

Initiative's goal is to build healthy habits in Fox Valley

11:59 a.m. CDT June 14, 2015

This weeks topic is Weight of the Fox Valley get your passport to stay healthy. Healthy Oshkosh is a community partnership with the Oshkosh YMCA produced by Oshkosh Northwestern Media examining some of the topics that keep Oshkosh healthy. Joe Sienkiewicz / Oshkosh Northwestern Media

Take part in Passport to Active Living in the Fox Valley, as first step to choosing to be more active this summer. All you have to do is check in and walk on area trails.



Weight of the Fox Valley is a community health initiative designed to address active lifestyles and healthy habits among Fox Valley residents to reach and maintain a healthy weight. The initiative promotes healthy weight in Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago counties. The initiative is championed by a team of 35 community leaders from all sectors in the tri-county area. The mission of the organization is to build a community that together achieves and maintains a healthy weight at every age. Currently, more than 60 percent of residents in the Fox Valley are overweight or obese. This impacts the vitality in our community. Maintaining a healthy weight can help prevent heart disease, diabetes and orthopedic problems. Being a healthy weight can help improve mental health, self-esteem and worker productivity.

Do you want to be more active this summer? The initiative has put together a "Passport to Active Living" as the beginning of a new fitness journey for anyone in the Fox Valley who is interested. There are five easy steps to get started:

- 1) Fill in the entry form and the pre-Passport questions on page one of the Passport. The Passport is available at any of the YMCAs of the Fox Cities locations, Oshkosh YMCA, United Way offices and the Calumet County Health Department.
- 2) Start walking, jogging, running. ... you choose what's right for you. Remember, before beginning any exercise program, it is best to consult your personal physician.
- 3) Stamp the weekly pages when you visit local parks and trails. Get at least one stamp per week or log at least 15 minutes of exercise three days per week to qualify for prizes.
- 4) After six weeks, take your Passport to a check-in station (YMCA of the Fox Cities, Oshkosh YMCA, United Way offices, Calumet County Health Department) to receive a six-week milestone stamp. Everyone who checks in after six weeks will receive a prize.
- 5) After 12 weeks, turn in your passport to a check-in station. Your completed passport will qualify you to enter a drawing to win one of several grand prizes.

To stamp your passport, try a trail from the list below each week, or visit your favorite trail.

•**Calumet County:** Brillion Nature Center, Calumet County Park, Ledge View Nature Center and Park.

•**Outagamie County:** Bubolz Nature Center, Mosquito Hill Nature Center, Plamann Park.

•**Winnebago County:** Heckrodt Wetland Reserve, Menominee Park, Oshkosh Riverwalk.

•**State trails:** Newton Blackmour State Trail, Friendship State Trail, Wiowash State Trail.

Why use local trails? They are free, or a very low cost; they offer a variety of activity options such as walking, jogging, running and biking; all ages may participate and use the trails; and the trails provide year-round activities.

All Passports must be turned in no later than Sept. 30 to qualify for the grand prize drawings.

For more information on this initiative, or to become more involved with the Weight of the Fox Valley, visit its website at www.WeightoftheFoxValley.org.

Molly Yatso Butz is the community health and wellness director for the Oshkosh