

Fox Valley Residents Issued “Passport” to Active Living



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The most recent Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index ranked Wisconsin 36th out of 50 when it comes to the most obese states in the country. The Badger State moved a notch closer to the “healthy” end of the scale compared to 2013.

The Fox Valley and Wisconsin as a whole are dealing with an obesity problem.

A group in the Fox Valley is kicking off a 12-week summer program aimed at tackling the obesity issue.

“Obesity is something that’s plaguing our country and the Fox Valley is no exception,” says Emily Dieringer with Weight of the Fox Valley. “About two-thirds of our population is overweight or obese which is detrimental to a lot of potential chronic diseases and other ill-health effects.”

Weight of the Fox Valley, a community health initiative, is launching a pilot program called “Passport to Active Living.” The 12-week program encourages residents to get active by exploring the local trails and parks in Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago counties. Participants then stamp their passport for every day they walk, hike, or jog for at least 15 minutes. The goal: to start combating obesity, by being active three days a week at a minimum.

According to Dieringer, “It’s not something we’re going to see changes in two, three or even five years, so this is one step or one piece of the puzzle that will hopefully encourage healthy lifestyles for everyone and again this is just one piece of that.”

And it’s something residents in the valley are excited to participate in.

Anne Strauch from Appleton says, “I think it’s wonderful. I think it’s an opportunity to break away from the computer which otherwise you don’t think about. And this is that push that we need and that I needed.”

“Anytime you can get people together and workout together, it builds camaraderie and people are more likely to do it and keep up with it,” adds Gloria Grandone of Neenah.

While the program is designed to get people active and moving by using local trails and parks, it really is based on the honor system so even if you just walk around the block one day you can still get credit in your passport.

“Stamp your passport anytime you go out on any kind of physical activity adventure,” says Dieringer.

Weight of the Fox Valley has a [website \(http://www.weightofthefoxvalley.org/\)](http://www.weightofthefoxvalley.org/) where you can download a passport and learn more about the summer program.

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