

# Tolland County Community Transformation

**Investing in  
Communities.**

**Investing in  
Health.**



## First County-wide Chronic Disease Prevention Effort for Tolland County

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) awarded 61 Community Transformation Grants (CTG) in 2011 to counties and states across the nation to reduce the burden of chronic disease and eliminate health disparities through policy, systems, and environmental changes to increase opportunities for healthy living. The State of Connecticut was awarded one of these grants to work with 5 counties (Litchfield, Tolland, Middlesex, Windham, New London) initially in a capacity building stage, with plans for implementation in 2013 and 2014.

The Tolland County initiative will work to strengthen the public health infrastructure and build upon resources already present in the region. This initiative aims to create new partnerships and bring together existing coalitions to study and address our County's unique health risk factors and disparities. The Tolland County Community Health Action Response Team (CHART) will develop a comprehensive plan to achieve health equity, eliminate health disparities and improve the health of all residents; making the healthy choice the easy choice.

Addressing an issue that impacts all of us

More than half of American adults have at least one chronic disease. In the United States, 7 out of 10 deaths are caused by chronic diseases each year. Seventy-five cents of every dollar spent on medical costs in this country is being used to treat chronic diseases and associated risk factors.

While direct costs of chronic disease are high, the indirect costs of chronic conditions may be several times higher than the direct medical costs. These diseases lead to lost productivity, such as missed days of work or school, disability, reduced work output, reduced quality of life, and premature death.

### Focusing on Priorities for Healthier Living

CTG concentrates on the causes of chronic disease; improving health and wellness with strategies that focus on areas such as:

- **Healthy Eating & Active Living**  
*Improving access to healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity.*
- **Tobacco-Free Living**  
*Strengthening cessation efforts, reducing access to tobacco and exposure to environmental tobacco smoke indoors and in public outdoor spaces.*
- **Quality Clinical Prevention Services**  
*Ensuring quality preventive and other clinical services for Tolland County's most vulnerable residents.*

**Our Mission** Build a healthy community through policy, systems, and environmental change & health promotion programming; making the healthy choice the easy choice.

**One Vision**  
Building Healthy Communities

## PREVENTION IN ACTION

Experts agree that the places where people live, learn, work and play profoundly shape their opportunities to make healthy choices. People living in Tolland County's towns and rural communities know that healthy choices are not always the easy choices.

To address local issues, the EHHD convened a coalition for the Tolland County CTG, working with community leaders in schools, worksites, healthcare, community organizations, and towns to make healthy choices easier. Guided by research and established best-practices, as recommended by the CDC, this initiative builds on existing momentum and sparks new, creative efforts to change the environment, improve community conditions, and invest in partnerships that will improve the health of all residents.



### JOIN THE MOVEMENT

The impact of the Tolland County Community Transformation Initiative depends on the vision, talent, dedication and support from every sector of our community.

Building a healthy community is everyone's business, and sometimes the "policy" changes that make the biggest impact on community health are those made in the everyday places of our lives: our workplace, club meetings, and home. Each and every small change plays a big role in this process. To learn more about your role in our Community Transformation, contact the EHHD.



## Building a Healthy Community!

In Tolland County, the initial funding for building a healthy community was awarded to the Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD) through the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors 2009-2012) as part of the CDC ACHIEVE Initiative. The EHHD started this work with member-town partners to build a healthier community. Through ACHIEVE, the groundwork was laid for sustainable change that contributes to community health by addressing key issues through policies, systems, and environmental changes.

The Community Transformation Grant is a five-year, CDC initiative. The CTG funding presents an opportunity to translate prevention research into public health practice. The Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD), in partnership with the North Central District Health Department, is leading the first county-wide effort to reduce chronic health issues such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes. This grant is funded as part of the Affordable Care Act and National Prevention Strategy to improve America's health. The funding expands the reach of ACHIEVE efforts to build a solid foundation for community prevention efforts to ensure long-term success.

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