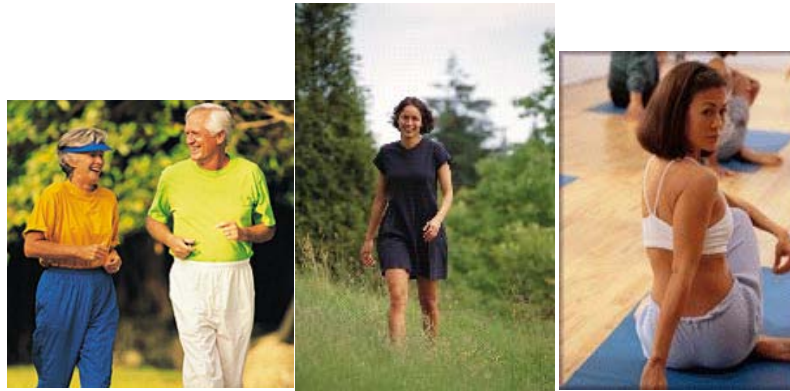


# Making Tracks

## *A Manual for Creating Your Own Making Tracks Program*

Feel free to use our Making Tracks program as a model. If you do use our program, we only ask that you call our coordinator, Tammy Bryant, so we know how many organizations are enjoying this terrific program. For more information on the Making Tracks program contact program coordinator, Tammy Bryant: 641-421-9315 or send her an email: [hpro@cghealth.com](mailto:hpro@cghealth.com)



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## ***What is Making Tracks?***

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Making Tracks is an on-going fitness and educational program that began in February 2001 as a mall-walking program. With the help of grant funding, Making Tracks has become an on-going health program that has grown in membership every year.

The Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health coordinates a community partnership, called Heart Healthy Cerro Gordo County, which is a group of dedicated community partners who work to reduce cardiovascular disease and stroke in Cerro Gordo County. When the coalition was created, an assessment was done to see how the coalition members could work together to meet a common goal: reduce cardiovascular disease and stroke cases in Cerro Gordo County.

After conducting a community assessment, Heart Healthy Coalition members agreed that an indoor mall walking program would be the most effective way to reach out to county residents who want to exercise in a safe, comfortable environment all year round. That led to the formation of the Making Tracks program, which started with 50 members. Today, more than 450 county residents enjoy this free program!

“Obesity is a serious issue that threatens the health of our community,” said Tammy Bryant, Health Promotion & Education Service Manager for the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health. “The number of Americans who are considered obese is on the rise. We wanted to create a fun, informative and meaningful program that would educate county residents about the importance of proper diet and exercise, to address and even prevent obesity. We want to teach our county residents how to live a heart-healthy life — today. I think people are searching for support in their ongoing efforts to improve their health. Making Tracks provides support and educational opportunities for all county residents, no matter what their current health status. Making Tracks is a FREE program.”

Benefits of physical activity have been proven:

- ④ Helps build & maintain healthy bones, muscles & joints
- ④ Helps control weight, builds lean muscle & reduces fat
- ④ Prevents or delays the development of high blood pressure & helps reduce blood pressure in some adults with hypertension

Source: *Surgeon General's report*

***Make your own version of Making Tracks! It's simple! Here's an outline of how we did it. You can modify this to meet your needs:***

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## ***Step 1: Getting Started***

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**Determine what you want to accomplish. What's your goal?** The goals and objectives in our initial grant included reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke in Cerro Gordo County.

With obesity on the rise, we wanted to try and find a fun and meaningful way to instill the value of being more physically active and eating better. People are searching for support in their ongoing efforts to improve their health. Making Tracks provides support and education for all county residents, no matter what their current health status.

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## ***Step 2: Getting Organized***

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**Who will organize this program?** We formed a community coalition, which was required in our grant. We invited key partners to the table whom we felt could help us reach our goals and objectives.

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## ***Step 3: Planning***

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**Create your plan. Work with your partners/coalition to determine how you will implement this program.** Coalition members agreed that a free indoor mall walking program would be the most effective way to reach out to county residents who want to exercise in a safe, comfortable & FREE environment all year. We came to that decision based on these factors:

- We know that our community has a high population of senior citizens.
- We know that we live in an area with four seasons, including cold winter months that tend to keep people indoors.
- We understand that senior citizens are concerned about walking outdoors during inclement weather, especially when there is snow and ice on the ground.

An indoor mall walking program worked for us. We invited our local mall manager to be part of the coalition. She has been one of our greatest assets. It's important to know who should be helping you organize your own version of this Making Tracks program.



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## **Step 4: Motivating**

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**Provide educational opportunities:** Once you get people enrolled in your program, it's important to keep their interest. Motivate them. One way to do that is to offer occasional health events, classes or even health fairs.

We organize short “**Mini-Education**” classes, once each month, to help our Making Tracks participants stay focused on good health habits.

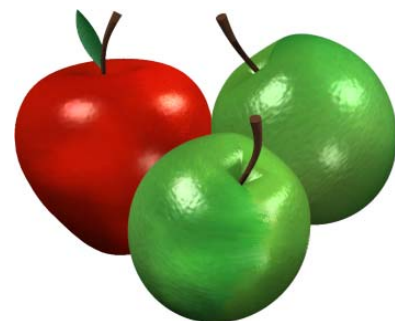
Each mini-education class lasts about 15-20 minutes. We hold ours in the food court of the local shopping mall. Since our local mall manager is on our coalition, she allows us to promote the mini-ed classes by leaving promotional table tents in the food court prior to each class.

We invite different guest speakers to talk about a health subject that is related in some way to heart health. Our grant helps us provide a small stipend for the guest speakers. If you don't have a budget to do that, ask for community volunteers. If monthly is too often, plan these types of events each quarter!

Make these educational opportunities fun – and brief. Some of our previous class topics include:

- The importance of a heart-healthy diet
- The importance of regular exercise
- Protect yourself from germs
- Heart-Healthy cooking
- Depression
- Facts about influenza
- Importance of sleep
- How pets affect your health

And many more! The possibilities are endless!





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## Step 6: Communicating

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It's important to communicate with your program participants. They need to know what is expected of them. Here's how we do it:

- **E-Mail:** We created an e-mail data base of all participants who wish to get messages electronically. This is an excellent way to get messages out quickly, and at low cost. It only takes your time.
- **Newsletter:** We publish a quarterly newsletter, titled "**Outlook!**" We include health tips, timely articles according to the season and we promote all events in advance.
- **Classes:** We see our participants face-to-face when we offer our monthly mini-education classes. This is an excellent opportunity for us to get feedback, collect log forms, make announcements and draw for door prizes!
- **Displays:** We put displays up in various locations, including area public libraries, the mall and businesses that partner with us.
- **Web site.** We also provide a list of upcoming activities and events on the internet. Since this program is coordinated by the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health, we use our own web site. But you can ask a partner or one of your community volunteers to help if necessary. Here is a sample of some previous Making Tracks programs that we posted on the internet:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Instructor</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>"Medications and Supplements: What should I do?"</b> Medications can be very confusing. Here is your chance to Ask the Pharmacist!	Tim Becker, Pharmacy Supervisor- Mercy Pharmacy-Forest Park	Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2003
<b>"Dealing with Grief. Help for the Holidays."</b>	Sue Porter, Bereavement Coordinator Hospice of North Iowa	Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2003

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## Step 7: Rewarding

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People will always be motivated if they have some type of reward waiting for them! We do everything we can to make our program exciting and rewarding.

- **Donations** — We collect donated items from area businesses. Usually it comes in the form of a gift certificate (restaurant coupons, massage therapy coupons, etc). We make every attempt to tie it in with heart-health. For example, our restaurant coupons come from establishments that offer heart-healthy meals on their menu.

- ID Card — Each Making Tracks member receives an ID Card when they register. On the back of each card is a list of participating businesses that are generous enough to offer Making Tracks members a discount when the card is presented at their business. Again, we try to focus on heart health. (Discounts could be at shoe stores so you can buy quality exercise shoes, restaurant discounts for heart-healthy meals, etc).

### ***What Else Do You Need to Start Your Own Program?***

- Coordinator — You will need someone who can coordinate all of your Making Tracks activities. Having one central person organize it all helps with communicating details to your participants.
- Support — It helps to get community support. Check with your local health organizations and area businesses. This might be just what they are looking for!
- Survey — (optional) We conduct a simple survey for all new Making Tracks members so we can help them track their progress. After all you don't know where you're going if you don't know where you came from! We have sample forms if you are interested in looking at them.
- Enthusiasm!

## ***Thank You!***

Making Tracks would not be possible without the support of local businesses and the members of the Heart Healthy Cerro Gordo County Coalition. We thank each of these members for their time and commitment in helping to reduce cardiovascular disease!

### **Heart Healthy Coalition Members include:**

Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health  
 Mason City Parks and Recreation Department  
 ISU/Cerro Gordo County Extension Service  
 Mason City YMCA & Rehabilitation Center  
 First Citizens National Bank Heritage Club  
 Mason City Community School Nurses  
 Regional Health Education Center  
 Mended Hearts Support Group  
 Child Health Specialty Clinics  
 Health Quest Fitness Center  
 American Heart Association  
 Mercy Heart Center  
 Southbridge Mall  
 Mercy Dietitians

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This manual shows you how we implemented Making Tracks in Cerro Gordo County, Mason City, Iowa.

Making Tracks is a wonderful and exciting program to help your target audience become a little healthier, happier and smarter when it comes to making better lifestyle choices.

Making Tracks is a local, home-grown program. By implementing this program and adding your own flair, you can create and provide a wonderful opportunity to those people you are working with.

We are happy to share our Making Tracks program with you. We only ask that you let us know if you are developing a program of your own. We would like to keep a record of organizations that use this manual to create their own program.

For more information, call Tammy Bryant: 641-421-9315. So, to you we say, "Lace your shoes, roll up your sleeves and join the Making Tracks pack!"

Sincerely,

Members of the Heart Healthy Coalition and the staff at the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health.

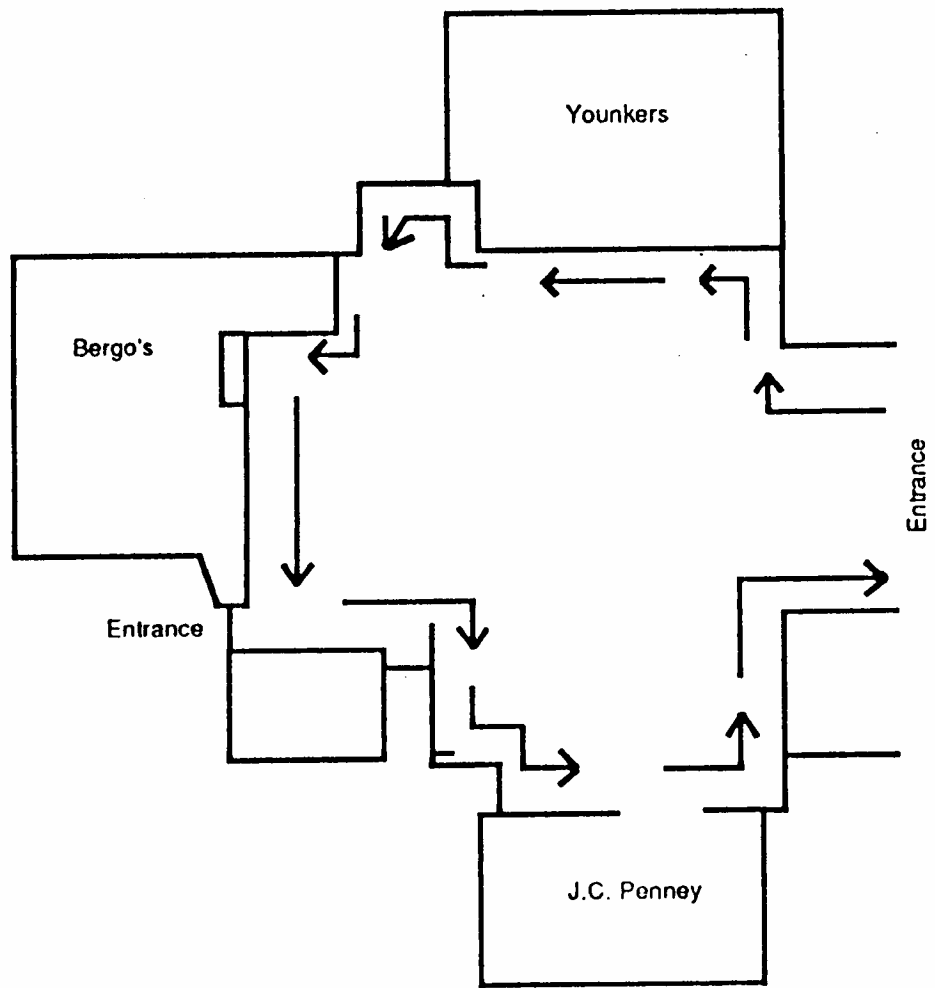


***On the next page, see more documents that may be helpful to you:***



We give our participants an outline of the indoor walking route: Southbridge Mall

1 Lap = 1/3 mile





## To Commit or Not to Commit: That is the question!

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am joining the "Making Tracks"  
(Print your name clearly)

walking/exercise program, sponsored by the Heart Healthy Cerro Gordo County Coalition. By signing up, I am taking a step in the right direction to help increase my knowledge, my overall health, and specifically, my heart health. My heart health is in my hands, and I can begin to make a difference by my commitment to this program and to myself.

I will be filling out a registration questionnaire, and an autonomous health questionnaire for the "Making Tracks" program. The data obtained will only be shared in the form of a graph showing the entire group's successes. This information will also be shared with the State of Iowa in the form of statistics. This is done to show how important we feel cardiovascular health is here in Cerro Gordo County, and the steps we are taking to make our county a healthier place to live. This data I understand will be kept for 10 years, at Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health. This information will be group specific, and all materials will be kept secured in a locked file. I also understand that if I choose not to have the information from the health questionnaire included in this data, that is my choice, and I will still be allowed to participate in this program.

I certify that I am in good health and that by signing up of my own free will, I understand that if I have ANY problems I will notify my doctor and consult with him/her. I know that I can stop at anytime during this program, if I need to.

I also will not hold the professionals, businesses, or any one part of the coalition responsible in the case of an accident. I take responsibility for myself and for the betterment of my own cardiovascular health.

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Participant Signature

Date

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Witness Signature

Date



# Registration Information

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last name, please print) (First) (MI)
2. Address: \_\_\_\_\_
3. City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Race/Ethnic Background: Caucasian African American (black) Asian  
Hispanic Native American  
Other
6. Age Group: 18-24 years 25-34 years 35-44 years 45-54 years  
55-64 years 65-74 years 75-84 years Over 85
7. Sex: Male or Female
8. What time of day is best for you to walk or exercise? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What health topics are you interested in learning more about? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Once a month or so, we will be holding 15-20 minute mini-classes at the mall. These can be attended before or after you walk! Please rank in order from 1 – 3 which times work best for you. (Select the three best times)  
6:30 am 7:00 am 7:15 am 7:30 am 8:00 am 8:30 am  
6:00 pm 6:30 pm 7:00 pm Other: \_\_\_\_\_(please specify)
11. Please take a moment to think and reflect about the next question. What are your personal goals and expectations for joining Making Tracks? What is it you hope to achieve?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Health Questionnaire/Survey

## Let's Get To The "Heart" Of The Matter:

Please read and answer the following questions and circle the choice that best suits you.

Select Age Group:     18-24 years                       25-34 years                       35-44 years  
                                  45-54 years                       55-64 years                       65-74 years  
                                  75-84 years                       Over 85

Sex:     Male                      or                       Female

1.    Please rate what you feel your overall health is today?  
      Excellent                      Good                      Fair                      Poor
2.    Compared to six months ago, how would you rate your health now?  
      Excellent                      Good                      Fair                      Poor
3.    How often do you exercise right now?  
      None    1-2 days per week                      3-4 days per week                      5-7 days per week
4.    How many servings of fruit do you eat per day?  
      0                      1-2                      3-4                      More than 5
5.    How many servings of vegetables do you eat per day?  
      0                      1-2                      3-4                      More than 5
6.    How many times per week do you eat out at restaurants?  
      0                      1-2                      3-4                      More than 5
7.    How many 8 ounce glasses of water do you drink each day?  
      0                      1-2                      3-4                      More than 5
8.    Please rate how you feel about yourself right now?  
      Excellent                      Good                      Fair                      Poor
9.    Are you happy with your current weight?  
      Very happy                      Happy                      Somewhat Happy                      Not Happy
10.    How would you describe your current energy level?  
      High Energy                      Good Energy                      Some Energy                      No Energy
11.    How often in the last 6 months have you felt depressed?  
      Most of the time                      Some of the time                      Rarely                      Never
12.    How often do you feel well rested?  
      Most of the time                      Some of the time                      Rarely                      Never
13.    How do you handle stress?  
      Excellent                      Good                      Fair                      Poor