

# Recreation Programs

## Hidden Potential within Intentional Programming

**Recreation programs can incorporate healthy information and activities within existing opportunities, making significant inroads towards healthier behavior.**

- Children, adolescents, and adults reported adopting healthier behaviors – such as choosing heart-healthy food more often – after participating in Hearts N’ Parks programs that incorporate heart-healthy behaviors into regular activities offered by park and recreation departments. (*NIH News*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)
- CDC survey of 4,000 high school students indicated that a low level of activity (fewer than two days of light exercise and no days of hard exercise in the past 14 days) were **associated with various risk behaviors:** tobacco and pot use, lower fruit and vegetable consumption, greater TV watching, failure to wear a seat belt, lower perception of academic performance (American Public Health Association).
- Adults participating in Hearts N’ Parks Programs, primarily at public senior centers, significantly improved their knowledge of overweight/obesity risks, physical activity, causes of high blood pressure, and ways to control cholesterol levels. Post-test scores also suggested healthier attitudes towards heart-healthy eating and physical activity(*NIH News*, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services).