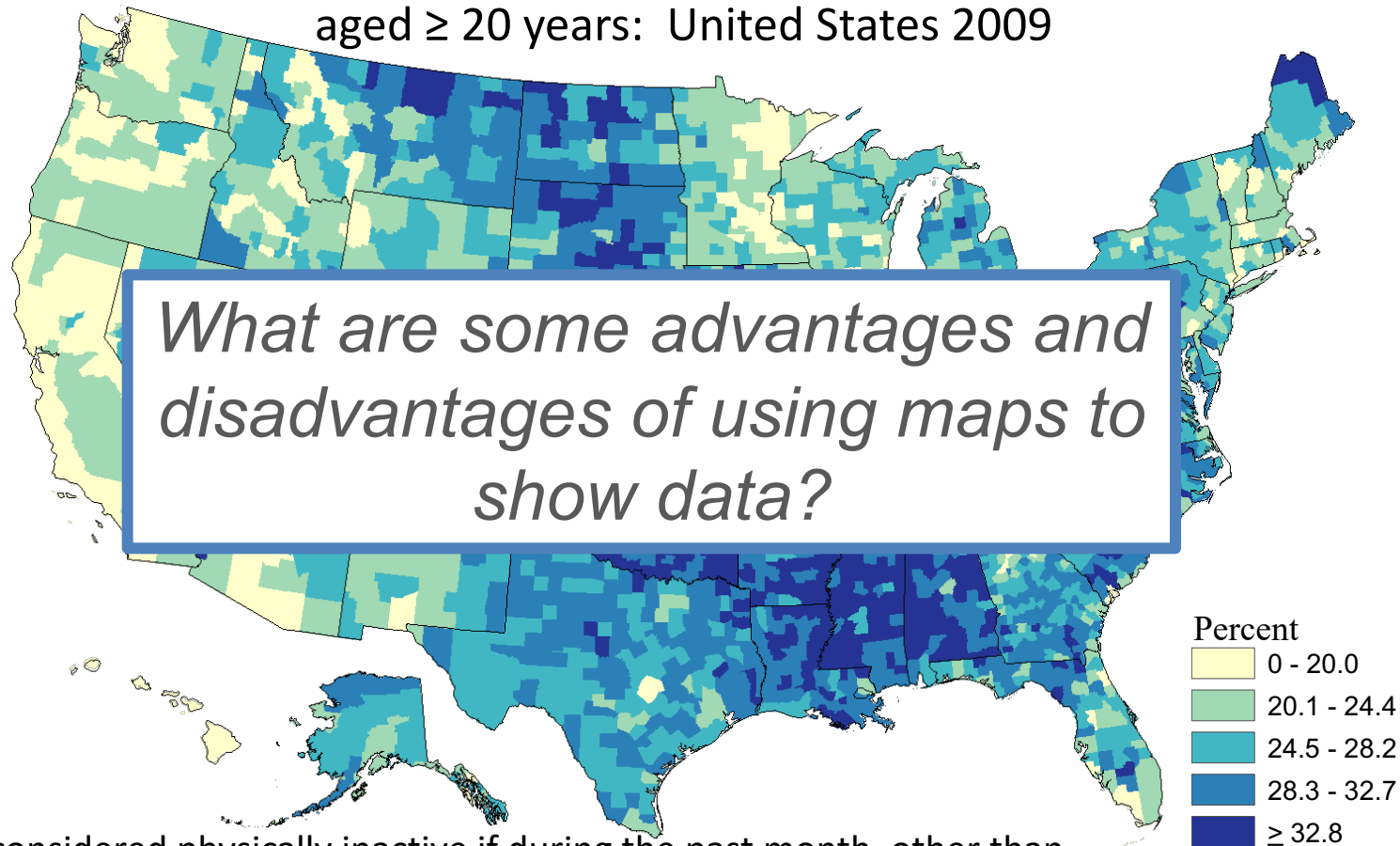- Social media (Facebook, twitter, blogs, etc.)

Tools for Web-based Surveys

- Google Forms (www.google.com/drive/apps.html) or SurveyMonkey (www.SurveyMonkey.com) allow you to create your own surveys for free and email the link to participants or post them on a webpage or social media site.
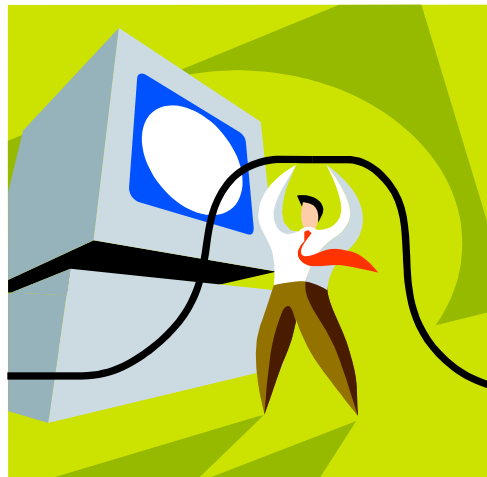
Use Maps to Show Data

County-level Estimates of Leisure-time Physical Inactivity among Adults
aged ≥ 20 years: United States 2009

What are some advantages and disadvantages of using maps to show data?

Percent
- 0 - 20.0
- 20.1 - 24.4
- 24.5 - 28.2
- 28.3 - 32.7
- ≥ 32.8

A person is considered physically inactive if during the past month, other than
a regular job, he or she did not participate in any physical activities or
exercises such as running, calisthenics, golf, gardening, or walking for exercise.

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Community Mapping

- Is used to reveal people's different perspectives about a community and see the resources available in a community.
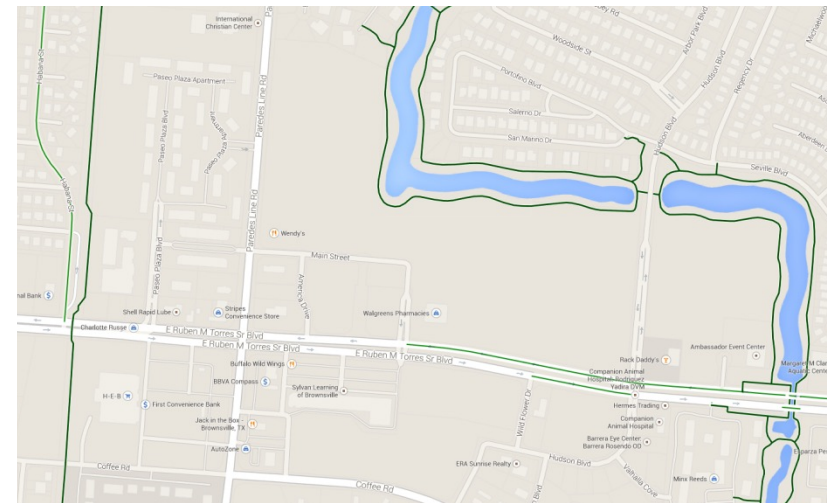
Trails   Dedicated lanes   Bicycle friendly roads

www.google.com/maps

Community Assessment Tools https://www.rotary.org/en/document/578%E2%80%8E

Mapping My Community

ACTIVITY

- Think about the following:
  - Schools, parks, playgrounds
  - Sidewalks, crosswalks, street lights
  - Bus stops or other public transportation
  - Grocery stores
  - Churches
  - Major roads

  - Housing (apartments, condos, houses on larger lots, vacant lots)
  - Bike lanes or trails
  - Farmers markets or community gardens
  - Hospitals/clinics
  - YMCAs or gyms
  - Other organizations that are important to your community

http://www.walkscore.com/

Where to look for tools?

- University of Kansas Community Toolbox (http://ctb.ku.edu/en/default.aspx)
  - Creating and Maintaining Coalitions and Partnerships
  - Analyzing Problems
  - Developing Action Plans
  - Developing an Intervention
  - Advocating for Change
  - Influencing Policy Development
  - Evaluating the Initiative
  - Sustaining the Work

- www.activelivingresearch.org
  - Walkability/Bikeability Assessment
  - Park Observation Forms
  - Physical Activity Assessments
  - Urban and Rural Physical Activity Assessments
  - Nutrition Environment Measures Survey

Where can I find local data?

- Texas Department of State Health Services http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/
  (Go to "Health Data")

- County and City Health Departments

- Local Universities
  (Nursing/Public Health/Kinesiology/Education/Policy departments)

- Hospitals and Clinics

- United Way

- Texas Education Agency
  (Academic Fitnessgram)

- Community/non-profit Organizations
  (Individuals who write grants and may have local data)

Statistics and Stories

- Results can be presented simply.
- Highlight comparisons to national and state findings, ask these questions when looking at the data:
    - What is the obesity level in my community compared to the rest of the state or nation?
    - What percentage of my community are meeting the physical activity recommendations?

- Combine the data with your own stories.
    - Your personal stories are very important.
    - They have a huge impact on their own, but with a few simple statistics they can have an even larger impact.

Community Assessments:
Key Point Recap

- Use any or all of the previous ways to look at your community.
- Think about what methods will work best for your community, all methods have positives and negatives.
- Don't forget to ask your community what they want!
- Have community members help lead the assessment.
- Specific, local stories and evidence can help to make the case.

MY PLAN
Community Assessments

What method of community assessment will you use in your community?

Walkability Debrief

1. **Tally up your scores**

2. **What good things stood out on your walk?**
   a) **Sidewalks – were they wide enough? Maintenance? Lighting? Safety features? Transparency? Other?**

3. **What could be improved upon?**
   a) **Sidewalks? Maintenance? Lighting? Safety features? Transparency, Other?**

4. **What other tools would could help when conducting an walkability audit?**
   a) **Google areal map, extra set of eyes, camera**

5. **What are the next steps?**

Let's move!

10-minute Activity Break

Switch to
Prioritize Strategies
PowerPoint