



# 5 HEALTH OF OUR COMMUNITY

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One of the key goals of the Parks and Recreation Department is to provide opportunities for the community to live a healthy lifestyle – from learning about healthy eating and cooking to fitness and stress relieving activities. This chapter summarizes the health of the community and gaps that the City can work to fill.

## 5.1 Exercise Frequency

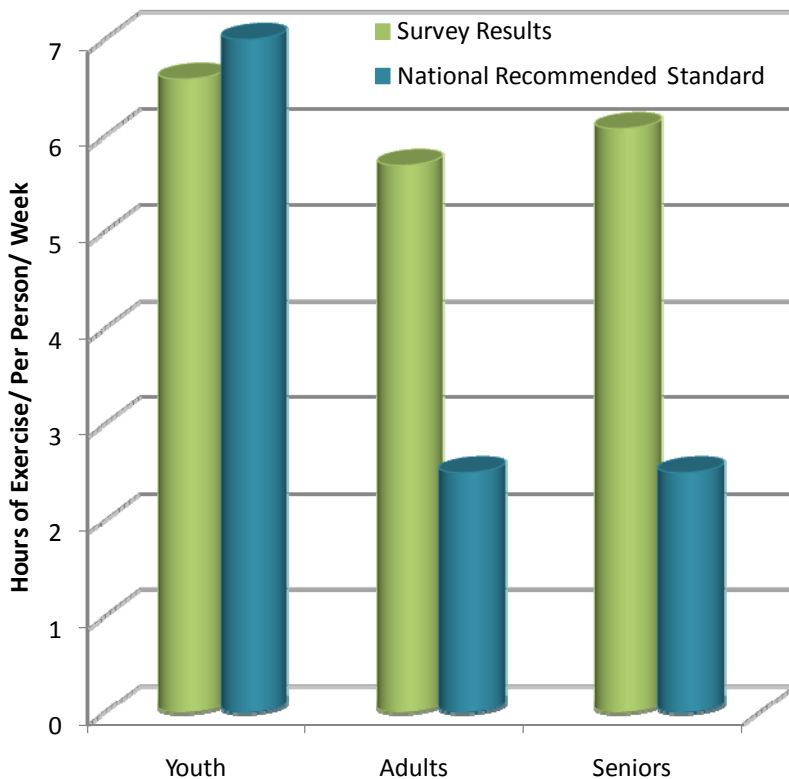
A statistically valid survey of Redmond residents indicated that adults are recreating more than the national recommended standards and that youth are close to meeting the standards for moderate activity, as shown in the following exhibit.<sup>1</sup>

**Exhibit 5-1: National Recommendations for Exercise**

Age	Type	Hours/Week
<b>Kids &lt;18</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>7</b>
Kids <18	AND Vigorous	1.5
Adults	Vigorous	1.25
<b>Adults</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>2.5</b>
Adults	Goal/ Vigorous	2.5
Adults	Goal/Moderate	5
<b>Seniors &gt;65</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>2.5</b>

Source: CDC, 1999. NIH, 2009.

**Exhibit 5-2: Reported Exercise Frequency by Redmond Residents**



Although Redmond residents reportedly exceed the Surgeon General’s recommended amount of exercise, there are still a large

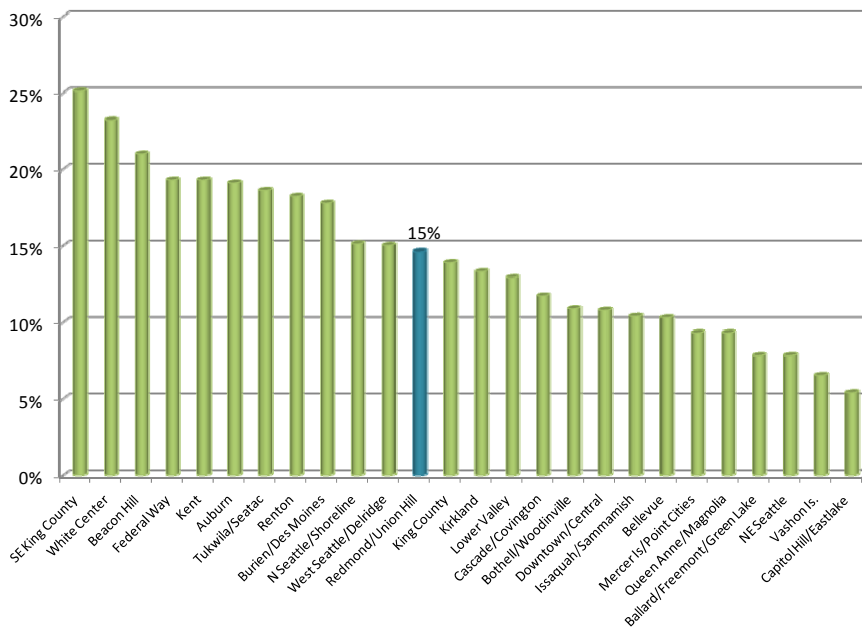
<sup>1</sup> EMC Research Inc., 2009. Parks & Recreation Community Telephone Survey  
 CDC, 1999. Physical Activity and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General’s Report  
 NIH, 2009. National Institute on Aging. <http://www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/Publications/exercise.htm>

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number of people who do not exercise at all, or who are not meeting the national recommended standards for exercise. In addition, there is strong evidence that inadequate exercise, among other factors, is leading to a decline in public health.

**Exhibit 5-3: No Physical Activity among King County Adults 2000-2004**



Source: Health of King County 2006

Comparatively, 25 percent of people nationwide report no physical activity at all in their leisure time and more than 60 percent of American adults do not get the recommended level of physical activity. Currently less than half of U.S. young people (ages 12-21 years) regularly participate in vigorous physical activity.<sup>2</sup>

## Exercise Trends in King Co.

- Between 1996 and 2004, the prevalence of physical inactivity (did not participate in any leisure time physical activity during the previous 30 days) among King County adults declined slightly but significantly from 15.2 percent to 14.5 percent.
- In 2003, 44.3 percent did not meet the recommended physical activity level.
- The older the age, the less likely to meet the recommended physical activity levels.
- Adults with lower household income were more likely to be physically inactive.
- The minority populations were significantly more likely to be physically inactive than whites.
- Among students in grades 8, 10, and 12, 77.8 percent met the recommended physical levels in 2004.

Source: The Health of King County 2006

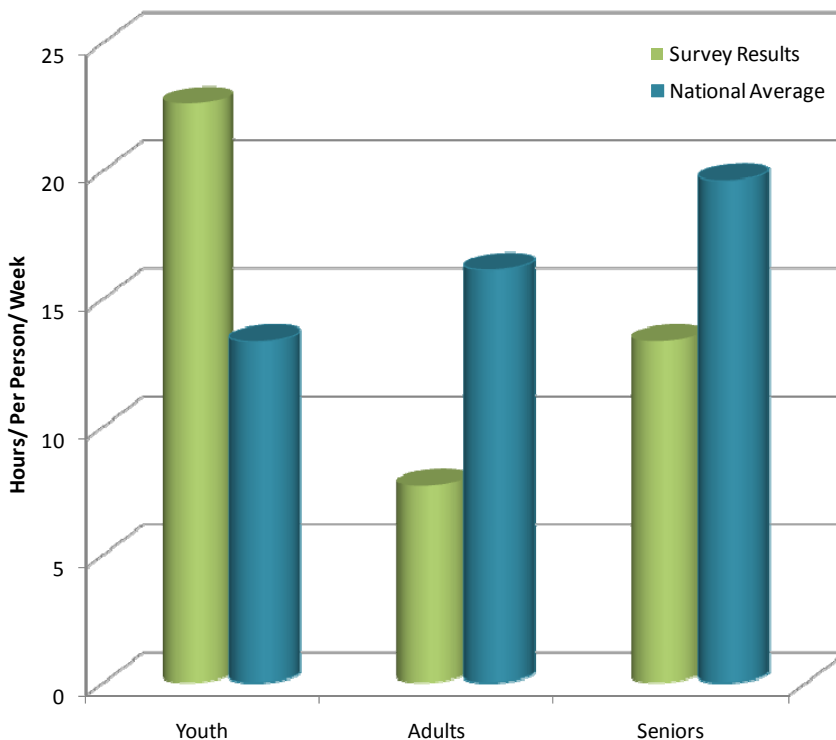
<sup>2</sup> CDC, 1999.

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## 5.2 Leisure Recreation Frequency

Non-exercise recreation is also important, as it provides balance in our busy lives through stress-relief, social relationship building, education, and community building experiences. The U.S. Bureau of Labor tracks the amount of time people spend on leisure recreational activities and our survey asked Redmond residents how they spent their leisure time as a comparison. Leisure recreational activities include hobbies, arts, music, games, reading and other educational activities.<sup>3</sup>

**Exhibit 5-4: Comparison of Leisure Recreational Time Spent by Redmond Residents to National Average**



Redmond youth are showing higher leisure recreation levels than their peers nationwide, while Redmond adults and senior citizens appear to spend less time on leisure activities than the national averages.

<sup>3</sup> Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2008. 2007 American Time Use Survey.

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## 5.3 Health Indicators

The *Health of King County 2006* report examined the current health status of King County residents and recent trends spanning the last 10 years. The study summarized key health findings from local jurisdictions within the county and compared the data to national, state, and regional averages.<sup>4</sup>

The most relevant data from the healthy choices and healthy living perspective is the prevalence of overweight and obesity (defined in the column to the right) and the relationship to inactivity and related diseases such as: the increased risk of coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension, diabetes, gallbladder disease, osteoarthritis, sleep apnea, respiratory problems, and endometrial, breast, prostate, and colon cancers. The prevalence of several significant behavioral risk factors is explored in Exhibit 5-5, below.

### **Exhibit 5-5: Behavioral Risk Factor Prevalence among Adults in King County**

Risk Factor	King County	WA State	US	2010 Objective
Currently Smoking	15%	19%	21%	12%
Obese	18%	22%	22%	15%
High Blood Pressure	22%	24%	25%	16%
Bad cholesterol	31%	33%	33%	

Source: *Public Health Seattle & King County, 2006.*

The King County Department of Health lists obesity as the second leading cause of *preventable* death. The study shows that nearly 56 percent of Redmond residents are either overweight or obese. The following exhibits depict the trends in overweight and obesity within King County.

### **Overweight and Obesity as Indicators of Health**

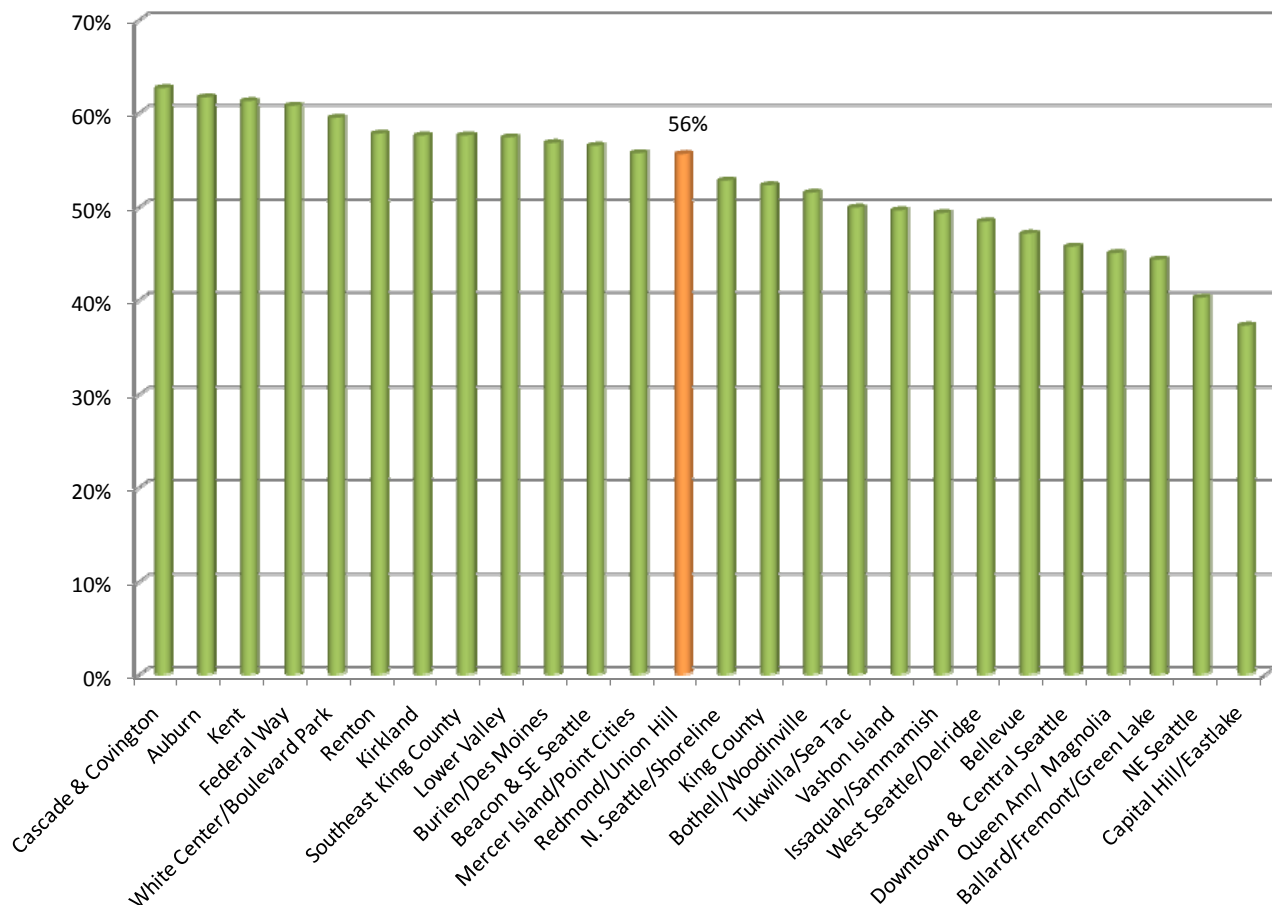
- In the King County Study, overweight and obesity for adults are defined by Body Mass Index (BMI), a ratio of weight to height (weight in kg/ (height in m<sup>2</sup>). Overweight is defined as a BMI between 25.0 and 29.9 and obese as a BMI of 30 or above. "Overweight and obesity" refers to BMI > 25.
- Similar to the national trend, the prevalence of overweight and obesity among King County adults continued to increase between 1995 and 2004 in both men and women.
- In 2004, 54.4% of the King County adults were either overweight (36.7%) or obese (17.7%).
- National data show that the prevalence of overweight has **also been increasing among children.**

Source: *The Health of King County 2006*

<sup>4</sup> Public Health Seattle & King County, 2006. The Health of King County. <http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/data/hokc.aspx>

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**Exhibit 5-6: Percentage of Overweight and Obese in King County – Averaged 2000 to 2004**



Source: US Census Data 2000

King County and Washington State are following a national trend of being increasingly overweight and obese. According to the 1999-2000 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 64 percent of U.S. adults over the age of 20 were either overweight or obese and nearly one-third of U.S. adults were obese.

The Center for Disease Control’s (CDC) Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System tracks overweight and obesity trends nationally. In the past 20 years, there has been a significant increase in the rate of obesity, including the following trends:

- In 1990, among states participating in the system, ten states had a prevalence of obesity less than 10% and no states had prevalence equal to or greater than 15%.

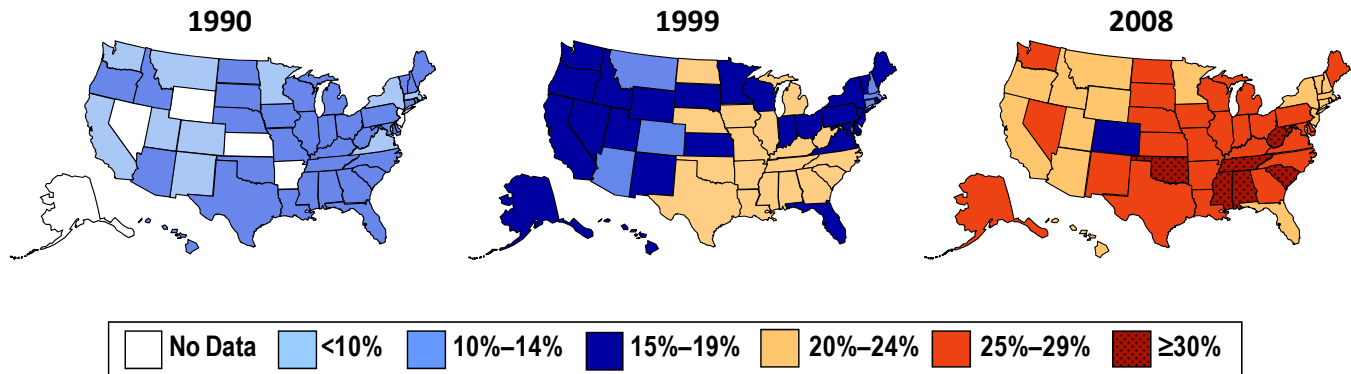
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- By 1999, no state had prevalence less than 10%, eighteen states had a prevalence of obesity between 20-24%, and no state had prevalence equal to or greater than 25%.
- In 2008, only one state (Colorado) had a prevalence of obesity less than 20%. Thirty-two states had a prevalence equal to or greater than 25%; six of these states had a prevalence of obesity equal to or greater than 30%.<sup>5</sup>

The following exhibit depicts the trends in overweight and obesity on a national level.

*Exhibit 5-7: Percentage of Overweight and Obese in US – Averaged 1990 to 2004*



Source: CDC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

<sup>5</sup> CDC, 2008. CDC's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). Obesity Trends among U.S. Adults between 1985 and 2008. [www.cdc.gov/obesity/downloads/obesity\\_trends\\_2008.ppt](http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/downloads/obesity_trends_2008.ppt)



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## 5.4 Summary

Recreation is an important factor in maintaining health and containing rising health costs. City parks offer recreational opportunities for all residents, independent of income, language spoken, or age.<sup>6</sup> Strong evidence shows that when people have access to parks, they are more likely to exercise.<sup>7</sup> To coincide with these observations, the CDC's recommendations for jurisdictions to help improve the health of their communities include:

- Provide environmental inducements to physical activity, such as safe, accessible, and attractive trails for walking and bicycling, and sidewalks with curb cuts.
- Provide community-based programs to meet the needs of specific populations, such as racial and ethnic minority groups, women, older adults, persons with disabilities, and low-income groups.
- Open schools for community recreation, form neighborhood watch groups to increase safety, and encourage malls and other indoor or protected locations to provide safe places for walking in any weather.



*Walking is the preferred form of exercise in Redmond, across the state, and nationally.*

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<sup>6</sup> Sherer, P.M., Why America needs more Park and Open Space. Prepared by Trust for Public Land. [http://www.tpl.org/content\\_documents/parks\\_for\\_people\\_Jan2004.pdf](http://www.tpl.org/content_documents/parks_for_people_Jan2004.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Land Trust Alliance, "Voters Approve \$2.9 Billion for Land Conservation," press release, November 6, 2002, updated January 31, 2003, [http://www.lta.org/newsroom/pr\\_110602.htm](http://www.lta.org/newsroom/pr_110602.htm).