

# **Access to Active and Green Spaces**

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## **Importance of Accessible Physical Activity Spaces**

**Support for being physically active goes beyond just informing people of such a need. People must also be afforded opportunities for safe, accessible, and welcoming places to pursue such physical activity.**

- People who had the best access to a variety of natural and built facilities were 43% more likely to get 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week as recommended by the Surgeon General, than those people who had poor access to such facilities.
- Older adults living near safe walking and biking paths, parks, and recreation centers are more likely to get adequate physical activity.
- The pedometer readings for older women who lived within walking distances of trails, parks, and stores were significantly higher than for women who did not and the more venues close by, the higher the pedometer readings.
- People with safe places to walk within 10 minutes of their residences were more likely to meet the recommended activity levels than were people without such access by a percentage of 43% to 27%.
- Women living in rural areas were more likely to be active if they indicated they lived nearby attractive scenery

Source: [www.activelivingresearch.org](http://www.activelivingresearch.org)

- Proximity, accessibility, attractive scenery, good lighting, toilets, drinking water and well-designed and well-maintained paths seem to predict physical activity in parks. (American Journal of Public Health, 2003.)
- A group of studies reviewed in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine showed that the “creation of or enhanced access to places for physical activity combined with informational outreach” produced a 48.4% increase in frequency of physical activity (Trust for Public Land).
- A study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control (2002) provided strong evidence that suggested when people have access to parks, there is a 25.6% increase in the percentage of exercising on three or more days per week (Trust for Public Land).

- Citizens who had better access to parks, visited parks frequently, and engaged in physically-active park behaviors also made fewer visits to their doctor for reasons other than a regular check-up (Godbey, Roy, Payne, and Orsega-Smith, 1998).