

Bring Your Shoes “N” Cruise Downtown Franklin

If you ever find yourself driving through the mountains of Western North Carolina and happen to stop in downtown Franklin, bring your cruising shoes. You can stroll West Main, Maple, and Church streets, check out the county courthouse, and even stop at the local Chamber of Commerce to see what other physical activities are available in Macon County.

Jennifer Garrett, Lead School Nurse and School Worksite Wellness Coordinator in collaboration with the Health Promotions from Macon County Public Health Center, Church Wellness Program and Healthy Carolinians spent a weekend measuring and mapping walking routes throughout downtown Franklin. The maps are very detailed and include five different paths from .4 to three mile distances. They also give you a challenge scale from one to four, amateur to super fit. The maps suggest family friendly routes based on sidewalk width (to accommodate strollers) and the number of busy intersections needing to be crossed. If you select route number four you may want to bring your pepper spray because it wanders through a residential area with “not so friendly” dogs. An added benefit of using the routes is the draw to the downtown businesses.

This eventful endeavor was completed as part of the STAR (Staff Together Achieving Results) School Worksite Wellness Program. The program encourages teachers, administrators and support staff to eat healthy, increase exercise, manage stress, and quit tobacco use. The maps are promoted in the schools at staff meetings and many of the routes are easily accessible from the schools making them convenient for school staff use. The walking maps are just one of the many innovative ways that Macon County School System is mapping the road to healthier staff.



Key Steps Walking Maps

- Designate coordinators.
- Choose a safe area for employees to walk. Consider indoor or outdoor walking routes of varying distances. Perhaps there is an existing track or sportsfield nearby.
- Borrow a measuring wheel or use your car odometer to determine distance traveled. Alternatively, use an online program such as Google Map Pedometer.
- Draw a map of the route or print it using an online program. Mark 1/4, 1/2, 3/4 and one mile locations. Copy and distribute maps to employees.
- Post maps in prominent locations such as the employee bulletin boards or rest room doors to encourage and remind employees to participate and use the walking route.
- The walking routes can be used for individual or team walking challenges.