

Working on the 'Weight of the Fox Valley'



by Alex Ronallo, FOX 11 NEWS Tuesday, January 31st 2017

APPLETON (WLUK) -- Every Tuesday a group of runners takes off during Fleet Fox Valley's Fun Run.

"To be healthy and to meet other people...socialize," explained runner John Ebel.

The runners go through several routes along Appleton's Newberry Trail.

"Just a great place to get out. You don't worry about traffic. It makes it a lot easier," Ebel told FOX 11 News.

Appleton Health Director Kurt Eggebrecht told us this shows how important trails can be in communities.

"Bike trails, trail connectivity, designing the environment that people have that easy choice," he explained, meaning that easy choice to get some exercise.

Eggebrecht said adults need two hours of movement a week, children need an hour a day.

An organization called Weight of the Fox Valley is now working in Outagamie, Winnebago and Calumet Counties to get people moving.

One thing the group has done is get local community leaders to adopt a resolution pledging to support the group's work and plans for walking and biking-friendly infrastructure.

"Our intent was really to get them aware of the effort and how they play a role in creating that environment in our community," Eggebrecht explained.

So far about a dozen communities have passed the resolution.

According to Eggebrecht there's been major work done over the last five years.

"You have the connectivity of what used to be recreational trails into the work place, or into the schools. There's really great strides already," he told FOX 11.

But Eggebrecht told us there is still more of that needs to be done.

According Weight of the Fox Valley 60% of adults in the area are overweight or obese.

"Next to smoking weight is the biggest contributor to preventable disease," said Eggebrecht.

(reporter) And prevention can start one small step at a time.

The resolutions are not binding, meaning if the community decides not to pay for any projects, they won't be done.