



FAIRFIELD A PROUD BLUE ZONES COMMUNITY

The eighth certified Blue Zones Community® in the nation invests in well-being for a more livable, vibrant, and healthy future.





CONGRATS, FAIRFIELD,
FOR PUTTING WELL-BEING
ON THE MAP!

We deserve a round of applause.
And maybe even a standing ovation.
Because we made it happen.

After launching Blue Zones Project®, **our community saw trail use of at least 230 users walking, running, and biking daily.** This is thanks to improved walkability and investments in new streets, sidewalks, and the beautification of our community as a whole. Our community's resurgence, anchored in putting the well-being of our residents first, is happening.

Fairfield has always been a great place to live, work, and visit. And it's only getting better.

We did this together. **By putting our personal and collective well-being first, we're making healthy choices easier, creating more economic opportunities, and ensuring a better quality of life for everyone.** Here's to making Fairfield one of the healthiest places in the nation, where residents are living better, together.

THE JOURNEY TO BECOME A BLUE ZONES COMMUNITY

6	PUTTING WELL-BEING ON THE MAP IN IOWA	27	RIGHT OUTLOOK
7	An Innovative Sponsor	28	Why Right Outlook Matters
7	A Transformative Solution	30	Organizations with the Right Outlook
8	Measuring the Impact		
9	Fifteen Communities Commit to Well-Being	32	EAT WISELY
		33	Why Eating Wisely Matters
11	PUTTING WELL-BEING ON THE MAP IN FAIRFIELD	36	Organizations Eating Wisely
12	Being Healthy is a way of Life in Fairfield		
13	A Community-Wide Commitment to Blue Zones Project	38	CONNECT
		39	Why Connection Matters
16	GUIDE TO THE POWER 9	40	Organizations Connecting
19	MOVE NATURALLY	43	APPENDIX
20	Why Movement Matters	43	Designated Organizations
22	Transforming Environments	44	Sources
25	Organizations Moving Naturally		

A rural landscape in Iowa featuring a green field in the foreground, a large tree, and several buildings in the background.

PUTTING WELL-BEING ON THE MAP IN IOWA

A GREAT STATE

What does it take to become a healthier state? What does that mean for those who live and work there? These were the questions on the minds of community leaders in 2011 when Governor Terry Branstad challenged Iowa to become the healthiest state alongside the Healthiest State Initiative. An answer came with Blue Zones Project, a community-wide initiative that united civic leaders, businesses, restaurants, schools, grocers, families, and others in an effort to enhance the community landscape and improve the overall well-being of Iowans. With this vision as a foundation, the Blue Zones Project partnership is bringing value to communities statewide — with things like improved health, a strong economy, and happier, healthier, and highly productive residents who spend more time living well.

AN INNOVATIVE SPONSOR

Wellmark® Blue Cross® and Blue Shield® chose to invest in the lives of Iowans by bringing Blue Zones Project to the state for what would be the cornerstone of Iowa's Healthiest State Initiative.

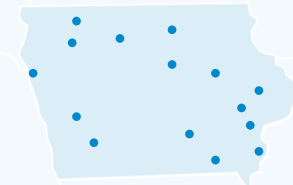
Wellmark knew that doing so would introduce an innovative approach that moves beyond diet and exercise regimens and applies the principles of behavioral economics to make healthier choices easier choices. The projected outcomes? Improved health and well-being for Iowans.

A Transformative Solution

Blue Zones Project helps transform U.S. communities like ours into Blue Zones Communities — areas where people live longer with a higher quality of life. The secrets to well-being and longevity are found in the Power 9® — nine common principles from the Blue Zones® longevity hotspots of the world. Blue Zones Communities are places where residents, employers, and others collaborate to create environments where healthy choices are easier for everyone.

The results?

Vibrant communities where residents are happier, healthier, and more engaged with each other. Iowa was among the first to embark on this journey to well-being. Fifteen communities and five years later, the results are undeniable.





IN COMMUNITIES WITH HIGHER WELL-BEING, WE HAVE FOUND THAT PEOPLE LIVE LONGER, HAPPIER LIVES AND BUSINESS AND LOCAL ECONOMIES FLOURISH. A RELIABLE WELL-BEING METRIC PROVIDES COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS LEADERS WITH THE DATA AND INSIGHTS THEY NEED TO HELP MAKE SUSTAINED TRANSFORMATION A REALITY. AFTER ALL, IF YOU CAN'T MEASURE IT, YOU CAN'T MANAGE IT.

Dan Buettner
New York Times best-selling author
National Geographic Fellow
Blue Zones founder

Measuring the Impact

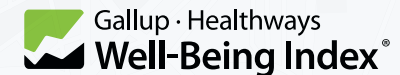
Change requires action. It isn't enough to do something one time; lasting change, which is a central tenet of Blue Zones Project, must be created from permanent and semi-permanent changes and alterations to the environment, policies, programs, and social networks. These actions allow healthy choices to become easy choices today and for many years to come.

From 2010 – 2015, according to the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index®, Iowa has outpaced the nation in overall well-being, improving at twice the rate of the national average.



GALLUP-HEALTHWAYS WELL-BEING INDEX

The Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index is the most proven, mature, and comprehensive measure of well-being in the world. Measuring well-being gives policy, community, and business leaders the data to benchmark populations, understand gaps and opportunities, and then prioritize interventions to measurably improve well-being. Improving well-being has been shown to lower health care costs and increase worker productivity, in turn, enhancing organizational and community competitiveness.



15 Communities Commit to Well-Being

In October 2011, 84 Iowa communities submitted statements of interest to be selected for Blue Zones Project, and an elite 15 were chosen. Communities received support from national experts and thousands of community members.

Across the state, Blue Zones Project has seen:

520,000

Lives impacted by environmental changes designed to help people move naturally, eat wisely, develop the right outlook, and connect with others.

430,000+

Actions taken by individuals to improve well-being for themselves, their families, and friends.

610

Worksites, schools, grocery stores, and restaurants achieved Blue Zones Project designation.

21,164

(And counting) Actions taken by those organizations to make healthy choices easier, helping residents, employees, and patrons live longer, better lives.

180,245

Total feet of bike lanes, trails, and sidewalks built to encourage people to move more naturally.

142

Walking School Bus routes created to encourage students to move naturally.

15

All 15 communities passed new Complete Streets policies to enable safe access for all users — drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

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IT'S CELEBRATING
WHAT THE PEOPLE
OF AMERICA ARE
NOW WAKING UP
TO, AND REALIZING
WHAT THEY WANT.
IT'S GOING TO
HAPPEN IN IOWA
FIRST.

Dan Burden
Walkability Expert
Blue Zones



WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE A BLUE ZONES COMMUNITY?

Worksites, schools, grocery stores, and restaurants complete various **action items** on a **pledge** in order to earn their Blue Zones Project **designation**.



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FAIRFIELD HAS EMBRACED TRANSFORMATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE THROUGH BLUE ZONES PROJECT AND HAS BEGUN TO SEE PROGRESS. WE APPLAUD THE COMMUNITY'S EFFORTS AND LOOK FORWARD TO THE CONTINUED FOCUS ON WELL-BEING IMPROVEMENT.

Dan Buettner

New York Times best-selling author

National Geographic Fellow

Blue Zones founder



PUTTING WELL-BEING ON THE MAP IN FAIRFIELD

As a pioneer in innovation, Fairfield is leading the way for a movement that is now more than 26 communities strong nationwide.

Our neighbors, teachers, and community leaders have made tremendous strides in optimizing the places where we all live, work, learn, and play.

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FROM THE OUTSET
OF THE GOVERNOR'S
ANNOUNCEMENT
OF THE HEALTHIEST
STATE INITIATIVE
AND THE
COLLABORATION
WITH WELLMARK
AND HEALTHWAYS
TO IMPLEMENT BLUE
ZONES PROJECT IN
IOWA COMMUNITIES,
I KNEW THAT
FAIRFIELD WOULD
RISE TO THE
CHALLENGE.

Ed Malloy
Mayor
Fairfield



Being Healthy is a Way of Life in Fairfield

Fairfield is a unique community, and we take pride on being a well-being innovator.

In our community, workplaces care for employees, and breaks mean getting up to walk rather than sitting in a room. Volunteering is encouraged as part of the workplace culture of giving back to the community. Several of our worksites are tobacco-free campuses. For example, Agri-Plastics updated its smoke-free policy to a tobacco-free policy and saw **tobacco usage amongst employees decrease from 33 to 18 percent**. Blue Zones Worksites® in Fairfield promote healthy employees, because they are more productive and more engaged.

At our schools, gardens help kids take learning outdoors, and students grow some of the produce that is harvested for the lunch program. In our Blue Zones Schools®, **130 students helped grow more than 1,500 tomato, pepper, broccoli, lettuce, and cauliflower plants**. Fairfield Middle School also features a farm-to-school program, which brings fresh produce and unique nutrition education to students. As a result of these initiatives, kids in Fairfield are staying active and eating nutritious foods.

Pedestrians and cyclists spend more time than ever before outdoors on the 16-mile Loop Trail that circles our community. The new Walton Road Bridge keeps them safe, and each year more trees are planted to provide shade on the route. Our residents can even stop to pick some produce or nuts from the edible orchard if they're hungry while out and about. As we worked to become a Blue Zones Community, **at least 230 walkers, runners, and cyclists used the Chautauqua Park trail each daily**.

In Fairfield, the culture of well-being surrounds you. It's another benefit of being a Blue Zones Community.



A Community-wide Commitment to Blue Zones Project



9,464

Lives impacted

4,148

Individuals pledged to support well-being

7,405

Well-being actions taken by individuals

31

Organizations implementing well-being principles

1,292

Changes made by organizations to support living longer better

20

Organizations completing the pledge

11

Fairfield worksites are Blue Zones Worksites®

6

Locally owned restaurants in Fairfield are Blue Zones Restaurants®

2

Fairfield public schools are Blue Zones Schools®

2

Fairfield grocery stores are Blue Zones Grocery Stores®



SEE IT IN ACTION

Blue Zones Project Highlight: Fairfield

Fairfield is making well-being a way of life. Hear from our leaders and neighbors about how an emphasis on well-being makes our community a better place to live.

Watch the video:

explore.bluezonesproject.com/Fairfield



Media Coverage Places Fairfield on National Stage

Blue Zones Project in Iowa has attracted local and national recognition, with more than 1,600 media stories to date.

Since the launch in 2012, Blue Zones Project® in Iowa has been heralded for innovative approaches to population health management in notable publications such as **O, The Oprah Magazine**.

The Des Moines Register



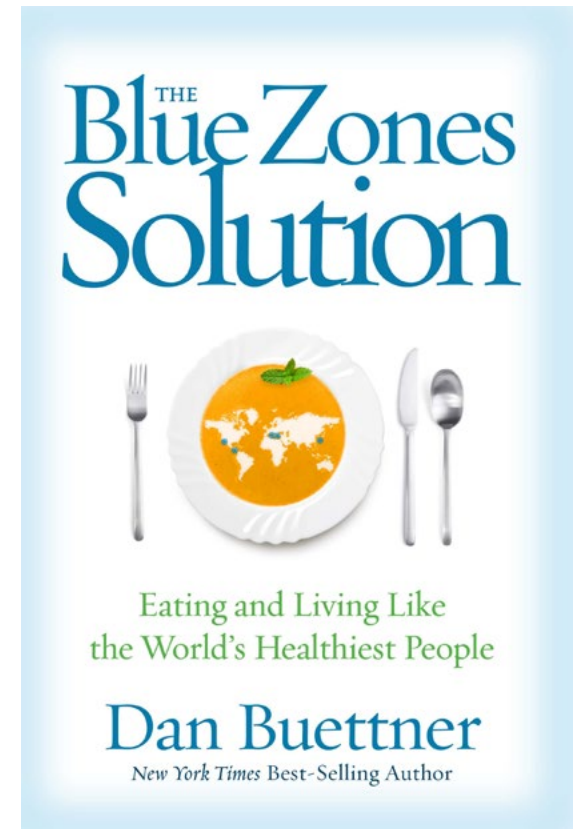
The Fairfield
Ledger



In the News



Fairfield Blue Zones Project leaders meet with Governor Branstad, May 2015.



In addition to great media stories covering our efforts, the Blue Zones Project Iowa story is featured prominently in Dan Buettner's latest *New York Times* best-selling book, *The Blue Zones Solution: Eating and Living Like the World's Healthiest People*.

The landscape for well-being in America cannot be improved without committed partnerships. That's why leaders across many sectors joined forces to take action and positively impact our residential and business communities. This broad, holistic approach is making healthy choices easier.

Using the secrets to longevity as our guide — **the Power 9** — businesses and residents have taken actions to make well-being a way of life.

Photo credit: Werner Elmker




GUIDE TO THE POWER 9

THE POWER 9

P.19

Move Naturally

 Make daily physical activity an unavoidable part of your environment.

P.27

Right Outlook


 Know your purpose.

 Downshift: work less, slow down, and take vacations.

P.32

Eat Wisely

 Eat until 80 percent full.

 More veggies, less meat and processed food.

 Drink a glass of red wine each day.

P.38

Connect

 Create a healthy social network.

 Connect or reconnect with religion.

 Prioritize family.

MOVING NATURALLY

Since launching Blue Zones Project, Fairfield has completed a new aquatics center, expanded an indoor recreation facility, and installed new outdoor basketball courts. A sidewalk expansion project and new bike lanes allow families to safely walk or bike to the new aquatics center.

We generally exercise too hard or not at all. However, the world's longest-lived people don't pump iron, run marathons, or join gyms. Instead, they live in environments that constantly nudge them to move naturally. They live in places where they can walk to the store, a friend's house, or places of worship. Their houses have stairs. They have gardens in their yards. It's not just about moving, it's about moving naturally.

Photo credit: Werner Elmker



WHY MOVEMENT MATTERS

About 69 percent of the American population can be classified as overweight or obese.¹

Our children's life expectancy is projected to be shorter than that of their parents for the first time in history. Obesity is not just a health problem, it's an economic one, too. The estimated annual health care costs of obesity-related illness are a staggering \$190 billion, or nearly 21 percent of annual medical spending. Childhood obesity alone is responsible for \$14 billion in direct medical costs.²

The good news is there is a solution for this growing issue. **Increasing simple movements like standing, walking, stretching, and bending can help burn an extra 350 calories a day.** Studies show that just by making our communities more walkable, the prevalence of obesity can decrease by more than 10 percent.³ That adds up to even bigger possibilities like lowered incidences of heart disease, diabetes, and respiratory issues and increased productivity, vitality, and years of quality life.

How Moving Naturally Impacts Our Community

City planners, schools, worksites, and organizations across our community have come together to create environments and support programs that help Fairfield residents move naturally. Our city has emerged as a leader for street and community design that nudges people to healthier daily habits. Here are some reasons why:

4

Walking Moai teams with 65 participants

1

Walking School Bus route



WHAT'S A MOAI?

Moai is a concept from Okinawa, Japan, that roughly means coming together for a common purpose. When you find your Moai, you find your personal board of directors — a committed group of individuals supporting each other and working collectively to improve well-being, for life.

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THE TRAIL SYSTEM IS REALLY A PRETTY AMAZING QUALITY-OF-LIFE INFRASTRUCTURE BECAUSE YOU DON'T NOTICE IT WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE IT, BUT WHEN YOU DO HAVE IT, IT REALLY INCREASES THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE AREA.

Stephen Pedrick
Chairman
Jefferson County Trails Council



TRANSFORMING ENVIRONMENTS

A community resurgence, anchored in putting the well-being of our residents first, is happening in Fairfield. Our community of nearly 10,000 is investing in making the community a place that naturally supports movement and well-being.

In 2014, the Fairfield city council passed a Complete Streets policy. Complete Streets policies ensure roads are safe for all users, including pedestrians and bicyclists. Positive built-environment projects are popping up all across the city, as evidenced by our many new trails and sidewalks that encourage residents to move naturally. In 2015, Fairfield completed its first Complete Streets project along Lincoln Avenue.

We're enjoying a new aquatics center. We expanded an indoor recreation facility, a new outdoor basketball court, and a sidewalk expansion. New sidewalks allow a safe, active route to the aquatic center.

A new treescape master plan supports Urban Greening and the tree canopy that we all enjoy.

Investment in Walking Trails

In November 2013, the Jefferson County Trails Council helped build the Walton Road Bridge, a **\$33,000 pedestrian and cycling bridge along Fairfield's 16-mile Loop Trail**. Construction of the new bridge was truly a community effort — our residents contributed \$30,000 worth of volunteer labor and \$22,000 in locally raised funds. The Walton Road Bridge allows pedestrians and cyclists a safe byway to cross Walton Road that connects the 16-mile Fairfield Loop Trail.

According to the Regional Planning Authority 15 Regional Trail Plan for 2016, **Jefferson County has invested more money in recreational trails than any other county in the region.**

In fact, Jefferson County (and Fairfield) has been awarded nearly \$1.3 million in Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) funds for trail construction in the past 15 years.

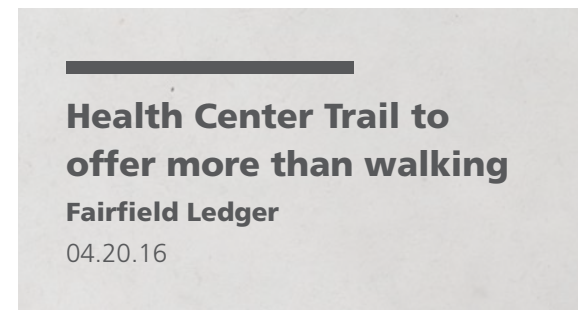
Trails and wellness are a well-established tradition in the culture of Fairfield. Data from the Iowa DOT show Fairfield has approximately 1.9 miles of trail per 1,000 people.

At least 230 people use the Loop Trail near Chautauqua Park on a daily basis. Accounting for the dates between Memorial Day and Labor Day only, the Loop Trail is used nearly 22,000 times per year. Those 22,000 people would fill the 522 seats of Fairfield's Sondheim Center for the Performing Arts more than 40 times.

Expansion of Sidewalks and Trails

A sidewalk extension of 700 linear feet was added along Jefferson Avenue allowing south side residents safer access to the newly completed rec complex; outdoor and indoor pool, and Cambridge SportsPlex. A Roosevelt Recreation Center Bikeway and Walkway Routes map was sent home with all Fairfield School District students prior to summer vacation in the Spring of 2016. Plans are in place to extend the sidewalk further and connect it with the main East-West thoroughfare.

In the News



ORGANIZATIONS MOVING NATURALLY

The health of our community is directly related to the health and vitality of our people.

Organizations across Fairfield have recognized their responsibility to create environments that support their employees and patrons in moving more.

Worksites

We spend about one third of our waking hours at work. Over the last 50 years, the percentage of jobs requiring moderate physical activity has fallen from 50 percent in 1960 to 20 percent today.⁸

This means four out of five jobs are sedentary or only require light activity. This decline in physical activity translates to Americans burning 120–140 fewer calories each day, which results in burning 12–15 fewer pounds each year.

As waistlines expand so do our medical costs. Annually, obesity-related illnesses cost more than \$190 billion in health care costs and \$153 billion in lost productivity, annually.²

With so much time spent at work, it's important that these environments are set up to help people move more. **Our community saw 11 worksites complete actions to help people move more, including adding standing desks, sharing walking routes, and offering stretch breaks and fitness classes.** These are small changes that lead to huge results for the average person over the course of a career.

Iowa State Bank remodeled its on-site fitness facility and introduced flexible schedule options to make exercising easier for employees. After the remodel, usage of the facility doubled, and employees are finding that exercising with coworkers during the day can make them healthier, less stressed, and more energetic.



Schools

Every day, children are learning habits they will carry for the rest of their lives.

Establishing healthy habits like moving naturally is so important in the early stages of life. Physical activity and stretch breaks during the school day can improve grades, increase concentration, and improve math, reading, and writing test scores.⁹

Additionally, research shows that including 10-minute activity breaks on a daily basis can promote improvement across these areas by up to 20 percent.

Our community saw two schools complete actions to help get students moving, including adding a Walking School Bus route, brain breaks, and additional recess and physical education time.

Restaurants and Grocery Stores

Grocery stores in Fairfield remind shoppers that parking further away is one way to easily add more activity in their day. Restaurants are installing bicycle racks to encourage people to consider active transportation to common destinations (and work up a healthy appetite, too). Small efforts like these make moving naturally easier than ever before in Fairfield.



WALKING HELPS KIDS

Children who walk to school are more alert and ready to learn, strengthen their social networks, and develop lifetime fitness habits.^{10, 11} A Walking School Bus allows a group of children to walk to school under the supervision of two or more adults.



A photograph of a young green plant with several leaves growing in a field. The plant is in the foreground, and the background is a blurred field of similar plants. A person's arm is visible on the left side of the image. The text "RIGHT OUTLOOK" is overlaid in large white letters on the right side of the image.

RIGHT OUTLOOK

Fairfield employers put purpose first, helping employees connect to company missions and encouraging volunteerism while ensuring employees are supported on their well-being journey with new health screenings.

Having the right outlook is a common thread in Blue Zones areas.

The longest-lived people have regular habits to shed stress. Okinawans take a few moments each day to remember their ancestors, Adventists pray, Ikarians take a nap, and Sardinians enjoy happy hour. **It doesn't matter what you do, just so long as it helps you keep the right outlook.**

Blue Zones centenarians also put an emphasis on connecting with their reason for being. Whether through family, career, or community, living with purpose pays off. **Blue Zones researchers have found that people who have a clear sense of purpose in life tend to live about seven years longer than those who don't.**

WHY RIGHT OUTLOOK MATTERS

No matter where we live, stress and the pressures of daily life can weigh us down.

Practicing regular methods to downshift from everyday stress and understand our purpose can improve well-being. **Stress leads to chronic inflammation, which is tied to every major age-related disease.**

Research shows that those who connect with a sense of purpose and wake up to live with it each day outlive those who don't. In fact, those with a sense of purpose had a 15 percent lower rate of death than those who did not.¹²

How Right Outlook Impacts Our Community

Volunteering is one way Fairfield encourages individuals to discover their innate gifts. We help our community members find opportunities that match their passion and commitment to deepen their sense of purpose.

Photo credit: Werner Elmker



ORGANIZATIONS WITH THE RIGHT OUTLOOK

Organizations in Fairfield are creating environments and practices that encourage the right outlook. By keeping this top of mind throughout the community, everyone is enjoying more health and vitality.

The Lord's Cupboard food bank receives more than 600 pounds of fresh produce each year to donate to those in need.

Actions Completed by 11 Worksites

- 1 Creating designated quiet spaces
- 2 Posting company mission
- 3 Encouraging volunteering

Worksites

Fewer than 50 percent of Americans find meaning at work. Employers that invest in making work meaningful for their employees are more likely to see production rise and turnover decrease.¹³

Worksites are helping employees focus on what really matters, rather than worrying about health concerns.

In 2014, Iowa State Bank offered biometric screenings and health-risk screenings for the first time, and 92 percent of employees took advantage of this offering.

Agri-Industrial Plastics implemented a tobacco-free campus policy and helped reduce employee tobacco use from 33 percent to 18 percent. Adopting a tobacco-free campus policy is a simple and cost-effective way to improve workers' health. It also results in other benefits by discouraging individual tobacco use, promoting clean air, reducing the risk of fires, and lowering the employer's cost of insurance.



Schools

Mindfulness is paying attention to the here and now with kindness and curiosity.

Research suggests that teaching mindfulness skills to students increases attention and improves social skills while decreasing test anxiety. It also creates a sense of calm connection to nature, and it improves sleep. These skills allow children to better cope with the stress and noise in life.¹⁴

Our community saw two schools implement mindfulness programming to support the community's youngest minds.

Research shows that students who participate in similar programs improved in the areas of empathy, perspective taking, optimism, emotional control, and mindfulness. They also were more likely to show improvements on trustworthiness, helpfulness, and sharing while showing less rule breaking and starting fewer fights than the control group.¹⁴

In the News

Blue Zones offers ways to cut seasonal stress

Fairfield Ledger
12.23.14

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I THINK WE HAVE CREATED A WORKPLACE THAT IS FRIENDLIER TO WORK IN; IT'S A HEALTHIER WORKPLACE TO WORK IN, AND I THINK WE HAVE HEALTHIER EMPLOYEES. ANY TIME YOU CAN GET THOSE EMPLOYEES HAPPY TO COME TO WORK EVERY MORNING, AND THEY KNOW THEY ARE COMING TO A PLACE THAT CARES ABOUT THEM, THAT CARES ABOUT THEIR HEALTH, THAT'S REALLY TREMENDOUS.

Chad Christensen
Agri-Industrial Plastics
Fairfiled

Well-being is literally growing in Fairfield with two community gardens at schools and worksites.

Eating wisely is not a diet plan, it's a way of life in Blue Zones areas. Residents of Okinawa, Japan, have a smart strategy for maintaining a healthy weight.

Before meals they say “hara hachi bu,” which means stop eating when you’re 80 percent full. Studies show that cutting back on calories can lead to better health, longevity, and weight loss. Centenarians in Blue Zones areas eat a plant-packed diet with a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, and beans. Rich in disease-fighting nutrients, fava beans, black beans, soy beans, and lentils are the cornerstone of their diets.

Don’t diet; eat wisely.

EAT WISELY



WHY EATING WISELY MATTERS

It is estimated that by 2030, 86 percent of the American population will be overweight or obese if current eating habits and exercise habits remain the same.¹⁵

Food is fuel, and what we eat impacts our productivity, too. A 2012 study revealed that **unhealthy eating is related to a 66 percent increased risk of loss of productivity.** Health-related employee productivity loss accounts for 77 percent of all productivity loss and costs employers up to three times more in annual health care expenses.¹⁶

In addition to looking and feeling better, **the benefits of healthy eating are numerous. In the U.S. estimated savings are \$114.5 billion per year (in 2012 dollars) in medical savings, increased productivity, and reductions in heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, and osteoporotic hip fractures.**¹⁷ Poor diet is a major risk factor for these five health conditions, all of which reduce life expectancy. By making subtle but substantial changes to our food options, we can be healthier.

How Eating Wisely Impacts Our Community

People make more than 200 food decisions every day.¹⁸ Blue Zones Project helps people choose wisely. Fairfield implemented small changes and defaults in restaurants, worksites, grocery stores, and schools. For example, restaurants created new, irresistible, good-for-you menu options. Grocery stores stocked their shelves with nutritious, tasty foods. Schools removed vending machines so kids aren't tempted by sugary snacks and sodas during the school day.

12 cooking classes with 60 participants bringing healthier cooking home to their families

Edible orchard with two-and-a-half acres of produce and nuts

2 gardens: one school garden, one worksite garden



BY THE NUMBERS

Since the early 1900s plate sizes have grown from

9.5 INCHES
TO
12.5 INCHES¹⁸

We've increased how much we eat by

27%¹⁸





THE OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS TO BECOME PART OF PLANTING, GROWING, HARVESTING, AND CONSUMPTION EMPOWERED THEM TO BE ACTIVE AND RELIABLE CITIZENS, WHERE THE POSSIBILITIES OF TRANSFERRING THIS KNOWLEDGE HOME ARE HIGHER.

Cory Khlem
Science Teacher
Fairfield Middle School

Community Gardens

With gardens springing up each season, Fairfield is literally growing well-being. Gardens empower people to grow fresh, local food, and in many cases donate it to local food bank —The Lord's Cupboard. The Jefferson County Master Gardeners helped students plant produce, which is also donated to the Lord's Cupboard.

Schools are taking part, too, with a school garden growing more than 1,500 plants. The produce is used in nutrition education. The local produce makes its way onto plates in the lunchroom as salads, sides, and entrees.





BY THE NUMBERS

1,000 CALORIES

in a typical American entree in a restaurant.²²

2 EXTRA POUNDS

gained a year by eating one meal away from home a week.²³

5.5% INCREASE

in same-store sales at restaurants that increased their better-for-you/low-calorie servings between 2006 and 2011.²³

5.5% DECREASE

in sales at restaurants that did not increase their better-for-you/low-calorie servings.²³

60%

of the food we purchase is highly processed, fatty, salty or sugary.²⁴

ORGANIZATIONS EATING WISELY

Changes made to our restaurants, grocery stores, and schools can make a huge impact on the health and well-being of the community as a whole. By working together, we can make eating wisely second nature, not a chore.

Restaurants

Our community saw six restaurants complete actions to make healthy food choices easier — things like offering half-size portions, creating new healthy entrees for adults and children, serving food on smaller plates, and serving healthier sides as the default option.

Our Blue Zones Restaurants are seeing noticeable business benefits as a result of these changes. For example, Yummy's started offering half-size sandwich orders that now account for 50 percent of sales. Revelations Café offers fresh fruit as the default side dish, which encourages customers to make healthy food choices. In general, people are much less likely to consume an unhealthy side dish if they have to ask for it.

Grocery Stores

Americans go to the grocery store more than twice a week. The actions we take to determine what we eat begin at the grocery store. Many grocery stores currently lead people to unhealthy foods in the way they are designed, the deals they promote, and the packaging of the food they sell.²⁵ Our community is taking the lead in taking the grocery store back.

Our community saw two grocery stores complete actions to make healthy food choices easier — things like sharing healthy recipes, offering cooking classes, ensuring water is available in checkout lanes, offering healthy foods on end caps and in special displays, and offering a Blue Zones checkout lane full of healthy options. Hy-Vee increased shelf space for water by 50 percent, making water more visible and available to shoppers — especially thirsty ones.



Iowa State Bank offers fresh fruit to employees at a nominal cost while unhealthy vending snacks are literally kept in the bank vault.

Worksites

Seventy percent of Americans eat at their desks several times a week, which can lead to distracted, disengaged, and mindless overeating.²⁶

In Fairfield, 11 worksites completed actions to make healthy food choices easier — things like starting healthy potlucks and worksite gardens, improving cafeteria options, and adding healthy choices in vending machines.

Maharishi University of Management planted fruit and nut trees across campus. Their cafeteria only serves organic and vegetarian foods.

Schools

With childhood obesity at 17 percent, there's never been a more important time to examine what students are eating at school.²⁷ The place they go to learn about history and science should be the place they go to learn about eating wisely as well.

Our community saw two schools complete actions to make healthy food choices easier for students.

Students who attend schools that sell foods with low nutrient density and sugar-sweetened beverages have lower intake of fruits, vegetables, and milk at lunch and higher daily percentages of calories from total fat and saturated fat.²⁸

Redesigning the school lunchroom is a simple and cost-effective way to nudge students into eating healthier without creating strict policies. Research by Brian Wansink of Cornell University found that **simple changes to the lunchroom design tripled salad sales, doubled fruit sales, doubled sales of healthy sandwiches, and reduced the purchase of ice cream.**¹⁸ By optimizing the school environment, students are nudged towards healthier choices.

Actions Completed by Two Schools

- 1 School gardens
- 2 Farm-to-school programs
- 3 Healthier vending machines
- 4 New policies for celebrating and fundraising with food



A photograph of two women walking a dog on a wooden deck overlooking a lake. The woman on the left is wearing a white tank top and dark shorts, and the woman on the right is wearing a pink tank top and black shorts. They are both smiling and looking towards the right. The dog is a small, light-colored dog on a leash. The background shows a large body of water, green trees, and a blue sky with light clouds. The word "CONNECT" is overlaid in large white letters on the left side of the image.

CONNECT

More than 65 residents built strong relationships with new friends and neighbors in Walking Moai groups.

The world's longest-lived people in Blue Zones areas have always understood the power of social connectedness and putting their families first.

In Okinawa, "Moais" — groups of about five people who commit to each other for their whole lives — provide social connection and emotional and sometimes financial support in times of need. Moai members have the security of knowing there is always someone there for them.

Putting family first and investing time with loved ones can add up to six years to your life.²⁹ Having a sense of belonging is an important part of enjoying a long and healthy life. It doesn't matter which faith you belong to, **studies have shown that people who belong to a place of worship and attend four times a month live four to fourteen years longer than those who don't.**³⁰



I LIKE PARTICIPATING IN THE WALKING MOAIS BECAUSE I HAVE GOTTEN WELL ACQUAINTED WITH PEOPLE WHO I MAY HAVE ONLY SEEN ON THE STREET. IN A HALF HOUR EVERY WEEK, WE'VE JUST GOTTEN WELL ACQUAINTED AND REALLY LOOK FORWARD TO TAKING CARE OF EACH OTHER.

Deb Arnold
Blue Zones Project volunteer

WHY CONNECTION MATTERS

Our connections to friends, family, and those around us are very powerful. They have the ability to shape our lives in more ways than we realize. Research shows that even your friends' friends' friends — people you don't even know — have the ability to affect your health, happiness, and behaviors.³¹

How Connectedness Impacts our Community

Spending time with people who positively influence one another is crucial. In Fairfield, we embraced the power of social connections to bring citizens together through groups, clubs, and faith-based organizations. We also encourage social connections throughout the community with our community gardens, outdoor dining locales, and miles of new trails.



BY THE NUMBERS

4

Walking Moais

65

Walking Moais participants



ORGANIZATIONS CONNECTING

There are many ways to promote connections in organizations throughout the community.

By providing these opportunities, everyone in the community feels like a part of something bigger.

Worksites

The digitalization of the work day has done wonders for productivity but not much for social connectivity.

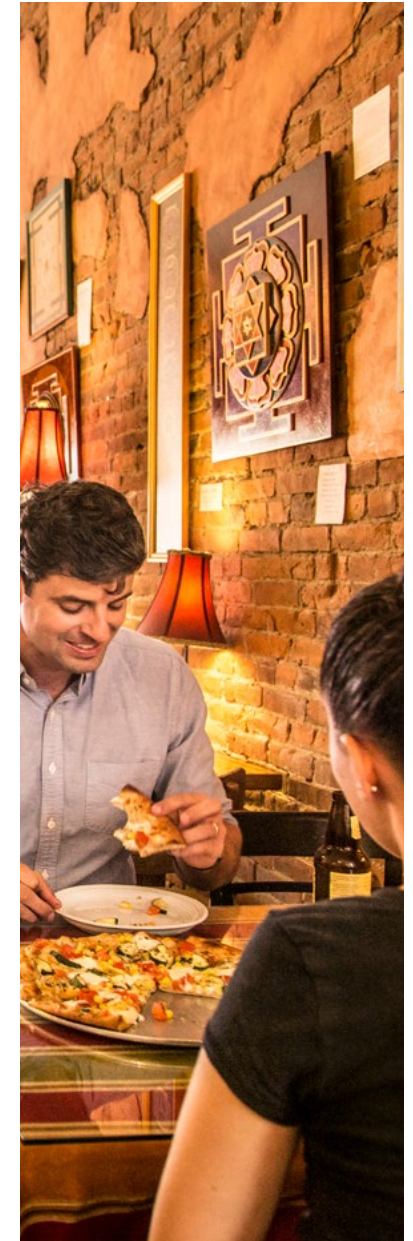
Americans change jobs more often than ever before, and working from home or in isolated conditions can further a lack of socialization among coworkers and peers.

Our community saw 11 worksites complete actions to help employees connect with each other, including offering things like “lunch with a co-worker” programs, flexible work schedules, strengths assessments, and Moais.

Restaurants

Eating together fosters togetherness in all kinds of families, even those that are the size of whole communities.

There are no better opportunities to connect than around a dining table. A new outdoor dining ordinance provides more opportunities for people to connect more deeply with their neighbors and community while enjoying a healthy meal outdoors.





FRIENDS ALWAYS SHARE

Friends provide more than good times, memories, and companionship — they also share health habits and other traits with one another. Did you know that if your friends are smokers, unhappy, or obese, you're more likely to adopt these same traits? You are twice as likely to be overweight if your three closest friends are overweight,³² and inversely, you are 20 percent more likely to succeed at new behaviors if you do them with a buddy.³³



GOOD FRIENDS AND FAMILY MAKE EVERYTHING BETTER



EAT TOGETHER BETTER

Adolescents who eat dinner with their family are 15 percent less likely to become obese. Additionally, a report by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse points out that teens who eat dinner with their families more than three times a week are less likely to do poorly in school.³⁵



SOCIAL WELL-BEING

The amount of time you spend socializing each day has a direct impact on your well-being. To have a good day, a person needs around six hours of socializing. So, get socializing!³⁴



DON'T GO IT ALONE

It's getting harder to be connected. In 2004, 25 percent of Americans felt they had no one to confide in. A lack of social connectedness leaves people vulnerable to depression, anxiety, and other anti-social behaviors.³⁶ Social isolation and feelings of loneliness can increase the chance of premature death by 14 percent—nearly double the risk of premature death from obesity.³⁷

CONGRATS, FAIRFIELD!

A PROUD BLUE ZONES COMMUNITY

We did this together. By putting our personal and collective well-being first, we're making healthy choices easier, creating more economic opportunities, and ensuring a better quality of life for everyone.

Here's to making Fairfield one of the healthiest cities in the nation, where residents are living better, together.



APPENDIX

Designated Organizations

Blue Zones Grocery Stores

Everybody's Whole Foods Grocery

Hy-Vee

Blue Zones Schools

Fairfield Middle School

Washington Elementary School

Blue Zones Restaurants

Docs Inn

Instanbul Grill

Jefferson County Courtyard Café

Revelations Café

The Green Gourmet

Yummy's

Blue Zones Worksites

Agri-Industrial Plastics

Cambridge Investments

City of Fairfield

Danaher Oil

Hawthorne Direct

Hy-Vee

Iowa State Bank

Jefferson County Health Center

Libertyville Savings

Maharishi University of Management

224th Battalion

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