

MAJOR FINDINGS FROM CCROPP AREA RESIDENTS SURVEY*

Field Research Corporation

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March 2010

Agreement on the Importance of Environmental Causes of Obesity

The idea that the environment is an important cause of obesity clearly resonates with Central California Regional Obesity Prevention (CCROPP) area residents. Even among those who view the problem as one for families and individuals to deal with, significant numbers support changes in the environment.

Support for a Wide Range of Specific Policies

A majority (53%) believe that it is **very** important for businesses and government to take steps to improve the environment in order to address the problem. Strong and broad support exists for a variety of specific policies including efforts to keep parks, playgrounds, walking paths and bike paths crime-free (96%); efforts to clean up and improve parks and open spaces (97%); funding of street improvements to make walking and biking easier (89%); and joint use, i.e. requiring school facilities to be open to the whole community (86%). There is also support for urban redesign efforts that would reduce the need for auto use (83%); public investment in farmer's markets (76%), community gardens (79%), and supermarkets in low-income neighborhoods (72%); and a soda tax with funds earmarked for the fight against childhood obesity (69%).

Lack of Environmental Supports for Healthy Eating and Active Living

Health Care Sector: Many area residents reported that their overweight children were not getting weight-related counseling (38%). Many adults also reported that they are without a regular health care provider (28%). In terms of job performance on the obesity issue, more rated the system as fair or poor (50%) than good or excellent (45%).

After-School Programs: Despite broad availability, 55% of residents reported that their kids are not taking part; about 1-in-3 parents say that they have experienced cost or other barriers to participation.

Community Sector: Twenty-seven percent reported difficulty in accessing sidewalks and walking and bike paths; 38% reported difficulty in accessing other safe outdoor places for physical activity. Thirty-two percent said that it was not very easy to find places for the children to be active indoors. Seventeen percent reported a problem with accessing a large supermarket and 33% reported a problem in accessing a farmer's market. Among those with access to farmer's markets, however, 57% reported frequent use, at least multiple times per month. In terms of an overall trend only 23% perceived that it was getting easier to find community environmental

* The survey involved 350 interviews with adults from the 8 counties in CCROPP: Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tulare. The survey was conducted by Field Research Corporation in September 2009. Interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish. Sampling error is plus/minus 7%.

support for more healthy eating and active living; two-thirds viewed things as “staying about the same” where they lived. Two-thirds rated the community as only fair or poor on a health promotion dimension.

Schools: There were somewhat more positive perceptions about area schools as supportive environments. The majority of residents expressed satisfaction with the amount of attention being paid to the obesity issue. Still, 54% still rated overall school sector performance as only fair or poor.