

Learning Network for Active Aging: Challenges and Successes to Date

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Learning Network for Active Aging Partners



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Problem Statement



- Communities are concerned about health and well-being of adults
- Unaware of best practices - or how to implement best practices - around activity programming or healthy environments

Concept of the Learning Network for Active Aging

- Bring together those interested in creating healthy communities by bridging research and practice through an innovative approach of e-collaboration



Purpose of the Learning Network for Active Aging

- **Share lessons** from translational research and best practices
- Serve as a **resource for communities** interested in implementing evidence-based programs
- **Disseminate information** about active aging and healthy communities
- **Provide a forum** for interactions across different sectors

Process to develop a user designed- user driven forum

- ① Gather information through community discussion groups, open-ended surveys, networking with experts
- ② Identify user needs and preferences
- ③ Develop content and features to match user needs
- ④ Evaluate and respond to findings



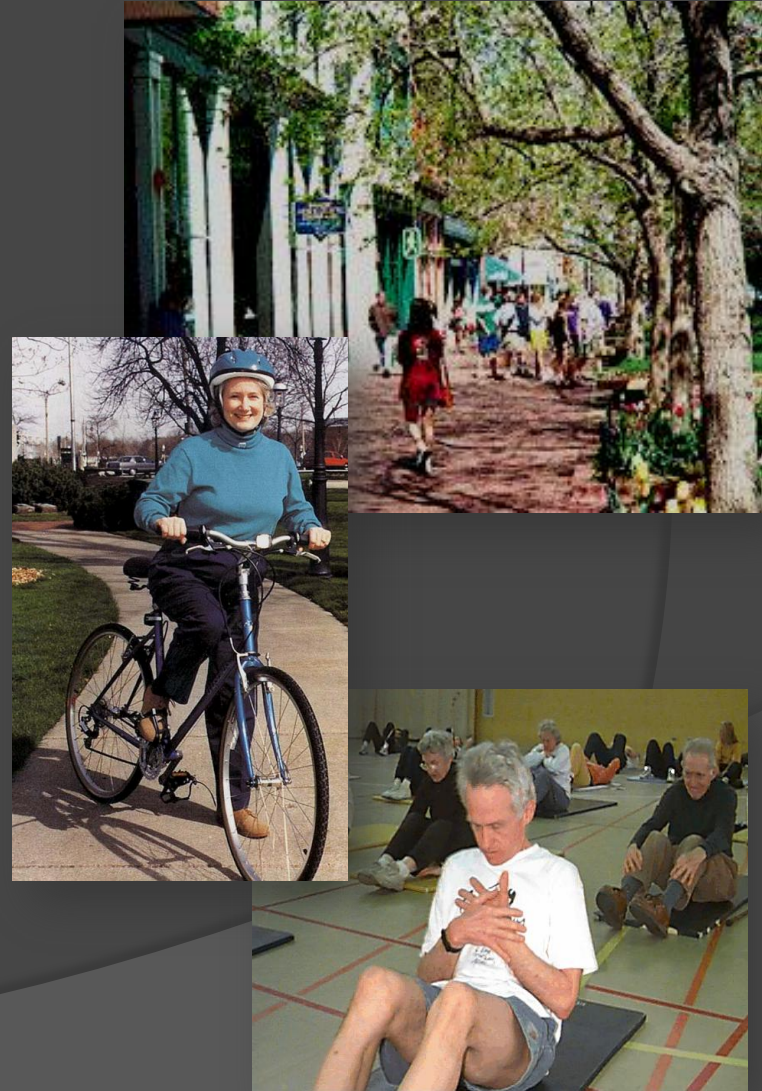
Aging and the Built Environment



- How does the built environment influence health related behaviors?
- What does it take to make the environment a healthier place for persons of all ages?
- What is unique about environmental influences for older people?

Partnership with EPA Aging Initiative

- Lack of awareness about healthy synergies achieved by combining Smart Growth and Active Aging
- National Award Program to recognize communities promoting the health and well-being of older adults through both smart growth principles and programming best practices



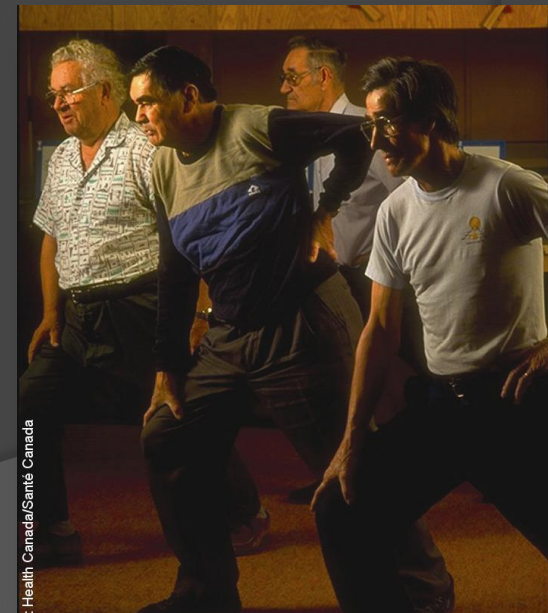
Partnership with CDC Healthy Aging Network

- Limited opportunities to obtain training about implementing, disseminating, or evaluating evidence based health programming
- Develop a blueprint for evaluating evidence-based health promotion programs for older adults



Partnership with National Blueprint and NCOA

- Communities want to use best practices but require assistance in selecting, implementing and/ or evaluating best practices
- Recommendations on how to implement best practice programs or principles that community-based physical activity program providers can use to initiate or improve upon their own programs.



Products

- ◉ www.LNactiveaging.com
- ◉ Joint newsletter with National Blueprint
- ◉ National Recognition Award (EPA)
- ◉ Article in Texas Public Health Association Journal
- ◉ Best Practices report with National Blueprint and NCOA (in progress)



Challenges

- ⦿ Time- everything takes longer than you expect
- ⦿ Building consensus
- ⦿ Open source software
- ⦿ Changing environment
- ⦿ Finding our niche
- ⦿ Funding priorities



Successes

- Leverage resources with networking and existing partnerships
- Expanded focus and target audience
- Interested constituencies: aging services network, commercial entities, municipal planning groups, wellness professionals and many others

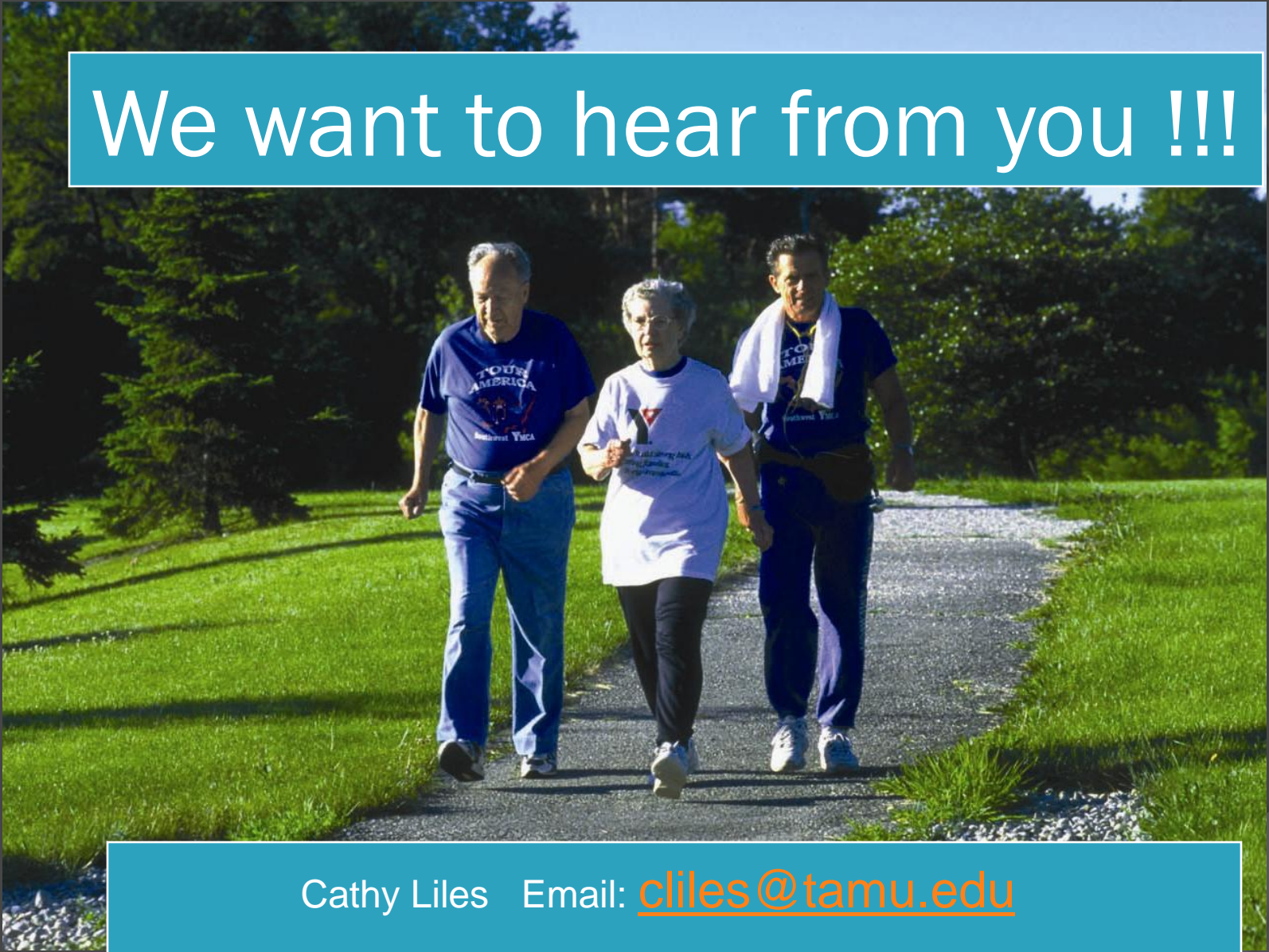


Next Steps

- Implement moderated bulletin board
- Develop content
 - Research translation
 - Identifying and selecting evidence-based programs
 - Improving existing programs with best practices
 - Building Healthy Communities for Active Aging Awards
- Provide vehicle for sharing stories
- Develop sustainability plan



We want to hear from you !!!



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