



## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INFRASTRUCTURE

*Fighting obesity and type 2 diabetes with more ways to stay active*

- ❖ Increased physical activity is critical to both the prevention and treatment of type 2 diabetes. In 2011, **only 53.4%** of New Jersey adults reported participating in at least 150 minutes per week of moderate to vigorous physical activity, compared with 51.4% nationally.
- ❖ **Safe Routes to School (SRTS)** is a nationwide initiative that seeks to increase physical activity by encouraging children to walk or bike to school. The Department of Transportation (DOT) has actively promoted and worked to expand the SRTS program throughout the state.
- ❖ **Complete Streets** is another national movement to convert existing neighborhood infrastructure into pedestrian and bike-friendly roadways. New Jersey is a leader in Complete Streets policies and can continue to expand their implementation across the state.
- ❖ **Joint Use Agreements** enable the shared use of public property or facilities. For example, a school may permit community members to use the school's outdoor athletic facilities after school, or a school may contract with an afterschool program for use of the indoor gym in the evenings.

### What is the current state of physical activity of New Jerseyans?

Only 53.4% of New Jerseyans reported participating in at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per week, and 61.5% of New Jersey adults were overweight or obese as of 2011. Almost 50% of these overweight or obese adults had pre-diabetes.

*Check out physical activity infrastructure in the **New Jersey PATHS Report:** pp. 43–45, 80–82*

### What are the benefits of increased physical activity?

Physical activity not only helps prevent the incidence of type 2 diabetes and other chronic diseases, but also mitigates the consequences of type 2 diabetes once individuals are diagnosed with the disease. Improving the built environment through programs such as Complete Streets and SRTS can assist individuals in increasing their physical activity, under the philosophy of “making the healthy choice the easy choice.” Joint use agreements aid residents with safe opportunities to exercise by putting underutilized community resources to use.

### What should New Jersey do?

1. New Jersey can **promote joint use agreements** in municipalities.
2. The Legislature can **provide state funding for physical activity infrastructure improvements** through Complete Streets, SRTS, and local efforts in municipalities seeking to increase healthy living by improving their environments.
3. The DOT and/or NJDA could **provide additional technical assistance** to municipalities seeking to improve their built environments.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

The Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation | Email: [chlpi@law.harvard.edu](mailto:chlpi@law.harvard.edu)