

## **Bringing health and nutrition back to Texas County**

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By HEATHER AVEY / Staff Writer

Texas County Turning Point (TCTP) is brewing with ideas to bring nutrition and fitness back into Texas County.

TCTP held a general membership meeting Tuesday at the Texas County Health Department. One of the highlights of the meeting was the Walk this Weigh Program.

Walk this Weigh Texas County is focused on getting people up and moving. The campaign is designed to improve the health of all the residents in Oklahoma through a three-pronged approach:

?Raising public awareness through a fun and innovative approach to reducing individual weight and increasing physical activity;

?Implementing healthy community design and smart growth strategies;

?Advocating for nutritional and physical activity policies and standards in schools, work sites, healthcare systems, and governmental entities.

For the Walk This Weigh Campaign this year, TCTP is putting together a walking competition.

The event will be kicked off on May 1 from 6-7 p.m. at the Thompson park walking trail and will be a month-long competition.

At the kickoff they will have a two-mile walk where all participants will be able to register for the competition and receive a t-shirt and pedometer. There will be no entry fee.

"The only entry fee there is that of the 900 minutes of exercise that you put into it," Mike Parkhurst, Assistant Superintendent of Guymon Schools, said.

The contest will consist of two categories, team and individual.

If competing as a team, each team needs to be comprised of four members and the team with the most minutes of physical activity at the end will receive prizes.

For the individuals participating the one with the most minutes will also receive prizes.

In addition, any participants who have accumulated at least 900 minutes of activity throughout the month will be entered in drawing for a grand prize.

And, all those participating as a team will also be entered as individuals and will be eligible for the grand prize.

According to Lana Shaffer, Turning Point Field Consultant, they have also agreed that time can be accumulated from the use of treadmills, electrical machines, jogging and more.

"Basically, however minutes of physical activity in their day will count towards their tally" Shaffer said.

"Hopefully we can get a lot of businesses involved, where they can put together teams for their employees."

Walk this Weigh Texas County is encouraging friends and family to participate in the program.

In order to make a successful project the program is looking for some sponsorship from the community.

Any contributions made will be used to promote the event, purchase prizes for the winning team, winning individual and for the T-shirts for all of the participants.

The sponsorship categories are: Platinum is \$750, Gold is \$500, Silver is \$250 and Bronze is \$100.

Sponsors of at least \$250 will be put on the back of the t-shirts.

If one would like to make a donation of a lesser amount, it would still be greatly appreciated.

The deadline for donations is Feb. 16.

There is no entry fee.

TCTP has set out a work plan that is divided into four different goals: Improving children's health, increasing the activity level of adults, increasing the number of active TCTP members and improving access to healthcare.

On March 8-9, Jada Dickerson, TCTP member, and Tammy Arnold, TCTP member, will be attending the Partners Conference for Oklahoma Families where they will be presented with a \$1,000 Children's Health Fair Award.

Those who are interested in making a donation or participating in the competition may contact Kay Allen at the Texas County Health Department at 338-8544 or Jada Dickerson at 338-3733.