

Rural Complications and Benefits of REACH Grants

Fostering Health in Danville, Va through Breastfeeding,
Nutrition and Physical Activity Initiatives

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November 19, 2025

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Understanding the REACH Grant and Rurality

- Purpose of REACH Grants (Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health)
- Unique Context of Rural Communities Like Danville, VA.
 - Geographic isolation and transportation barriers.
 - Limited access to specialized healthcare and resources.
 - Potential for strong community networks but also limited capacity.
 - Socioeconomic factors and health disparities.



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Breastfeeding Initiatives: Successes in a Rural Setting

Community Expertise

Collaborative Assessment

Actionable Planning

Resource Development

Feeding Tent Initiative

Community Resource Hub

Virtual Adaptation

Training Local Capacity



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Breastfeeding Initiatives: Challenges in a Rural Setting



Sustainability Concerns

Workplace Barriers

Limited External Partnerships

School Partnerships

Provider Gaps

Data Collection Challenges

Long-Term Career Sustainability



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Nutrition Initiatives: Successes in a Rural Setting

Local Expertise

Establishing Partnerships

Focus on Local Food Pantry

Engagement with Youth Organizations

Development of Monitoring

Shift to Faith-Based Organizations

Community Food Security Assessment



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Nutrition Initiatives – Challenges in a Rural Setting



Initial Delays

Limited Partner Engagement

Lack of Response from External Network

Need for Broad Participation

Fragmented Voucher Programs

Reaching Food Box Recipients

Developing Accessible Messaging



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Physical Activity: Successes in a Rural Setting

Leveraging External Resources

Geographic Expansion

Community-Driven Approach

Cross-Sector Collaboration

Focus on Infrastructure Improvements

Integration with Existing Plans

Progress on Local Projects



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Physical Activity – Challenges in a Rural Setting



Loss of Momentum

Delay in Evaluation

Stakeholder Changes

Lack of Funding

Reigniting Dialogue

Rural Infrastructure

Capacity of Rural Stakeholders



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Key Learnings and Moving Forward

- Key Successes
- Persistent Challenges
- Adaptability, Local Partnerships and Persistent Outreach
- Future Plans and Sustainability Plans



What are the actionable next steps for your community?

- Which racial/ethnic minority groups in your specific **local area** are most disproportionately affected by chronic diseases (e.g., heart disease, diabetes) and have the highest rates of preventable illness?
- Given the challenges of limited resources and rural transportation, what is **one immediate, low-cost step** you could take to improve access to healthy food this month?
- What **existing, underutilized asset** in our community (e.g., a school track, a library meeting room, a park trail) could you leverage or revitalize to create a free and safe space for physical activity, especially for target populations?
- How can you partner with local entities that already have transportation infrastructure (e.g., churches, senior centers, public transit) to overcome **transportation barriers** to healthcare appointments, farmers' markets, or physical activity programs?
- Besides a major grant like REACH, what are **two smaller, more accessible funding sources** (local businesses, civic organizations, small foundation grants) you could approach **next week** to support a new health initiative focused on the underserved?





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