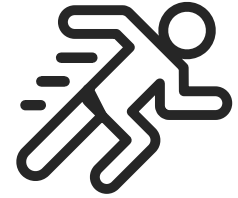


Be Well Communities™

Active living resource guide for the Houston area



Be Well Communities™ is The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center’s place-based strategy for cancer prevention and control, working with communities to promote wellness and stop cancer before it starts. Be Well Communities unites individuals, schools, workplaces, government agencies, health care providers and policymakers to plan and carry out sustainable, community-led solutions that will make positive, long-lasting changes in people’s lives. An important component of the Be Well Communities model is working with community-based organizations such as schools, workplaces, community colleges, and parks and recreation departments, who all have an important role to play in reducing the risk of cancer. More than 50 local, regional and state organizations are actively engaged on Be Well Communities steering committees in the areas of healthy eating, active living, sun safety, tobacco-free living and preventive care.

This active living resource guide has been created by the Be Well Communities team to provide support and knowledge-based resources for community-based organizations in the Houston area, who serve individuals who want to learn more about active living, exercise and related topics.

Please note, this resource is for organizations and does not include information for individuals or health care advice. Community members should contact their primary care physician before beginning a physical activity program or for referrals. Specific and local information on resources for addressing needs related to non-medical drivers of health, such as housing, are available from [Harris County Public Health](#) (click on “Community Resource List” for the current month’s guide).

- For more information or technical assistance, contact: BeWellCommunities@MDAnderson.org
- To learn about Be Well Communities, visit: MDAnderson.org/BeWellCommunities

In-person programs



These groups provide in-person free health education and physical activity classes that empower people to make active living part of their lives.

Organization	Description
Agents of Discovery – Houston Parks Board	<p>Agents of Discovery is an educational mobile gaming platform that uses augmented reality to get youth active and outdoors. Houston Parks Board hosts pop-up missions at locations all over the city to help families explore the outdoors in a safe and socially distant way.</p> <p>Program audience: youth</p>
All Kids Bike	<p>All Kids Bike offers information on their free bike program geared towards kindergarten physical education class. Schools can apply for the program and receive bikes and curriculum to teach kids how to bike during physical education class.</p> <p>Program audience: youth</p>
BakerRipley	<p>BakerRipley offers evidence-based health and wellness classes at more than 60 locations throughout Harris County for seniors, adults, families and children in both English and Spanish. Classes help you address specific health concerns and achieve your wellness goals.</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults, adults over 60</p> <p>Languages offered: English, Spanish</p>
BOUNCE – University of Houston	<p>BOUNCE is a community outreach and research initiative offering various physical activity and nutrition programs for youth and families. Contact them via email or call 832-842-5921 for more information.</p> <p>Program audience: adults</p> <p>Languages offered: English, Spanish</p>
City of Baytown	<p>The City of Baytown Parks and Recreation Department offers a range of fitness activities available including outdoor Zumba, POUND, yoga and much more.</p> <p>Program audience: adults</p>
City of Bellaire	<p>The City of Bellaire Parks and Recreation Department offers a range of adult and youth recreational classes and activities.</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults</p>

City of Deer Park	<p>The City of Deer Park Parks and Recreation Department offers a range of adult and youth recreational classes and activities.</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults</p>
City of Houston	<p>The City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department offers a range of adult, youth and senior recreation, sports, leisure and enrichment classes.</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults</p>
City of La Porte	<p>The City of La Porte Parks and Recreation Department offers a range of adult recreational classes and activities.</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults</p>
City of Pasadena	<p>The City of Pasadena Parks and Recreation Department offers free Zumba classes and a range of other recreational activities throughout the city.</p> <p>Program audience: adults</p>
Diabetes Awareness and Wellness Network (DAWN) - Houston Health Department	<p>DAWN Centers provide free fitness classes and workout centers to reduce or prevent diabetes; centers are located throughout the city of Houston.</p> <p>Program audience: adults</p> <p>Languages offered: English, Spanish</p>
Harris County Precinct 1	<p>Precinct 1 offers free senior health and wellness classes and youth out-of-school programs at their parks and community centers.</p> <p>Program audience: adults, adults over 60</p>
Harris County RideONE Program	<p>RideONE is an alternative transportation program developed by Commissioner Rodney Ellis and runs out of community centers. RideONE brings the joy of biking to underserved communities and gives residents the opportunity to learn about bicycle safety and bike maintenance while getting comfortable riding bikes for pleasure and to fill basic transportation needs. They have their own fleet of bicycles that are available to the public to check out.</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults</p>
Harris County Precinct 2	<p>Precinct 2 offers various free fitness and youth cooking classes and activities available at the 17 community centers in the precinct.</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults over 60</p>
Harris County Precinct 3	<p>Precinct 3 operates 8 community centers and offers a variety of free educational seminars, fitness classes, group activities and social support.</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults</p>

Harris County Precinct 4	<p>Precinct 4 operates 10 community centers and offers fitness classes, arts and crafts, games, seasonal celebrations, and much more. Programs, seminars and classes are free and designed for the entire family.</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults</p>
Healthy Weight and Your Child - YMCA	<p>The YMCA offers evidence-based programs designed to address childhood obesity through education, healthy eating and physical activity. Contact them via email or call 713-758-9179 for more information.</p> <p>Program audience: youth</p>
Houston Health Department – Health education classes	<p>Houston Health Department offers a wide selection of free, health education courses on the topics of hypertension, overweight and obesity, and tobacco use to community members across the lifespan. Education is offered through clinic-based health, community-based health and health education by request. The health education calendar on the website includes all exercise classes at City of Houston Multi-Service Centers through Keep HOU moving.</p> <p>Program audience: adults, adults over 60</p> <p>Languages offered: English, Spanish</p>
MD Anderson Cancer Center	<p>MD Anderson offers several healthy lifestyle programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Living After Cancer aims to improve the quality of life of cancer survivors in Houston and El Paso by promoting physical activity and providing navigation services for survivorship concerns. 12 weekly sessions available in English and Spanish. Contact them via email or call 713-442-1216 for more information. • Your Health Matters offers strategies to help adults move to a healthy diet as well as increase physical activity, plus information on other ways to reduce cancer risk. 4 sessions are available in English and Spanish. Visit MDAnderson.org/Community to reserve this program. • Healthy Weight, Healthy Life is a one-time presentation to support achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. It is offered in English. Visit MDAnderson.org/Community to reserve this presentation. • MD Anderson’s Health Disparities Research department has active living research studies. Visit their website to sign up for a current study. <p>Program audience: adults</p> <p>Languages offered: English, Spanish</p>

<p>StepHEALTHY program – Memorial Hermann Community Benefit Corporation</p>	<p>The StepHEALTHY program is offered through Memorial Hermann Community Benefit Corporation. They work with communities to promote active living and are currently active in Clark Park and Highland/DeSoto Park.</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults, adults over 60</p>
<p>Wellness Walks - Urban Paths</p>	<p>Urban Paths offers free wellness walks at Memorial Park on Fridays and Buffalo Bayou Park on Wednesdays.</p> <p>Program audience: adults</p>
<p>Adaptive sports and recreation</p>	
<p>City of Pearland Adaptive Recreation</p>	<p>The City of Pearland Parks and Recreation offers recreation and sports programs for all abilities.</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults</p>
<p>Insperity Adaptative Sports Complex</p>	<p>Insperity Adaptive Sports Complex provides children with disabilities and special needs a barrier-free environment to play and participate in team sports.</p> <p>Program audience: youth</p>
<p>Metropolitan Multi-Service Center</p>	<p>The Houston Parks and Recreation Department’s Adaptive Sports and Recreation section is headquartered at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center at West Gray. Adaptive Sports and Recreation offers a variety of recreational, sporting and quality of life programming for people with differing abilities.</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults</p>
<p>Verne Cox Multipurpose Recreation Center</p>	<p>Verne Cox Multipurpose Recreation Center provides affordable recreation programming, innovative therapeutic recreation services and an outlet to promote healthy usage of leisure time for people with disabilities.</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults</p>

Online programs



These online tools provide free or low-cost interactive resources to promote active living.

Organization	Description
AARP Virtual Community	<p>AARP Virtual Community offers free online fitness classes and is updated weekly. No membership is required for most classes.</p> <p>Program audience: adults over 55</p>
Howdy Health - Texas A&M AgriLife Extension	<p>Howdy Health links to many online programs including Walk Across Texas, Walk Through Texas History, Walk Across Texas Youth, and 10&10,000 Change Challenge. Call 713-274-0950 for more information.</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults, adults over 60</p>
It's Time Texas	<p>It's Time Texas provides a calendar of free online fitness classes available in English and Spanish powered by It's Time Texas Stronger Austin (some classes are in-person in Austin).</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults, adults over 60</p>
MD Anderson Cancer Center	<p>MD Anderson offers weight management information and a body mass index calculator, plus tips to achieve a healthy diet.</p> <p>Program audience: adults</p>
National Center on Healthy, Physical Activity and Disability (NCHPAD)	<p>NCHPAD has created a playlist of the top exercise-from-home videos on their YouTube channel. The playlist for kids and adults includes several options for all abilities to help you choose an exercise mode that works for and is enjoyable to you.</p> <p>Program audience: youth, adults, all abilities</p>
NCHPAD – 14 Weeks to a Healthier You	<p>NCHPAD offers this free, personalized, web-based physical activity and nutrition program for individuals with disabilities and chronic health conditions.</p> <p>Program audience: adults</p>
NFL Play60 App	<p>NFL Play60 is a free app that allows users to choose their favorite National Football League team and create their own personalized avatar. Users can create custom workouts and play games by controlling their avatars on-screen with their physical movement.</p> <p>Program audience: youth</p>

Silver Sneakers	<p>Silver Sneakers provides live online classes or workshops at no cost for adults 65+ through select Medicare plans.</p> <p>Program audience: adults over 60</p>
Silver&Fit	<p>The Silver&Fit® program offers members access to exclusive exercise plans and workout videos on demand. Available through participating Medicare plans.</p> <p>Program audience: adults over 60</p>
Special Olympics fitness videos	<p>Special Olympics provides free online fitness videos for people of all abilities and fitness levels.</p> <p>Program audience: adults, all abilities</p>
Texercise – Texas Department of Health and Human Services	<p>The Texas Department of Health and Human Services provides online exercise videos and a free handbook (by ordering) to help you get on the road to fitness. Contact their team via email or call 1-800-889-8995 for more information. (Note: this class is offered in person at several locations across Houston including Acres Homes Multi-Service Center.)</p> <p>Program audience: adults</p>
US Department of Health and Human Services Move Your Way	<p>Move Your Way offers free online activity health planner to help set goals, choose activities you want to do, and get tips to help you stay motivated.</p> <p>Program audience: adults</p>

Places where you can be active



This section includes information and links to locations showing parks, trails and centers that provide free or low-cost opportunities to be active. This section is organized by cities/municipalities in Harris County, Harris County Precincts and other places to be physically active.

Organization	Description
Cities/municipalities in Harris County	
City of Baytown	The City of Baytown maintains over 50 parks and 15+ miles of trails.
City of Bellaire	The City of Bellaire maintains 14 parks and several trails.
City of Deer Park	The City of Deer Park maintains 28 parks and multiple walking trails.
City of El Lago	The City of El Lago maintains 4 parks.
City of Friendswood	The City of Friendswood maintains 10 parks.
City of Houston	The City of Houston maintains 382 parks and 163.12 miles of trails.
City of Houston Free Weight Rooms	The City of Houston offers free fitness centers throughout the Houston area. Some centers include free weights and cardio equipment. Phone reservations are required 24 hours before use.
City of Humble	The City of Humble maintains 4 parks.
City of Jacinto City	The City of Jacinto City maintains 4 parks.
City of Jersey Village	The City of Jersey Village maintains 5 parks.
City of Katy	The City of Katy maintains 10 parks.
City of La Porte	The City of La Porte provides a recreation and fitness center (fees apply) and maintains over 30 parks open to the community.

City of League City	The City of League City maintains 15 parks, miles of trails and a mountain bike course.
City of Nassau Bay	The City of Nassau Bay maintains 5 parks.
City of Pasadena	The City of Pasadena maintains 46 parks and over 14 miles of trails.
City of Pearland	The City of Pearland maintains 17 parks and miles of sidewalks and trails.
City of Seabrook	The City of Seabrook maintains 18 parks, and several are connected via trails.
City of Southside Place	The City of Southside Place maintains 1 park.
City of Stafford	The City of Stafford maintains 6 parks.
City of Sugar Land	The City of Sugar Land maintains 27 city parks, 3 special-use facilities and over 35 miles of trails.
City of Taylor Lake Village	The City of Taylor Lake Village maintains 1 park and trail.
City of Tomball	The City of Tomball maintains 7 parks.
City of Webster	The City of Webster maintains 5 parks.
City of West University Place	The City of West University Place maintains 10 parks.

Harris County Precincts

Precinct 1	Harris County Precinct 1 maintains 21 parks and miles of trails.
Precinct 2	Harris County Precinct 2 maintains 50 parks and 27 miles of trails.
Precinct 3	Harris County Precinct 3 maintains 70 parks and 8 trails covering multiple miles.
Precinct 4	Harris County Precinct 4 maintains 51 parks and 100 miles of trails.

Other places to be active

Bayou Greenways	Bayou Greenways creates and maintains multipurpose infrastructure totaling nearly 150 miles that adds greenspace to the bayous, connecting neighborhoods and communities.
Hester House Fifth Ward	Hester House Fifth Ward provides a free weight room and aquatic center for community use in the Fifth Ward area.
North Houston District – Greens Bayou	North Houston District runs along Greens Bayou and manages 8 parks and over 6 miles of trails.
Pinnacle Senior & Aquatic Fitness Center	Pinnacle Senior & Aquatic Fitness Center provides a comprehensive array of programs and activities to promote healthy aging and a sense of well-being to senior citizens ages 50+ in Fort Bend County. Program audience: adults over 60

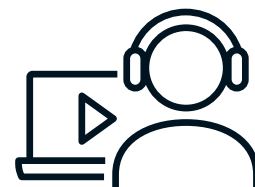
All-inclusive parks and playgrounds

Alief Park	Park and playground at Alief Park and Neighborhood Center in Houston.
Boundless Playground	Playground in League City.

Buddy Carruth Playground for All Children – Hermann Park	Playground at Hermann Park in Houston.
CVS Boundless Playground – Eastwood Park	Playground at Eastwood Park in Houston.
Dylan Park	Playground in north Houston.
Insperity Adaptive Sports Complex	Playground (open during non-school hours) in the Humble area.
James Driver Park	Playground in the Aldine area.
Katy Play Station – Katy City Park	Playground at Katy City Park in Katy.
Lindsay/Lyons Park and Sports Complex	Playground maintained by Harris County Precinct 3 in Humble.
Mary Jo Peckham Park	Playground maintained by Harris County Precinct 4 in Katy.
Matzke Park	Playground maintained by Harris County Precinct 3 in northwest Houston.
Olson Park	Playground maintained by Harris County Precinct 2 in Pasadena.
Sunset Park	Playground at Sunset Park in Pasadena.
Vale-Asche Foundation Playground - Memorial Park	Playground at Memorial Park in Houston.

Vale-Asche Foundation Playground – Metropolitan Multi-Service Center	Playground at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center in Houston.
Vale-Asche Foundation Playground – Tidwell Park	Playground at Tidwell Park in Houston.
Verne Cox Multipurpose Adaptive Recreation Center	Playground and recreation center in Pasadena.
Universally Accessible Playground – First Colony Athletic Park	Playground at First Colony Athletic Park in Sugar Land.

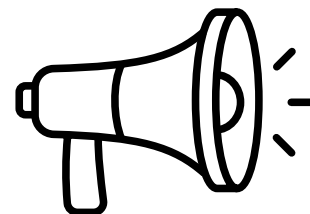
Free active living education material



Visit these sites to order free print materials for your group or organization.

Organization	Description
America Walks	This site offers educational materials and information on walking, health and the environment.
BikeTexas	This site offers educational materials and information on biking in Texas and cyclist safety.
MD Anderson Cancer Center	This site provides information on ordering print materials on cancer prevention, screening and risk reduction tips. Languages offered: English, Spanish, Vietnamese
Move Your Way® Campaign	This site contains all campaign materials and resources for the promotional campaign for the second edition of the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans . Languages offered: English, Spanish
Moving Matters Campaign	This site provides information about Moving Matters, a communication campaign supporting Active People, Healthy Nation, a CDC-led initiative to help 27 million Americans be more physically active by 2027. Languages offered: English, Spanish, additional on the website
Special Olympics' Fit 5 Resources	This site contains Special Olympics resources, free printable Fit 5 guide, and fitness cards in six languages. Languages offered: English, Spanish, French, Chinese, Russian, Arabic

Ways to promote active living in your community



This section includes recommendations for innovative approaches to promote physical activity in your community or organization.

Organization	Description
All sectors	<p>Encourage communities and organizations to use proven strategies to implement and scale up community programs to increase physical activity, such as strategies identified by Active People Healthy Nation.</p> <p>Create a successful walking club using the American Heart Association library of how-to guides featuring useful advice and tools.</p>
Business and industry	<p>Use and share worksite wellness resources and programming, like those available from Active People Healthy Nation to promote physical activity among employees.</p> <p>Incentivize active transportation.</p>
Community, recreation and parks	<p>Promote and offer programming at smaller, neighborhood parks that are easily accessible by nearby residents by foot, bike or public transit.</p> <p>Assess and improve, if needed, the hours of operation for parks and other physical activity programming.</p> <p>Develop and/or support a Safe Routes to Parks program.</p> <p>Support the implementation of and build on existing parks master plans.</p> <p>Support the virtual delivery of sports and fitness activities to people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.</p> <p>Support and enhance physical activity programming and opportunities for diverse cultures in areas geographically marginalized.</p> <p>Seek input and partnership with community members to promote the planning and implementation of physical activity programs.</p>

Education	<p>Partner with school districts and childcare providers to better fund and implement active education and youth programs and to give students options to be physically active.</p> <p>Develop and/or support a Safe Routes to Parks program.</p> <p>Create more outdoor learning environments at childcare centers by collaborating with Outdoor Learning Environment (OLE!) Texas.</p> <p>Establish shared or joint use agreements to open up playgrounds and outdoor recreation spaces to the community during non-school hours.</p> <p>Carve out a space to test and pilot new, innovative ideas to increase physical activity, especially considering the impact of events like the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>
Faith-based	<p>Tailor faith-based physical activities or programs to take place outdoors when feasible.</p> <p>Encourage the development of partnerships with organizations focused on active living throughout changing seasons.</p> <p>Build upon the success of existing faith-based health programs, such as the Faith, Activity and Nutrition Program developed by University of South Carolina.</p>
Health care	<p>Supply health care providers with access to and knowledge of successful, evidence-based, culturally appropriate community programs for physical activity.</p> <p>Implement a Park Prescription (Park Rx), exercise prescription or Walk with a Doc program.</p> <p>Work with older adults to help promote policies for aging in place.</p>
Public health	<p>Create or join an active living coalition.</p> <p>Create, maintain and leverage cross-sectoral partnerships and coalitions that implement evidence-based strategies to promote physical activity.</p>
Transportation, land use and community design	<p>Improve shared use active transportation infrastructure, such as sidewalks and bikeways, by prioritizing “quick build” solutions and reallocating street space to active transportation uses/users.</p> <p>Work to mitigate excessive heat in cities by prioritizing tree canopy and other shade creation strategies.</p>

Additional organizations

These organizations provide active living-related resources for specific communities in the Houston area. [Contact the Be Well Communities team via email](#) to be added to this list.



Organization	Service Area	Description
BikeHouston	Houston area	BikeHouston is a nonprofit organization working to transform Houston into a city where anyone, regardless of who they are or where they live, can safely and easily get around by bike.
Fit Houston	Houston area	Fit Houston is a nonprofit that increases physical activity across Houston's communities. Their mission is to inspire vibrant minds, bodies and communities through physical activity.
FitMix Communities	Houston area	FitMix Communities is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the well-being of all participants. They focus on outreach, taking free group classes to places and areas where they are needed the most.
Go Healthy Houston	City of Houston	Go Healthy Houston aims to foster within local government a culture that promotes laws, programs, projects and policies that increase healthier living.
Harris County Public Health – Built Environment Unit	Harris County	The Harris County Public Health Built Environment Unit ensures that communities are planned and developed in ways that improve health and quality of life. They work closely with other agencies and organizations, such as Harris County Engineering Department, Harris County Flood Control District, Precincts, community organizations and local leaders, to provide a health lens on proposed plans, policies and projects. Notably, Safe Routes to Schools and Parks Plans have been created for several areas.
Houston-Galveston Area Council	13 counties, 107 cities, and 11 independent school district members throughout the region	The Houston-Galveston Area Council is the regional organization through which local governments consider issues and cooperate in solving area wide problems pertaining to regional planning. They offer grants and community planning support to local communities.

Kings Hike and Bike Community	Greater Houston area	Kings Bike and Hike Community is a nonprofit organization that offers free services, activities and lending of equipment in order to promote biking and hiking, as an outreach to youth that have been marginalized.
Madres Del Parque	Gulfton	Madres Del Parque (Mothers of the Park) is a group of mothers interested in the safety and well-being of our children, they host events and advocate for the parks in their neighborhood.
Nature & Eclectic Outdoors	Acres Homes / Third Ward	Nature and Eclectic Outdoors offers many programs to promote outdoor activity. Call their team at 512-731-0936 for more information.
Prairie View A & M Wellness in Houston	Greater Houston area	PVAMU Wellness in Houston promotes health, wellness and nutrition through a variety of classes and activities.
Texas Children's Health Plan	Texas	Texas Children's Health Plan provides fee assistance for extracurricular activities for children and fitness center memberships.
Urban Paths	Greater Houston area	Urban Paths uses nature, movement and meaningful connection to coach you towards a healthier mind, body and more present you. They offer free and low-cost walks.
Vision Zero	City of Houston	Vision Zero Houston is a comprehensive and holistic approach to safer streets that supports the common good and enhances the quality of life for all Houstonians. Vision Zero Houston prioritizes safety and accessibility in street design for people of all ages and abilities.