



NC 5 A Day Coalition
NC DHHS
Division of Public Health
Physical Activity &
Nutrition Branch

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E-newsletter--April Reese

NC Awards Program--Jason Horay

Annual Symposium--Doris Sargent

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Janice Ezzell

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Alice Lenihan

Corrine Giannini

Kevin Harrell

NC 5 A Day Coalition and Program

The Mission of the NC 5 A Day Coalition is to *promote better health for all North Carolinians by increasing their fruit and vegetable consumption to 5 or more servings each day.* Through programs and promotions in communities, schools, restaurants, cafeterias, worksites, health agencies, supermarkets and community groups, North Carolinians learn that eating 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day can reduce the risk of cancer, heart disease and other illnesses. Begun in 1996 with 5 members, the Coalition has grown to over 270 members representing 81 of the 100 NC counties and the Cherokee Reservation. Membership is free and comprised of representatives from government, academia, industry, media and other non-profit and private organizations.

The National Cancer Institute licenses the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) (as the State's Health agency) to administer the 5 A Day Program. Within NCDHHS, the NC 5 A Day Coordinator is housed in the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch, Division of Public Health and is responsible for launching 5 A Day programs and coordinating 5 A Day activities at the state level. To accomplish this goal, the NC 5 A Day Coordinator works closely with the NC 5 A Day Coalition. The NC 5 A Day Coalition is led by a Steering Committee. Together, the NC 5 A Day Coordinator and Coalition Steering Committee guide 5 A Day initiatives in North Carolina. Coalition members plan and implement 5 A Day activities at the local level.

NC 5 A Day is important to North Carolinians because research shows that eating 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day plays an important role in preventing heart disease, cancer and stroke (the #1, 2 & 3 killers of North Carolinians), osteoporosis, high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes and birth defects. Healthier diets (including 5 A Day) could **prevent at least \$4.9 billion per year in medical costs, lost productivity, and lost lives**. Fruits and vegetables can also increase energy, and assist in weight loss; and in addition, they are tasty, convenient, easy and quick to prepare.

Our Overall Success in improving the health status for North Carolinians depends greatly on **achieving dramatic increases in the rates of fruit and vegetable consumption among both adults and children.** To realize this increase, high quality fruits and vegetables must be easily available, affordable, and marketed in many different places and provided in many different forms. This will only be achieved by developing a **comprehensive and coordinated state 5 A Day program infrastructure** which builds on the bountiful supply of successful programs that have already been implemented in NC by the NC 5 A Day Coalition and its many partners.

Continued Success will require more resources and commitment. Continued collaboration is needed of government agencies, not-for-profit groups, and industry to expand 5 A Day efforts in North Carolina to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables for improved public health. Promotion, media, state, local and nationally based programs, research, policy, and environmental strategies will be used to foster behavioral change. A variety of funding sources have contributed to the success of the NC 5 A Day Program. Currently, state funds help to support the salary of the PAN Branch Nutrition Coordinator, and approximately 35% of her time is allocated to 5 A Day coordination. In-kind donations from Coalition members, other state agencies, and support from chronic disease initiatives and grants have supported activities at the state level. At the local level, many funding and in-kind resources have been used to implement programs.

Our Future --The NC 5 A Day Strategic Plan (2004-2010) focuses on **five priority areas**, which include:

- development of a sustainable state, regional and community infrastructure,
- enhanced communications and programs;
- leveraging of fruit and vegetable industry partners and their programs,
- enhanced state, regional and community based advocacy, policy and environmental change efforts; and
- facilitation of strategic research and evaluation of the NC 5 A Day Program to ensure that it is achieving its desired outcomes, goals and objectives.

These focus areas will support an increase in fruit and vegetable consumption among all North Carolinians, and will ultimately decrease the rates of chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, certain types of cancer, stroke, and obesity.

Getting Involved--Your talents can be put to good use on the ...

- **State or Regional level**--by participating on the NC 5 A Day Coalition Steering Committee, a workgroup, or on the Leadership Advisory Team, educating others about the work of the Coalition and engaging them to also carry on the work of the Coalition.
- **Local/Community level** -- by identifying what you, your Organization or Community can START, CONTINUE or STOP doing to promote fruit and vegetable consumption.

For More Information on the NC 5 A Day Coalition and Program, Success Stories, and How to Get Involved...Visit www.nc5aday.com

