

COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION GRANTS:

Sustainable Change Through Catalytic Engagement





TRANSFORMING PHILANTHROPY

Sometimes the biggest opportunities are hidden behind even bigger challenges.

We saw that first hand when implementing our inaugural Community Transformation Grants. These grants, created by the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health to address larger systemic barriers to health, work with the entire community to create sustainable change to combat childhood obesity.

What we couldn't have known before we started was just how the passion of these local community champions – with all their diversity of thought, experiences and skills – could ignite new ways of thinking and partnerships that will live on long after the grant ends.

Launched under our High Five initiative to fight obesity, the story of these Community Transformation Grants continues. Our hope is that this report provides insights on how committing to collaboration and innovation can lead to outcomes that change communities and change lives.

In good health,



K. Witt-Doyle

Kendra Witt-Doyle, PhD, MPH
**Executive Director,
Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health**

“We have made changes that were otherwise almost impossible for us to do on our own.”

KIRI BROWN
City of Lapwai



85%

Of responding participants say they now think differently about addressing childhood obesity, increasing physical activity, or healthy eating.



250,000+

People are estimated to be impacted by CTG projects in the next 5 years.



75%

Of responding participants report that the grant contributed to their organization forming new partnerships.



1 in 3

Number of Idaho children that are overweight or obese.



\$2.7 billion

The amount Idaho spends due to obesity. This is projected to rise to more than \$3 billion by 2030.



Leading causes of death caused or heavily correlated with obesity.

THE NEED

Lasting Change Begins in our Communities

The numbers are staggering: One in three Idaho children is overweight or obese, putting them at risk for serious health problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease.

This generation of children likely represents the first in American history to have a shorter life expectancy than that of their parents.

We can do better. We must do better.

COMPLEX CAUSE; NO SIMPLE SOLUTION

The reasons for these challenges are complex, impacted by an ever-changing landscape of factors ranging from the challenges in the built environment to family dynamics.

Like many other organizations, The Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health realized challenges this large wouldn't — couldn't — be solved alone. In 2013, we formed High Five, a community collaborative that combined knowledge, energy and resources from a wide range of partners, from city leaders and schools to industry groups and businesses of all sizes.



Our goal was focused: reduce childhood obesity in Idaho.

Our approach was clear: increase physical activity and access to healthy and affordable foods.

What we didn't know was the precise path all this would take, because every community is different. They each have unique needs, challenges and opportunities. They have varying levels of community engagement and financial wherewithal.

A WAY FORWARD

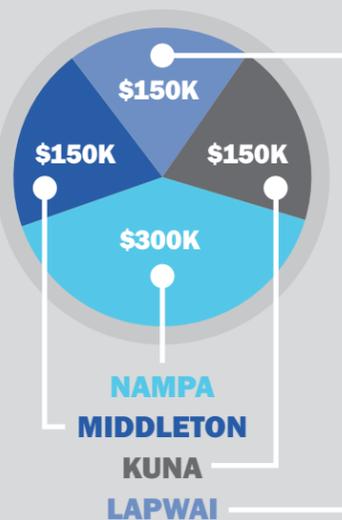
What citizens all share is a desire to make their community better for their kids. The Community Transformation Grant, we theorized, would allow us to tap into the community to understand their needs, activate solutions, and share in the satisfaction of progress.

This approach appears to be working. But it is not without challenges. The need in Idaho is still tremendous. On the whole, our kids remain at risk. And community leaders, health advocates and other stakeholders have much to learn about the steps that have the greatest impact.

The High Five Community Transformation Grants (and related collaborative methods) present a promising path towards reducing childhood obesity. They accept the complexity of the challenge, embrace the fact that the most effective solutions "bubble up" from the community, and recognize that funding alone isn't enough.



**2013
Grant Recipients
\$750,000**
Was allocated across
four communities



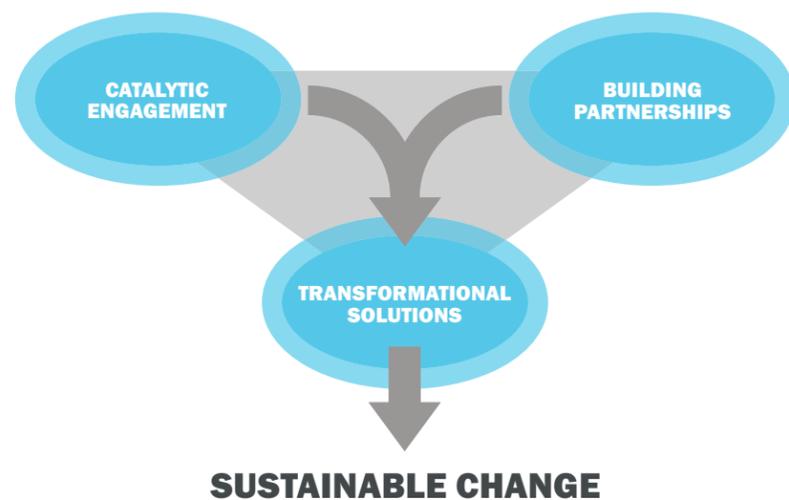
Four additional "High Five Ambassador" communities were also named as part of the grant, providing funding for specific, high-impact projects.

ABOUT THE GRANT

A New Kind of Grant for a New Way of Thinking

In 2013, The Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health launched the Community Transformation Grant program under its High Five initiative, a statewide effort to engage Idaho and reduce childhood obesity.

These grants awarded funding and technical assistance to support projects aimed at improving the health of youth, particularly around physical activity and access to healthy, affordable foods. Precisely how and when the communities activated the funding was determined during a collaborative ideation, buy-in and planning process.



A NEW MODEL FOR CHANGE

The Community Transformation Grants followed the Foundation's unique model for sustainable change:

CATALYTIC ENGAGEMENT

Actively engaging with the community to identify challenges, opportunities, resources and desired outcomes.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Establishing trust within the community, developing champions and identifying and attracting a wide range of organizations to join the team.

TRANSFORMATIONAL SOLUTIONS

Thinking big, yet starting small – working together, often the largest, most likely to be transformational impacts came from unexpected places.

In 2013, the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health launched High Five. This collaborative effort focused the knowledge, energy and resources of a wide range of community partners on issues to prevent childhood obesity.

PROCESS TIMELINE

The Community Transformation Grants were designed to be a collaborative process. We utilized an innovative selection process in an effort to ensure key community members were committed to it. We never wanted to be "just funding" and that is what our selection methodology reflected.



June 2013

Announced grants

Aug 2013

Grant application and video submission

Sept 2013

Finalists selected

Sept 2013

Site visit to finalist communities

Oct 3, 2013

Announce selected communities at Healthy Eating, Active Living conference

Oct – Dec 2013

Community Assessments Conducted

Jan – March 2014

Community Action Plan created with community teams

April 2014 – Dec 2016

Grant Implementation

MOBILIZATION PARTNER

For assistance in managing the day-to-day operations of listening to and working with the communities, the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health engaged an outside evaluation and mobilization partner. This company, Spark!, brought expertise and daily focus that supplemented the Foundation's in-house staff.

There were some unexpected benefits, too: using a third-party to facilitate communication allowed us to gather more authentic input and feedback from the community than is typically possible for funders. The result was a shortening of the feedback loop, quicker iterations and faster adjustments throughout the process.

KEY LEARNINGS



CO-CREATE

While the process was designed to be collaborative, we realized early on that we were actually still quite prescriptive in suggesting solutions. As we opened ourselves to true co-creation of the solutions, more people engaged, community members took more ownership, and more meaningful (and sustainable) impacts were made.

IDENTIFY & CULTIVATE CHAMPIONS

We learned to identify our “champions” early in each step of the process. These motivated individuals — sometimes working from within city government, but often simply concerned citizens — brought energy and muscle to rally their community. Their efforts let the Foundation focus on “shepherding” the community versus “sherpa-ing” the myriad of tasks that needed to be accomplished.

LEVERAGE OUTSIDE RESOURCES

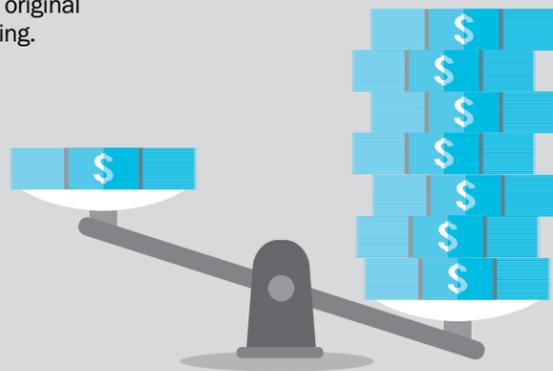
No organization in Idaho has the resources to conquer obesity on their own. But what impressed — even surprised — us was how our commitment catalyzed other local, regional and national organizations to contribute to the effort. The result was thousands of additional hours and hundreds of thousands of additional dollars for the projects.



LEVERAGED FUNDS

Communities were able to raise 7x the original Community Transformation Grant funding.

\$750,000
Community Transformation Grant funds total



<i>Kuna</i>	\$1,313,379.10
<i>Middleton</i>	\$605,697.00
<i>Lapwai</i>	\$3,064,974.00
<i>Nampa</i>	\$337,633.00
TOTAL	= \$5,321,683.10
	<small>(est. at time of publishing)</small>

CASE STUDIES BY COMMUNITY

LAPWAI | KUNA | NAMPA | MIDDLETON



at a glance

LAPWAI, IDAHO

POPULATION:
1,148

ABOUT:
"Lapwai" means butterflies



LAPWAI:

Turning Community Pride Into Community Progress

When is a park more than just a park? When it is a symbol of a community's optimism for their children's future.

Such is the case for Lapwai, Idaho, a small North Idaho town that serves as the county seat for the Nez Perce Indian Reservation. Tucked in a scenic valley, a short drive from some of Idaho's most rugged mountains and wild rivers, Lapwai is a small, close-knit community well aware of their history – and their future.

"We had such a huge wish list, and it's amazing how much actually got accomplished," said City Councilwoman Julie Seely.

Championed by Councilwoman Seely, Lapwai brought together a cross-section of the community to imagine the possibilities and develop a plan for how the grant could make it possible. Representatives from the city, tribal leadership and the school district joined parents and local youth for a guided action planning session.

Lapwai's small city hall buzzed. Participants walked collaboratively through exercises that helped them set priorities. Colorful sticky notes capturing individual ideas filled the walls. And community members, including a group of middle school boys advocating for a skateboard park, brought their suggestions forward to the community and High Five representatives.

"In the past the City of Lapwai, the Lapwai School District, and the Nez Perce Tribe have all partnered respectively, but this was the first opportunity for all three to partner and focus on one project together," said Debbie Evans of Kamiah Grants & Associates, Lapwai's contract grant writer. "It was an eye opener as to the benefits of what a grant can do in a community."

The results have been visible: Lapwai's lone city park is revitalized with new exercise and play equipment and community garden; planning is underway on a skatepark thanks to seed funding provided by the grant (see sidebar for more); and critical mental health services and other needs received much needed funding.

Lapwai even hosted its first bike rodeo to bring the community together around a fun, healthy activity.

"(The choice to include) the NiMiiPuu people will be felt for many years and generations to come."

DEBBIE EVANS
Grant Writer



"(High Five) made people believe that things are possible. When people saw the equipment and that progress was being made, more folks got involved."

MAYOR RUTH McCONVILLE
Lapwai Mayor

While the challenges facing tribal communities such as Lapwai are complex, and there is still much to be done, those who participated in this process say it was a catalyst for both immediate improvements and lasting change.

"This grant gave us the opportunity to accomplish some projects that were just ideas and dreams," said Antonio Smith, a Lapwai City Council member, pastor, and communications specialist for the Nez Perce Tribe. "The transformation of our parks, playgrounds, community gardens and soon to be started skatepark are visual reminders of what is possible and what can be done with partnerships and some work."



Lapwai Bike Rodeo

SEEDING A SKATEPARK

Often a single grant cannot fund an entire high-impact project on its own. But that doesn't mean it can't create transformative change.

When a group of middle school boys stood to advocate for a new skatepark in Lapwai, much of the community – and the High Five team – understood its potential impact on the health of the city's youth.

But skateparks are expensive, often with budgets several times the entire High Five Grant value. Recognizing this, High Five worked with the community to "seed" the skatepark, providing funding for initial designs, budgeting and more.

The results were even greater than we had hoped: with the High Five seed funding secured, the community was able to raise enough additional funding and in-kind donations to move forward with Phase 1 of the skatepark.



THE GRANT AT WORK

The CTG fully funded or "seed" funded many projects in Lapwai, including:

COMMUNITY GARDEN

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

SCHOOL GREENHOUSE

BICYCLE WORKSHOP & RODEO

GLOW WALK

PARK BEAUTIFICATION



at a glance

KUNA, IDAHO

POPULATION:
17,902

ABOUT:

Kuna is a bedroom community of Boise, ID with a strong agriculture and ranching heritage.



KUNA:

City Leadership Champions Youth Health

Kuna, Idaho may be a quiet bedroom community, but it's not nearly as quiet as it used to be.

Since 2000, the city has more than tripled its population, making it one of the fastest growing cities in Idaho. With such rapid growth, strains on a city's resources are inevitable. And Kuna is no exception.

"For every project that we do, we realize there is more work to be done," explains Kuna Mayor Joe Stear.

Fortunately, the flexibility of the Community Transformation Grant allowed — actually, encouraged — the community to come together to determine citizen priorities based on the current reality and their shared vision for the future.

The first step was to understand what citizens saw as critical needs. To help, the city solicited input from citizens, business leaders and city staff in the form of surveys and community meetings. With this information the city prioritized several key projects and programs. Then, working within the flexible framework of the grant, worked with High Five to fully or "seed" fund programs that will continue long after the initial funding period ends.

And while these individual projects each led to positive outcomes on their own, including increased levels of activity, hundreds of thousands of dollars in leveraged funds, and an overall improvement in healthy lifestyles, community leaders say the biggest difference is how the Community Transformation Grant changed the city's collective mindset.

"It spurred an excitement in the community," says Mayor Stear. "People feel like things are happening in a positive manner. It started on day one and has carried on to today."

Fueled by Kuna's City Council and staff's renewed focus on youth and youth activity, the community discussion around the importance of healthy habits is way up. With help and encouragement from the High Five team, the city now engages with the community with greater frequency across many channels, from social media to the Mayor's Youth Council to stronger relationships with the farmer's market.

"That support made all the difference in helping us set our goals and achieve them," says Belinda Gordon of Boys & Girls Clubs of Ada County, who participated in many phases of the grant.

"I think this is a great resource for cities with funding issues. It can change a town for sure."

BOBBY WITHROW
Kuna Parks & Recreation Director

The bottom line? While the Kuna Community Transformation Grant funded many important programs and projects, the true legacy of the program was how it helped this community see how they can come together to make lasting change in the lives of their youth.

"It truly has been life changing," says Mayor Stear. "High Five has opened my eyes to possibilities for youth and healthy habits that we as a city can not only endorse, but also facilitate."

"I can honestly say that our community is a better place because of this program."

MAYOR JOE STEAR
Kuna Mayor



THE GRANT AT WORK

The CTG fully funded or "seed" funded dozens of individual projects in Kuna, including:

NUTRITION EDUCATION CLASSES

- Cooking Matters classes in collaboration with the Boys and Girls Club
- Nutrition classes in collaboration with The Zone and the Boys and Girls Club
- Healthy Living seminar in partnership with Freedom Fitness

KUNA FARMER'S MARKET

The City of Kuna joined with the Kuna Farmer's Market to bring fresh produce and goods to the community, as well as awareness of the town's agricultural heritage.

PARK SURVEY

An investment allows the city to expand parks and amenities in order to keep up with community growth, including an investment in a drone to help maintain city parks.

PARK RANGER PROGRAM

Seeded by High Five funds the first year, this has become an annual summer program put on by the Parks Department that allows children to participate in a variety of healthy activities, community involvement, and outdoor experiences.

SPECIAL "HEALTH-CENTERED" EVENTS

- Banner and Art Walk
- Warrior Run
- Family Bike Ride
- Mud Obstacle Course

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION FUNDING

Invested in a plan to promote a more walkable and bikeable downtown. High Five seed funds led to more than \$1 million in additional investment.

SPORTS EQUIPMENT

Used during summer sports programs in partnership with KPAL.

DISC GOLF COURSE

Design, installation and equipment. Now both a health and economic driver in the community.

GREENBELT

Assistance enhancing the community's popular pathway, including adding bike "fix-it" stations, lighting, and exercise equipment.

ADDITIONAL PARK FACILITIES

- Basketball backboard
- Sports field line painting
- Horseshoe pits
- Merry-Go-Rounds
- Soccer field improvement
- Park Shelters
- Tetherball courts
- Trees

at a glance

NAMPA, IDAHO

POPULATION:
92,382

ABOUT:
Canyon County's largest city



NAMPA:

Coming Together to Make Health a Priority

Sometimes, great organizations can be so busy doing so much good work in their community, the challenge is less about “getting oars in the water” and more about ensuring everyone’s paddling in the same direction.

“(High Five) changed the trajectory of overall health and awareness.”

DEBBIE KLING
Nampa Chamber of Commerce

For Nampa, a thriving community with a diversity of citizens and, therefore, diverse needs, the first step was simply taking stock of community concerns, opportunities and organizing the initiatives and which organizations were working on them.

To help, the High Five Community Transformation Grant funded a community health conditions assessment by Chris Danley of Vitruvian Planning. Key to the assessment was gathering more than 100 stakeholders, including city leaders, the faith-based community and an array of nonprofit organizations, to discuss the current state of the city and the possibilities for the future. It was an intense, engaging experience.

While broadly considered a success, it was not without challenges. Ensuring that a representative cross-section of the community was aware and able to engage was extremely difficult. Still, what came out of the assessment carved a path forward for the community.

“For potential long term and policy impact, the community assessment by Chris Danley may be one of the most valuable activities funded through the High Five project,” said Lynda Clark, Nampa’s grant writer at the time.

The assessment was much more than a working document. It was a catalyst for change.

“It was the beginning of thinking about how to convene around health in the community,” said Debbie Kling, President/CEO of the Nampa Chamber of Commerce. “It was a paradigm shift of where we were in our community.”

The result? A number of key influencers began making health a priority in their organizations — and much more likely to collaborate to find solutions. This led to a number of health focused projects and programs, including expansion of the Nampa HealthFest event, bicycles for disadvantaged youth, and a new traveling playground to serve kids no matter where they live in the city. Nampa was even awarded an Invest Health grant by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to spur efforts to improve access to healthy activities, affordable housing and quality jobs among low income populations.

But beyond the success of these efforts, it is the change in mindset of the community that will continue to have the largest impact.

This summer Nampa Mayor Bob Henry introduced Healthy Impact Nampa Coalition, a city-sponsored “think tank” made up of organizations and citizens who want to help make their community even healthier (see sidebar for more).

“The High Five initiative helped Mayor Henry (and other policymakers) understand the importance of city involvement in programs that impact the overall health of the community in a broad sense,” said grant writer Clark. “This brings a broader perspective and legitimacy of the importance of health.”



THE GRANT AT WORK

The CTG fully funded or “seed” funded many projects in Nampa, including:

TRAVELING PLAYGROUND

WALKING PROGRAMS/TRACKS AT ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

BIKE TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS & BIKE FIT STATIONS

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

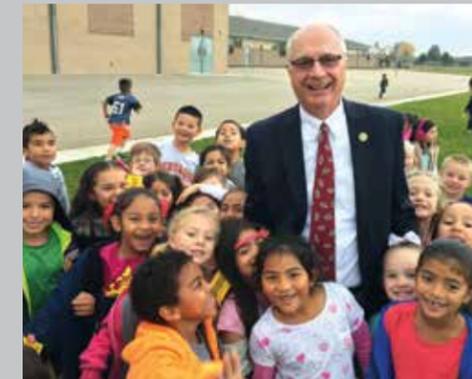
NAMPA FORMS COMMUNITY HEALTH “THINK TANK”

Spurred by a deeper understanding of how a healthy community can enhance his city, Nampa Mayor Bob Henry announced the formation of Healthy Impact Nampa Coalition.

The organization, made up of representatives from local businesses, civic organizations, churches and many others, will work together to address further steps Nampa and its citizens can take to improve health.

“It will take the community – from its residents to private businesses, local organizations, churches and yes, even the city to a degree – to drive positive change,” Henry said in a statement announcing the organization.

It’s a dramatic step for a city who, just a few years ago, didn’t have community health on it’s radar.



“The collaborative discussions with others in the community has been enlightening and help connect the community together.”

JENNIFER VANDERPOOL
Nampa Parks & Recreation

at a glance

MIDDLETON, IDAHO

**POPULATION:
7,168**

ABOUT:
Named for its position between Boise and a historic Snake River ferry crossing



MIDDLETON:

Getting Kids Outside and Moving

Middleton is a small town with big hopes for its children.

Located in one of the fastest growing areas of the Treasure Valley, Middleton city leaders take great pride in their city's family-friendly quality of life.

But as is often the case for a small town managing rapid growth, despite the city's best efforts, Middleton's resources — both in staff time and money — struggled to be enough just to keep up, let alone invest heavily in the future.

That's where the Community Transformation Grant came in.

"(High Five) has given the city hope, initiative, and a financial commitment to leverage other grant funds," said Middleton Mayor Darin Taylor.

The city used the grant, and more than \$600,000 in additional funding the grant helped secure, to refresh and revitalize a variety of city facilities.

The once rarely used Roadside park got a new playground and skatepark. A new pathway and sidewalks enhanced community connectivity. In addition, some of the funds were used to make it easier for community members to schedule and find community events, including sports programs.

The impact is visible. More people — particularly children — are outside and active.

"The City of Middleton has seen a significant increase in children who are now able to get outside and exercise," said Becky Crofts, Middleton Grants, Parks and Trails Administrator, Technical and Communications Coordinator. "The new playground equipment and walking paths have made a significant difference in the ability for children to safely enjoy being outdoors, and travel safely from park to park."

The city also reports some dramatic, but positive, unintended consequences. Park vandalism (and associated maintenance costs) are down. Public social interactions, thanks to newly formed walking groups and enhanced space for school events, are up. And other city aims, such as community policing and a strong economy, have been made easier.

"The people being out have helped the city maintain the small town feel," said Mayor Taylor. "New construction homes are selling for their asking prices. Existing homes are going for 95% or more of their asking price. This creates financial health."

It was only possible because the city as a whole, and specific champions within it, were driven to see change. City leaders and citizens committed to an intense process that included a needs assessment and action planning. Despite limited resources, the city did all it could to rally the community and leverage the momentum and funds the grant provided.

"Everything was so visible. That doesn't go away," Mayor Taylor said. "The (High Five) legacy is that it helped to bring new life into Middleton — new amenities, convenient living, and safe ways to move through city. What once created resistance now is a positive."

"(The grant) requirements caused us to be thoughtful and creative in our public outreach/education."

MAYOR DARIN TAYLOR
Middleton Mayor



THE GRANT AT WORK

The CTG fully funded or "seed" funded many projects in Middleton, including:

PLAYGROUND

SKATEPARK

WALKING/BIKING TRAIL PROJECT

SIDEWALKS



CHAMPIONING THE FUTURE

While Middleton's success leveraging the Community Transformation Grant was a community effort, one internal champion of the program kept things moving.

Becky Crofts, a longtime resident of Middleton and current city employee, drove the process forward at every step.

Inspired by her interactions with community members, including one mother who told her, "We deserve nice things in Middleton, too," Crofts worked tirelessly within the city and with outside groups to make progress on every front.

"Cities have a responsibility for understanding the need to provide opportunities for healthy food, and places to play outside their homes," Crofts said.

It is true that it "takes a village." But sometimes it takes an individual to rally the village.



"Everybody loves a small town. But nobody loves a rundown small town."

KANDICE COTTERELL
City of Middleton



80%

Of responding participants say their awareness of childhood obesity increased.



85%

Of responding participants say their organization now thinks differently about addressing childhood obesity, increasing physical activity, or healthy eating.



80%

Of responding participants report that since the start of the grant, health and/or child health is now a priority in their organization.



100%

Of participants were able to leverage the Community Transformation Grant to raise additional funding.



71%

Of responding participants say the grant contributed to their organization making youth health a priority.

IMPACT

Transforming Community Health is a Process, Not an Event.

For nearly two decades, The Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health has worked to improve health in Idaho. With every new initiative, we learn, we adapt and we improve. The High Five Community Transformation Grants are no different.

What is different is the lasting impacts we're seeing. Our catalytic approach has led to both **short-term gains** and what we believe will be **long-term change**.

SHORT-TERM GAINS

- More physical activity among children and adults
- Increased collaboration – and trust – among stakeholders
- Improvements in infrastructure with the help of leveraged funds

LONG-TERM CHANGE

- New understanding of the impact and importance of health among policymakers and key stakeholders
- Growing enthusiasm and urgency for action
- Inclusion of health initiatives in city budgets and strategic plans

TO TRACK PROGRESS

Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health conducted a final evaluation survey with key stakeholders in each community.



NEXT STEPS

The Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health will continue to monitor the progress of the first cohort of Community Transformation Grant recipients. Our key learnings have been integrated into plans for the 2017-2019 cohort. Community assessments and action planning for that cohort is underway now.

ABOUT THE BLUE CROSS OF IDAHO FOUNDATION FOR HEALTH

The Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health, Inc., is a nonprofit charitable foundation established in 2001 by Blue Cross of Idaho. The Foundation works statewide to improve the health of all Idahoans through wellness and prevention programs.



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Foundation
for Health, Inc.