



Action Plan (2009-2012)

November 2008

1. Background

In August 2007, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors authorized the Department of Health Services to convene a health action council (now called "Health Action") to work on improving health and health care for all Sonoma County residents. Health Action's overarching mission is community health improvement. Building on the interest and commitment of many community leaders, the Department of Health Services has recruited and convened a diverse, multidisciplinary group to identify priority health and health care issues and to develop specific recommendations on local approaches to promote the health of our community and improve the health care delivery system.

Over the past year Health Action assessed data on health issues impacting Sonoma County, created a shared vision for community health improvement that is based on the multiple determinants of health, developed criteria for focusing its efforts, developed an initial set of health improvement strategies, received input on these strategies from the community, and has begun the process of developing implementation plans. Health Action members and partners engaged through the planning and community outreach process will work together to create the agreements and secure the resources necessary to implement specific projects beginning in the spring of 2009.

This Action Plan presents the recommendations developed by Health Action during its first year. First, it presents a vision for a healthy Sonoma County and identifies specific goals that will serve as a framework to build upon the efforts of the many agencies and organizations in our community that are working toward common health improvement goals. Second, it presents Health Action's initial health improvement agenda, called *Priorities for Action*, which represents first steps for focused and effective local action. Finally, this plan calls for development of a funding strategy to identify adequate and sustainable resources for investments in community health in Sonoma County.

2. 2020 Vision for Sonoma County

By the year 2020, we envision that Sonoma County will be the healthiest county in California... It will be a healthy place to live, work, and play... a place where people thrive and achieve their life potential.

For many people in Sonoma County, the basic conditions that support health and well-being seem to be out of reach. Many families struggle to make ends meet and over 25% of our youth do not graduate from high school on time, thus reducing their chances of becoming productive and healthy adults. Sedentary lifestyles and unhealthy eating contribute to increasing levels of obesity and overweight in our community, yet many residents lack access to affordable healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity. Other unhealthy behaviors, such as tobacco use and substance abuse, and lack of access to health care services further contribute to preventable illness and death in our community each year.

To achieve our 2020 vision, Sonoma County must address key social, economic, and environmental determinants of health, must support healthy behaviors and lifestyles, and must assure access to quality health care services. To move aggressively in this direction, Health Action drew upon existing research to identify the following 10 health goals that would significantly contribute to improved health status in Sonoma County. For each of these goals, Health Action has set ambitious targets to help align community efforts and to help assess our progress (Table 1). See Appendix 1 for information on the methodology for selecting indicators and data sources. Health Action will stimulate and support steps that individuals, health care providers, businesses, and community organizations can take help reach our ambitious goals by 2020.

Goals and Targets

By the year 2020, we envision the following:

- Sonoma County youth graduate from high-school on time
- Sonoma County families have the economic resources to make ends meet
- Sonoma County residents are connected to their communities and participate in community life
- Sonoma County residents eat healthy food
- Sonoma County residents are physically active
- Sonoma County residents do not abuse alcohol or prescription drugs and do not use tobacco or illicit drugs
- Sonoma County residents enjoy good mental health
- Sonoma County residents take steps to prevent injury
- Sonoma County residents have health care coverage
- Sonoma County residents are connected with a trusted source of prevention-focused primary care

Table 1: A 2020 Vision for Sonoma County - Goals and Targets

Goals	Indicators	2020 Target	2008 Status
Sonoma County youth graduate from high school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase proportion of Sonoma County 9th graders that graduate from high school 4 years later • Increase the proportion of Sonoma County 4th graders that are proficient or advanced in English language arts 	90% 90%	72% 61%
Sonoma County families have the economic resources to make ends meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase proportion of Sonoma County residents that live in households above 300% of the federal poverty level • Decrease proportion of renters who spend 30% or more of household income on rent 	75% 25%	61% 52%
Sonoma County residents are connected to their communities and participate in community life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in percent of eligible voters that are registered to vote <i>(Additional indicators to be developed)</i> 	90%	71%
Sonoma County residents eat healthy food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase proportion of Sonoma County residents who eat 5 or more fruits or vegetables/day • Decrease the proportion of Sonoma County adults that are obese 	75% 15%	56% 24%
Sonoma County residents are physically active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the proportion of Sonoma County adults who engage regularly, preferably daily, in moderate or vigorous physical activity • Increase proportion of 7th graders that achieve the Healthy Fitness Zone for all 6 areas of the annual California physical fitness test • Increase proportion of adolescents and children who walked, biked, or skated to or from school in the past week 	50% 75% 50%	38% 35% 22%
Sonoma County residents do not abuse alcohol or prescription drugs and do not use tobacco or illicit drugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase proportion of adolescents (ages 12-17) not using alcohol or any illicit drug during the past 30 days • Reduce proportion of adults binge drinking alcoholic beverages during past 30 days • Decrease proportion of adults smoking a cigarette in past 30 days 	90% 6% 10%	55% 20% 13%
Sonoma County residents enjoy good mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase proportion of adults who report needing help for mental/emotional problems who saw a mental health professional • Eliminate suicide deaths for Sonoma County youth, age 10-24 (annual number) 	75% 0	50% 6
Sonoma County residents take steps to prevent injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce rate of deaths due to motor vehicle collisions (deaths per 100,000) • Reduce rate of pedestrian deaths (per 100,000) • Reduce rate of hip fractures due to falls for women ages 65+ (per 100,000) 	9.2 1.0 416	11.7 1.4 811
Sonoma County residents have health care coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase proportion of persons under age 65 with health insurance 	100%	85%
Sonoma County residents are connected with a trusted source of prevention-focused primary care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase proportion of Sonoma County residents with a usual source of care • Increase proportion of Sonoma County children who have a dental visit within the past year <i>(Additional indicators to be developed)</i> 	96% 90%	93% 83%

Guiding Principles to Achieve our 2020 Vision

The following principles are intended to guide the development and implementation of an effective action agenda for Health Action's 2020 Vision for Sonoma County.

Recognize that health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity: Our efforts must embrace the multiple determinants of health and support the health and healthy development for people of all ages over the lifespan. This includes nurturing vital connections between community members to reduce stigma and isolation.

Maximize impact by focusing on prevention and primary care: Taking action to avoid or remove the root causes of health problems will help us focus our efforts and resources “upstream” where they have the greatest potential for community health promotion and improvement.

Identify and build partnerships: The entire community shares responsibility for improving the health and health care of Sonoma County. Long-term improvements in community health will require the involvement of individuals, employers, local government, health care providers, health insurers, community-based organizations, schools, faith community, and others.

Promote evidence-based interventions and evaluation: We base our interventions on what has been proven to work. Health Action is designed to promote best practices known to improve health, based upon the best available scientific evidence. For each health improvement priority, we will create a series of benchmarks for measuring and tracking improvements in the health of the county.

Prioritize populations in greatest need: Many health problems are experienced in varying degrees among people in different neighborhoods, income levels, age groups, and racial/ethnic groups. Recognizing that some communities and populations are in greater need and potentially have the most to gain from public health and health care services than others, Health Action prioritizes its efforts where there is greatest potential to increase quality and years of healthy life and eliminate health disparities.

Address policy barriers: A wide range of community and health care system conditions are barriers to health, health care access, and optimal use of preventive services. To address those, Health Action provides a framework for a local, state, and federal policy agenda with legislative, regulatory, and administrative proposals to improve health.

Identify adequate and sustainable resources for community health improvement: A dedicated and sustainable effort toward community health improvement will require a paradigm shift in how health system resources are invested. Stable funding for health improvement initiatives is needed to support lasting, systemic changes that can address the broad determinants of health. Health Action provides leadership to identify strategies and mechanisms for meaningful and sustainable investments in community health promotion and improvement.

3. Priorities for Action

Health Action's *2020 Vision* will serve as a long-term guide for community health improvement efforts in Sonoma County. Many local groups and organizations are already working on these issues and the *2020 Vision* will help align these efforts and increase awareness and support for these issues in the community.

In the short-term (2009-2012), Health Action has developed *Priorities for Action*, which represent first steps and strategies for the following 3 initial goal areas:

- Sonoma County residents eat healthy foods
- Sonoma County residents are physically active
- Sonoma County residents are connected with a trusted source of prevention-focused primary care.

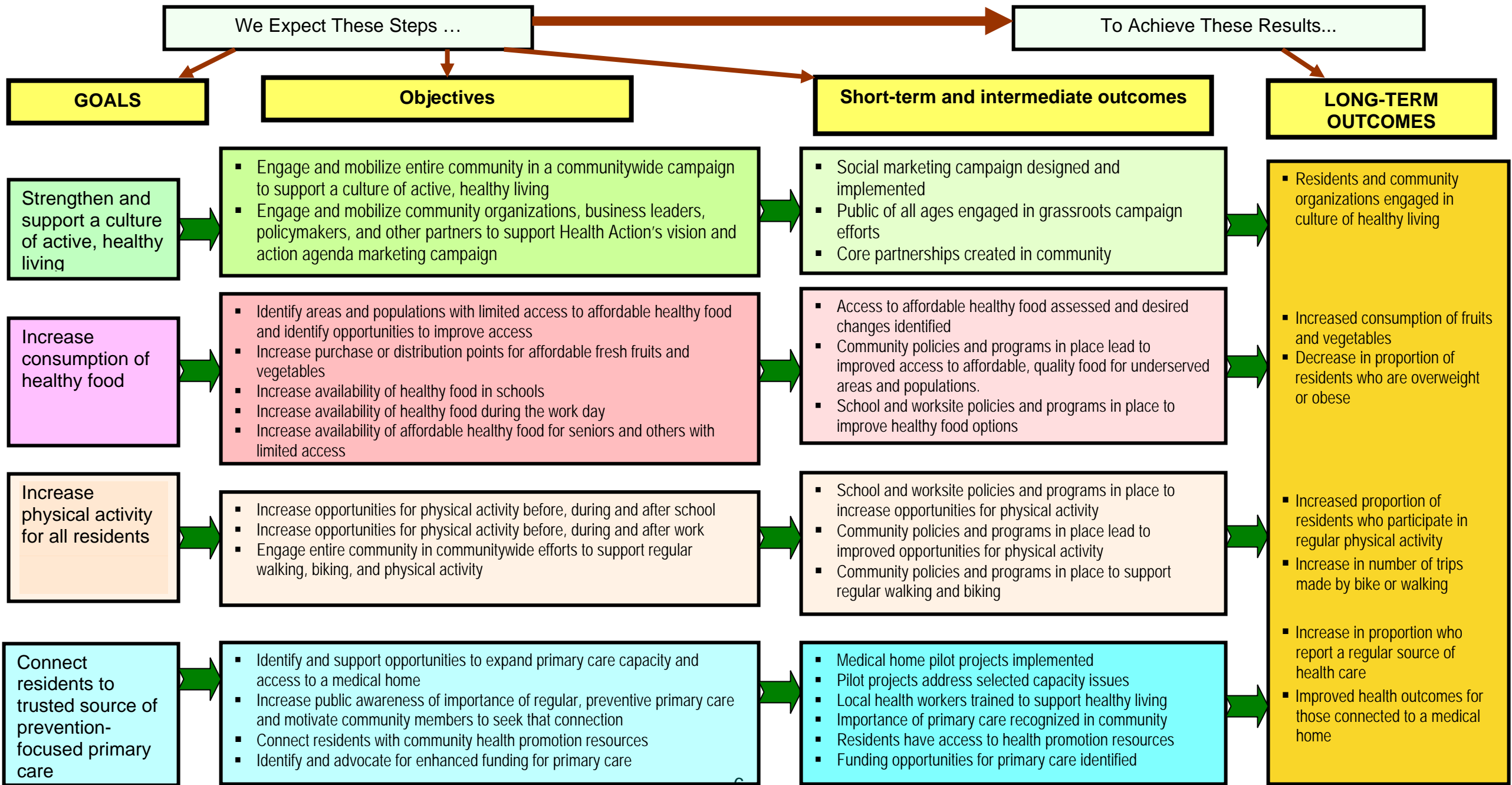
Health Action will focus its initial health improvement agenda on these 3 goals because they are seen as an opportunity to engage and mobilize a very broad cross-section of individuals and communities throughout the county, while also stimulating changes in the health care delivery system to address the significant and growing health problems (such as obesity and diabetes) caused by unhealthy eating and sedentary lifestyles. Focusing on these initial goal areas will offer significant opportunities to engage the entire community in health improvement efforts and to leverage local resources and energy to improve individual and community health.

Two task forces with community experts in these topics were convened from April through September 2008 to develop specific strategies to achieve these 3 goals. A Community Health Task Force focused on community conditions that contribute to unhealthy eating and sedentary lifestyles and developed recommendations for improvement. A Health Care Delivery System Task Force focused on identifying potential improvements to the health care delivery system to support healthy eating and physical activity. The task forces worked collaboratively to:

- Assess community's health needs in these areas
- Assess existing community and health system barriers/conditions that prevent or hinder health improvement in these areas
- Identify potential community partners
- Research best/promising practices
- Look for opportunities to support existing efforts or create new local initiatives to fill the gaps
- Develop specific goals, objectives, and strategies to address identified barriers and achieve specific outcomes

The task forces drafted short-term strategies, called *Priorities for Action*, to facilitate focused and effective local action over the next 3 years (2009-2012). These draft strategies were discussed in 21 community meetings across Sonoma County during the summer of 2008 and feedback from the community will be incorporated into the final strategies and work plans to be developed during the implementation planning phase of this project. Appendix 2 provides a complete listing of the proposed strategies developed by the task forces. Figure 1 presents a visual representation of the proposed goals, objectives and expected outcomes.

Figure 1: Priorities for Action – Goals, Objectives and Expected Outcomes



4. Resource Development

In order to carry out the strategic initiatives identified in the *Priorities for Action* and the *2020 Vision*, it is necessary to identify adequate and sustainable resources for investments in community health in Sonoma County. A dedicated and sustainable effort toward community health improvement will require a paradigm shift in how health system resources are invested. Research has demonstrated that substantial amounts could be saved on health care costs if we invest strategically in community-based disease prevention¹. Health Action recognizes that stable funding for health improvement initiatives is needed to support lasting, systemic changes that can address the broad determinants of health.

In order to carry out the strategic initiatives identified in this report, Health Action will provide leadership to identify strategies and mechanisms for meaningful and sustainable investments in community health promotion and improvement. Toward this end, Health Action will:

1. Develop a diverse funding strategy with community partners to identify funding opportunities for identified short-term strategic initiatives.
2. Explore the options for development of longer-term resources for a sustained community investment in health promotion and disease prevention.

¹ Trust for America's Health, *Prevention for a Healthier America: Investments in Disease Prevention Yield Significant Savings, Stronger Communities*, Issue Report, July 2008, www.healthyamericans.org

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Health Action Members

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Suzy Marzalek, Community Volunteer
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Greg Rosa, MD, Sonoma County Medical Association/Palm Drive Hospital
Alena Wall, Executive Director, Northern California Center for Well-Being
Lynn Scuri, Manager, DHS, Public Health Division

Community meeting hosts

Alexander Valley Clinic, Cloverdale
Community Action Partnership – Padres Unidos
Community Baptist Church
Concerned Citizens of Rohnert Park (C-CORP)
Council on Aging - Healdsburg Senior Center
Council on Aging - Guerneville Senior Center
Graton Day Labor Center
La Luz and Nuestra Voz, Boyes Hot Springs
Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, Windsor
Petaluma Ecumenical Properties and Vallejo Street Senior Apartments
Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce
Santa Rosa Teen Council
Sebastopol Community Church
Sonoma County Alliance
Sonoma County Department of Health Services
Sonoma County Indian Health Project
St. Joseph Health System
St. Philip's Church, Occidental
St. Vincent's Church, Petaluma
United Winegrowers for Sonoma County
Vintage House, Sonoma

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Bobbie Wunsch, Pacific Health Consulting Group

Notes about the Selected Indicators and Targets

Many organizations concerned about health improvement have identified indicators to measure community health and well-being. Most notable is the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), in its publication Healthy People 2010 (HP2010). HP2010 establishes national health improvement goals and it challenges individuals, communities, and professionals to take specific steps to ensure that good health is enjoyed by all. HP2010 specifies a wide range of health improvement objectives and indicators that can be used to assess the effectiveness of health improvement efforts across the country.² Many of the indicators and targets selected in the 2020 Vision for Sonoma County are taken from the HP2010 objectives and are noted as such in the table below. An additional group of indicators were included to address the growing body of research that documents the significant impact of key socioeconomic determinants on health status.³

Ultimately, three criteria were used in identifying indicators and targets for the 2020 Vision for Sonoma County:

1. Communication Power: Does the indicator communicate to a broad range of audiences?
2. Proxy Power: Does the indicator say something of central importance about the desired goal or result?
3. Data Power: Can we get quality data on a timely basis?

Indicators	Data Source	Rationale for Indicator and Target
Proportion of ninth graders that graduate from high school 4 years later	California Department of Education, DataQuest, http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/ Data for Sonoma County class of 2007, high school completion.	Key socioeconomic determinant of health; also included in United Way <i>Goals for the Common Good</i>
Proportion of Sonoma County 4 th graders that are proficient or advanced in English language arts	California Department of Education, California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR), Test scores for Sonoma County, 2008 http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/	Key socioeconomic determinant of health; also included in United Way <i>Goals for the Common Good</i>
Proportion of Sonoma County residents that live in households above 300% of the federal poverty level	U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey	Key socioeconomic determinant of health; similar indicator in United Way <i>Goals for the Common Good</i>

² Healthy People 2020 objectives and targets will be released in January 2010 along with guidance for achieving the new 10-year targets. See <http://www.healthypeople.gov/hp2020/> for more information.

³ The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Socioeconomic Status and Health, *Reaching for a Healthier Life: Facts on Socioeconomic Status and Health in the U.S.*, 2008.

Indicators	Data Source	Rationale for Indicator and Target
Proportion of renters spending 30% or more of household income on rent	U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey	Key socioeconomic determinant of health; similar indicator in United Way <i>Goals for the Common Good</i>
Percent of eligible voters that are registered to vote	California Secretary of State, September 5, 2008 Report of Registration. http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ror/60day_presgen_08/county.xls	Social isolation is associated with poor health outcomes. Indicator is a rough measure of participation in community life.
Percent of Sonoma County adults that volunteer in their community or participate in community organizations	<i>To be developed.</i>	Measure of participation in community life.
Proportion of Sonoma County residents who eat 5 or more fruits or vegetables per day	California Health Interview Survey, 2005	HP2010 target = 75% for fruit, 50% for vegetables (Objectives #19-5 and 19-6)
Proportion of Sonoma County adults that are obese	California Health Interview Survey, 2005	HP2010 target = 15% (Objective # 19-2)
Proportion of Sonoma County adults who engage regularly, preferably daily, in moderate or vigorous physical activity	California Health Interview Survey, 2005	HP2010 target = 50% (Objective # 22-2)
Proportion of 7 th graders that achieve the Healthy Fitness Zone for all 6 areas of the annual California physical fitness test	California Department of Education, 2006-2007 California Physical Fitness Report	HP2010, target not comparable due to different definition of HP2010 indicator
Proportion of adolescents and children who walked, biked, or skated to or from school in the past week	California Health Interview Survey, 2005	HP2010 target = 50% for walking, 5% for biking (Objectives #22-14 and 22-15)
Proportion of adolescents (ages 12-17) not using alcohol or any illicit drug during the past 30 days	California Healthy Kids Survey (average of 7 th , 9 th , and 11 th grade rates), 2004-2006	HP2010 target = 89% (Objective # 26-10a)
Proportion of adults engaging in binge drinking of alcoholic beverages during past 30 days	California Health Interview Survey, 2005	HP2010 target = 6% (Objective # 26-11c)
Proportion of adults smoking a cigarette in past 30 days	California Health Interview Survey, 2005	Better than HP2010 goal of 12% (Objective # 27-1a)

Indicators	Data Source	Rationale for Indicator and Target
Proportion of adults who report needing help for mental/emotional problems who saw a mental health professional	California Health Interview Survey, 2005	HP2010, target not comparable due to different definition of HP2010 indicator
Suicide deaths for Sonoma County youth, age 10-24 (annual number)	California Department of Public Health, Center for Health Statistics, Death Records, 2004-2006	HP2010 target = 5.0 per 100,000; due to small numbers, local target set using annual number.
Rate of deaths due to motor vehicle collisions (deaths per 100,000)	California Department of Health Services, County Health Status Profiles 2008	HP2010 target = 9.2 per 100,000 (Objective #15-15a)
Rate of pedestrian deaths (per 100,000)	California Department of Public Health, Center for Health Statistics, Death Records, 2004-2006	HP2010 target = 1 (Objective # 15-16)
Rate of hip fractures due to falls for women ages 65+ (per 100,000)	Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, Patient discharge data, 2003-2005	HP2010 target = 416 (Objective # 15-28a)
Proportion of persons under age 65 with health insurance	California Health Interview Survey, 2005	HP2010 target = 100% (Objective #1-1)
Proportion of persons with a usual source of health care	California Health Interview Survey, 2005	HP2010 target = 96% (Objective #1-4a)
Proportion of Sonoma County children who had a dental visit within the past year	California Health Interview Survey, 2005	Better than HP2010 target of 56% (Objective #21-10)



Priorities for Action: 2009-2012

Goal 1: Strengthen and support a culture of active, healthy living in Sonoma County

Objectives:

1.1 Engage and mobilize the entire community in a communitywide campaign to strengthen and support a culture of active, healthy living

Proposed strategies:

- a. Design and implement social marketing campaign that promotes Health Action's vision and action agenda and is designed to support a culture of active, healthy living in Sonoma County.
- b. Engage public of all ages to get involved in grassroots efforts to support Health Action's community campaign.

1.2 Engage and mobilize community organizations, business leaders, policymakers, and other partners to actively support Health Action's vision and action agenda

Proposed strategies:

- a. Create core partnerships with a broad array of community organizations, business leaders, and other partners to implement Health Action's vision and action agenda.
- b. Advocate for cities, community organizations, neighborhoods, and other partners to endorse and actively support Health Action's vision and action agenda.

Goal 2: Increase consumption of healthy food

Objectives:

2.1 Identify areas and populations of the county with limited access to affordable healthy food and identify opportunities to improve access

Proposed strategies:

- a. Conduct countywide food system assessment to identify areas of the county and populations (e.g., seniors, recent immigrants) with limited access to affordable healthy food and to identify opportunities to improve access to affordable healthy food in low access areas.

(Will include assessment of community assets and resources)

- b. Assess the feasibility and benefit of creating a multi-stakeholder “Food System Alliance” to work on improving access to healthy food in Sonoma County and promoting the sustainability and resiliency of the local food system.
- c. Identify and advocate for local policies that could improve access to affordable healthy food for Sonoma County residents, especially those in low access areas (as identified in Strategy 2.1.a; link to Strategies 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 below).

2.2 Increase number of purchase or distribution points for affordable fresh fruits and vegetables in the community

Proposed strategies:

- a. Support community-based projects that expand availability of affordable fresh produce in the community, especially for areas and populations with identified low access.

(Could include both market-based projects as well as those that expand home and community gardens and gleaning/exchange of fresh produce).

2.3 Increase availability of healthy food and educational opportunities about healthy food in schools

Proposed strategies:

- a. Mobilize and engage parents, teachers, school board members and other community stakeholders to implement and monitor school wellness policies that increase availability of healthy food and educational opportunities about healthy food in school (link to Strategy 3.1.a).

(Would include policies and practices for fundraising that emphasize healthy food and physical activity)

- b. Support school districts to improve the healthy choices offered in school meal programs, including development of farm-to-school initiatives that incorporate fresh, local produce into school meals while teaching students about local agriculture.
- c. Support schools to integrate nutrition education into their curriculum (both required and elective subjects) that is consistent with the CDE Health Framework for California public schools, including expansion of school gardens, cooking programs, and salad bars that are integrated with nutrition education efforts.

2.4 Increase availability of healthy food during the work day

Proposed strategies:

- a. Develop countywide “Healthy Business” program to support employers in Sonoma County to implement programs, policies, or activities that promote worksite wellness and increase opportunities for healthy eating, such as healthy food options at worksite meetings, vending machines, cafeterias, and surrounding food venues (link to Strategy 3.2.a).

2.5 Increase availability of affordable healthy food for seniors and others with limited access

Proposed strategies:

- a. Support efforts to expand access to affordable healthy food choices for seniors and others with limited access

Goal 3: Increase physical activity for all residents

Objectives:

3.1 Increase opportunities for physical activity before, during and after school

Proposed strategies:

- a. Mobilize and engage parents, teachers, school board members and other community stakeholders to implement and monitor school wellness policies that increase opportunities for physical activity before, during, and after school (link to Strategy 2.3.a).

(Would include policies and practices for fundraising that emphasize healthy food and physical activity)

- b. Support schools to implement daily physical education for all Sonoma County children.
- c. Collaborate with schools to implement a countywide Safe Routes to School program.

3.2 Increase opportunities for physical activity before, during, and after work

Proposed strategies:

- a. Develop countywide “Healthy Business” program to support employers in Sonoma County to implement programs, policies, or activities that increase opportunities for physical activity before, during or after work for employees (link to Strategy 2.4.a).

3.3 Engage the entire community in communitywide efforts to support regular walking, biking, and physical activity

Proposed strategies:

- a. Conduct countywide assessment of existing community infrastructure to support regular walking and biking and identify priority areas where infrastructure improvements are needed.
- b. Create and launch a countywide walking program (link to Strategy 1.1.a).
- c. Support efforts to establish alternative/public transportation programs to encourage walking and biking.

- d. Support efforts to expand physical activity opportunities for seniors, including those in communal living arrangements.
- e. Mobilize community residents to advocate for community infrastructure improvements to support walking, biking and other physical activity and reduce dependence on cars.
- f. Promote walking and biking concepts in city and county government planning processes (including General Plans, Specific Plans, and Redevelopment Plans) in Sonoma County.

Goal 4: Connect all residents with a trusted source of prevention-focused primary care and community resources to support healthy living

Objectives:

4.1 Identify and support opportunities to expand primary care capacity and access to a medical home

Proposed strategies:

- a. Establish a “Sonoma County Primary Care Collaborative” to provide technical assistance, support, and evaluation for local medical home pilot projects and measure outcomes in the areas of: improved health of a defined population, enhanced patient experience of care, and economic performance.
- b. Identify and support opportunities to enhance or expand primary care to underserved areas or populations.
- c. Identify and support opportunities to recruit and retain primary care providers in Sonoma County.
- d. Train health workers in effective, culturally-appropriate methods of teaching and supporting healthy behaviors in their patients (e.g., motivational interviewing) (link to Strategy 4.1.a).

4.2 Increase public awareness of the importance of regular, preventive, primary care and motivate community members to seek that connection

Proposed strategies:

- a. Develop approaches and tools to educate and engage the public, health care providers and employers about the importance of primary care and preventive health services and its relationship to positive health outcomes.

4.3 Connect residents with community-based health promotion resources appropriate to all ages, cultures, and ethnicities

Proposed strategies:

- a. Work with community partners to market existing health promotion resources and to develop new resources that address unmet needs.

4.4 Identify and advocate for opportunities to enhance funding for primary care

Proposed strategies:

- a. Convene a local “Employer Group for Primary Care” (with employer groups, insurers/payers and health care providers) to identify opportunities to enhance payment to primary care providers and to support prevention-focused health care delivery (link to Strategy 4.1.a).
- b. Advocate for state and national public policy changes to increase reimbursement for primary care and to expand investment in prevention.