



Health Promotion Board
3 Second Hospital Avenue Singapore 168937
Tel. 6435 3500
Fax. 6438 3848
www.hpb.gov.sg

7 October 2012

HPB LAUNCHES FIRST 'COMMUNITY MODEL' WALKING TRAIL TO INTEGRATE BITE-SIZED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INTO DAILY LIFE

Recognising the importance of physical activity in promoting healthier lifestyles, healthy trails within community neighbourhoods are being developed and retrofitted to make physical activity something every resident can access and enjoy.

Singapore, 7 October 2012: The Health Promotion Board (HPB) is working with grassroots community planners to develop healthy trails in order to address rising concerns about Singaporeans' sedentary lifestyles and escalating problems associated with overweight and obesity.

2. Research consistently shows that even simple recreational activities, like taking a pet for a brisk walk around the neighbourhood, can help trim health-related problems and subsequent healthcare costs.
3. The health benefits of active living range from controlling obesity to reducing the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, osteoporosis and Type 2 diabetes; maintaining mental health and improving arthritis.
4. Although most people know they should exercise, the National Health Survey 2010 revealed that less than half of Singaporeans between 18 and 69 years old engage in physical activity during their leisure time. One of the main reasons was a lack of time due to personal and family commitments. Seniors worried about falling and safety also tend to lead sedentary lifestyles at home.

5. Safe, inviting and accessible neighbourhood healthy trails connecting homes to nearby destinations like schools, playgrounds and local amenities aim to alleviate this problem by making exercise a part of residents' daily routine and a way of life.

6. Like gyms and health clubs, healthy trails are also places where users can interact with others, thus promoting the kind of social bonding and community cohesion that will encourage more residents to use the facility and improve their health.

7. Christened 'Happy Strides', the new healthy trail launched today at Kampong Chai Chee is made possible by leveraging active citizenry in a multi-agency collaboration among HPB, grassroots organisations, the People's Association, the East Coast Town Council, the Housing and Development Board (HDB) and the Land Transport Authority (LTA).

8. Said Mr Lee Yi Shyan, Grassroots Adviser to East Coast GRC Grassroots Organisations: "Contrary to how many people perceive exercise, a good workout need not be long, boring or expensive. It can be combined with our everyday routines, such as a brisk 30-minute walk to the local library with our children, or a 10-minute jog to the post office and back. For people who are inactive, even small increases in physical activity can bring measurable health benefits. Walking is also a tremendously good activity for seniors who want to maintain their mobility and independence, as it is cheap and easy to do. To provide Kampong Chai Chee with opportunities for healthy recreation that can be built in to the daily routine, we have worked with different partners such as HPB, HDB, LTA, the East Coast Town Council and People's Association to launch a safe, inviting and accessible healthy trail as part of our community environment. Our Residents' Committee Youth Chapter at Kampong Chai Chee is also mobilising youths to reach out to the elderly in the community and encourage them to make use of the healthy trail to improve their well-being."

9. Said Mr Ang Hak Seng, Chief Executive Officer, HPB: "HPB recommends that adults accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderately intense physical activity a week. To help Kampong Chai Chee residents reach this weekly target, the new healthy trail offers a 1.3-km route that translates to 10 to 20 minutes of physical activity each time, and a longer 2-km route that adds up to 20 to 30 minutes each time. So that it is safe for children and seniors alike, the trail has also been retrofitted with anti-slip decals and new concrete slabs where needed. To generate interest and encourage residents to use the trail regularly, HPB is working with grassroots partners to organise activities such as health talks, healthy family picnics, healthy cooking demos and health qigong classes at 'pit-stops' along the route. In

recognition of their efforts, participants will 'earn' incentive points which can be redeemed for healthy lifestyle tokens."

10. By end 2014, HPB aims to partner 10 other constituencies in building healthy trails.

Issued by Health Promotion Board