# Walk Texas! Diabetes Program News

## *CDP TRAINING: PhotoVoice Speaks Louder Than Words*

*Sandy Graham, Ph.D.*
*John Bartholomew, Ph.D.*

The concept of Photovoice was introduced to CDPs during the September training. They viewed photos taken of bus stops, crosswalks, and sidewalks in Austin, Texas neighborhoods. These pictures were part of a training session led by John Bartholomew, Associate Professor in Kinesiology and Health Education, and Sandy Graham, Ph.D., to teach CDPs use of effective photography to advocate for policy and environmental changes. This program, called "PhotoVoice" acts on the principle of "seeing is believing", and can be extremely effective in promoting change. What better way to show policymakers these needed changes than to give them a picture?

*Pictures can be used to evoke emotion and promote change.*

Dr. Bartholomew and Dr. Graham discussed such techniques as using contrasting photos to demonstrate unfairness between neighborhoods, evoking emotion through subject use (children and older adults), and using photography to present possible solutions to policymakers. They used one example of a well-manicured bus stop next to one with no shade, sidewalk, or bench to accent the disparities between neighborhoods.

## *HEALTHY COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE*

*Sandy Graham, Ph.D.*

The UT staff assisted the TDP/C with the application for the CDC Funding Opportunity Announcement of the Healthy Communities Initiative. The Healthy Communities Initiative is a collaboration of efforts across DSHS Adult Health and Chronic Disease Programs and The University of Texas at Austin. Members include representatives from Texas Diabetes Council/Program; Cardiovascular Health and Wellness Program; Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Prevention Program; Tobacco Prevention and Control; Asthma Control Program; Cancer Registry; and The University of Texas at Austin Department of Kinesiology and Health Education – Walk Texas! Program.

Program leads nominated communities for participation in the initiative and the UT Austin staff developed a review process to make equitable selections. A matrix was used to assess the appropriateness and readiness of each community. Sorting and ranking resulted in agreement upon two communities to be the first for the Healthy Communities Initiative in Texas.

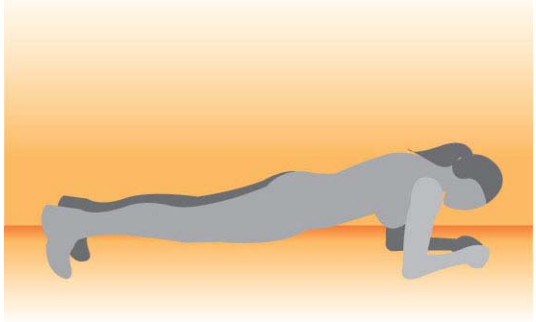
UT Austin staff has been researching and collecting resource tools to create a model of developing Healthy Communities. Due to the vast geography of the state of Texas, a website will be developed to offer a user-friendly process for building healthy communities throughout Texas.
Working closely with the TDC/P director, the UT Austin staff attended meetings, conference calls, and provided on-going conversations with program leads involved in the Texas Healthy Communities Initiative.

## *Optional PMATS Training:*

The PMATS training was held on September 9, 2009 as an option for those who were new to the program or just wanted a review. Programmer Eric Leversen introduced the PMATS software program and provided an update of information for the program. New features will include a "Save as a Draft" option, which allows CDPs more control over editing and allows them to partially enter an activity one day and complete it the next day.

***SCENARIOS*** Caelie Dunn and Esbelle Jowers, Ph.D. from The University of Texas at Austin provided scenarios of programming so that participants could practice using PMATS. Scenarios included entering a series of classes and showed the proper breakdowns and data that PMATS requires.

***SLOW DOWN*** Mark Faries, M.S., UT Health Education doctoral student from UT FIT, led an exercise break consisting of two different exercises highlighting the "Tempo" technique. The "Tempo" technique refers the speed at which exercises are performed: apparently slower repetitions have been popular as of recent. Participants were asked to stand and perform 10 repetitions of body weight squats at a normal pace or tempo. After a brief 2-3 minute rest, participants were asked again to perform 10 repetitions of a body weight squat. During this set of repetitions, participants were asked to make each phase of the squat (down, pause at the bottom, and up) to be 4 seconds each. In other words, participants would take 4-seconds to squat, pause 4-seconds at the bottom of the squat, and take 4-seconds to come up to the starting position. After their 10 repetitions, Mark Faries summarized why the longer time the muscle was under tension provided a different feeling than their first set of squats. Tempo was endorsed as an effective way to manipulate their exercise routine.



## *KEEP IT UP ON YOUR OWN: Plank Exercise*

The plank exercise is a great way to strengthen your core (abdominal) muscles and improve posture, balance and overall stability. Start in a pushup position, using either your hands or your forearms to support your upper body *(see picture at left)*.

Straighten your back (don't let your bottom droop!) and hold yourself steady for 15-60 seconds. FEEL THE BURN!