

The mission of the **Flint Hills Wellness Coalition** is to create a healthy, equitable community for Manhattan/Riley County residents through policy, system, environmental, and personal change. Using a Health in All Policies framework, the Coalition and partners continue to elevate the discussion regarding healthy eating, active living, and commercial tobacco use with the goal of improving individual and community health.

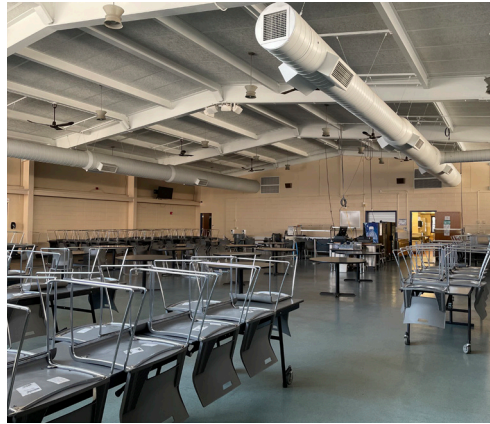
Community Perception

- All nine focus groups identified transportation barriers to accessing healthy, affordable foods, including unsafe walking routes, inconvenient bus routes and times and confusing navigation apps.
- Three different populations of focus — international students at K-State, Spanish only speaking households, Afghan households — agreed that culturally familiar food choices at grocery stores are limited and more expensive. Access via communal meals, restaurants, or pantries is also limited.
- Focus group participants agreed that simple access to health related resources is needed. Accessing food, healthy eating education, physical activity options, understanding bus routes, and neighborhood garden opportunities were reoccurring themes.

“Pathways led to a partnership with Common Table to provide free community meals in one location. Addressing food insecurity together is a win for the community.”

— Eric Reid
Associate Superintendent,
Manhattan-Ogden USD 383

Riley County



Healthy Eating



The **Food and Farm Council of Riley County/Manhattan** received a *Pathways* implementation grant to strengthen work through policy.

A diversity, equity, and inclusion policy lens is guiding discussions with community members. Key findings will mobilize the **Master Food Plan**. Impact so far includes engaging neighborhood leaders and starting a **SNAP** application assistance program.

Active Living



Matching funds provided by *Pathways* will address a significant sidewalk gap on the north side of **Fort Riley Boulevard (K-18)**, improve

an existing pedestrian crossing, and will repair and extend the sidewalk on the south side. A well-worn cow path is evidence this corridor is heavily used by pedestrians and bicyclists.

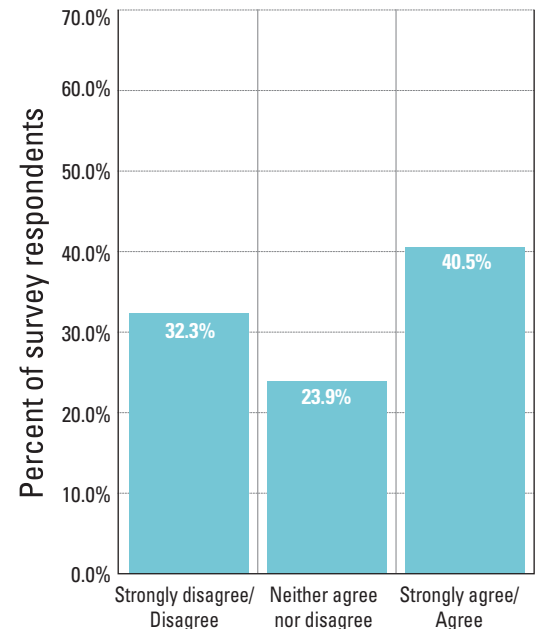


Commercial Tobacco Control



Riley County Health Department is actively working to establish **Resist** chapters within school districts and **4-H** groups in the northern part of the county. While identifying champions to lead these efforts has proven challenging in the aftermath of COVID-19, we remain committed to our goal.

Initiative Wide: In general, my community has sufficient options for healthy eating.



Key findings:

Nearly one-in-three respondents across the 24 *Pathways* communities said their community does not have sufficient options for healthy eating.

Results are based on data from an initiative-wide survey of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas members for whom e-mail addresses were available in each of the 26 counties in which BCBSKS has funded coalitions as part of the *Pathways to a Healthy Kansas Initiative*. N = 3,708. The survey response rate was 5.3 percent. For this question, 3.2 percent of respondents did not provide an answer (blank response).

12
Projects

\$265,000
Pathways Grant
Funding

71,959
Population
Impacted

Pathways to a Healthy Kansas combines evidence-based solutions and promising practices for improving healthy eating, active living and tobacco prevention to make a large impact in communities. The program provides community coalitions with the tools and resources needed to remove barriers and engage their communities – and represents the largest community grant program ever funded by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas.

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