

Nutrition & Physical Activity State Plan

Montana Office of Rural Health & Area Health Education Center

Shalina Mirza is the Project Coordinator for the Montana Office of Rural Health and Area Health Education Center. Her efforts are focused on the Montana Rural Health Initiative (RHI) which aims to create a network of health experts, programs and initiatives across Montana.

Activities Relevant to State Plan to Prevent Obesity: A variety of activities aimed at increasing the health of Montana's communities through nutrition and physical activity efforts. Some of these activities include: monthly educational webinars on health and wellness topics, an Incubator program, dynamic interactive website, quarterly newsletters and an active listserv to increase communication across the state.

Services/Recipients: The RHI Incubator program strengthens local efforts to encourage healthy lifestyle choices and create prevention focused communities. The Incubator is designed to help rural communities hatch and grow projects aimed at improving community health through nutrition and physical activity efforts. The intent of this program is to stimulate the creation of more prevention and wellness activities across Montana aiming to reduce the incidence of obesity and related diseases while promoting health, wellness and overall fitness.

State Plan Settings: Worksites, Built Environment, Schools, Social/Cultural Environment

CDC Behaviors:

- Increasing fruit & vegetable consumption by supporting local community gardens and healthy food choices
- Increasing breastfeeding by supporting and disseminating information on breastfeeding efforts.
- Increasing physical activity through supporting, assisting with development and disseminating information on evidence-based physical activity efforts.
- Decreasing screen time by supporting and disseminating information on screen time efforts.

Gaps and Concerns: Educating the general public on the importance of nutrition and physical activity, positioning Montana for demonstration projects that are included in Health Care Reform, promote policies that aim to make the healthy choice the easier choice, supporting and implementing the National Physical Activity Plan.