

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



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Governor

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State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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Date: 01/06/2015

## FLORIDA DOH RECOGNIZES FOUR PINELLAS CITIES AMONG ITS 2015 HEALTHY WEIGHT COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS



Four cities in Pinellas have been recognized by the Florida Department of Health as *2015 Healthy Weight Community Champions*. Throughout the state, 65 communities achieved this distinction—an increase from the 38 communities recognized in 2014.

Between August and December 2014, local governments were invited to submit best-practice policies they have implemented in their jurisdictions over the year. City and county governments submitted evidence-based policies to increase physical activity and improve nutrition. The Pinellas communities that met the criteria were the cities of Clearwater, Largo, Pinellas Park and Safety Harbor.

The four Pinellas cities were recognized for these initiatives:

- **City of Clearwater:**

Clearwater has worked to revitalize the downtown and beach areas by working on its streetscape. It has built wider sidewalks, narrower roads, landscaping, medians, midblock median bulb-outs and public art to make the city more attractive, safe and comfortable for pedestrians and cyclists. It also has a speed hump traffic calming program that is intended to improve the safety and livability of residential districts.

- **City of Largo:**

Largo offers a community garden at the McGough Nature Park. Users are encouraged to plant, tend and harvest their own fruit, herbs and vegetables there. The city's farmer's market operates each Friday night from September to May on city property at Largo Central Park. Largo has a contract with a vending company that offers healthy options at its recreation facilities.

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- **City of Pinellas Park:**

The city hosts a *Community gARTen* that combines the worlds of art and gardening. The garden plots are made of recycled materials and are decorated and maintained by citizens. Pinellas Park also has several pedestrian trails located at Helen Howarth, Freedom Lake and Sparkle Lake parks. All of city's 17 public parks offer opportunities for physical fitness. Pinellas Park's Open Recreation Program at Forbes and Broderick Recreation Centers offers children's cooking classes that promote healthy meal planning and cooking skills. Both centers also participate in Pinellas County Schools' summer lunch program to provide healthy meals to camp participants and to the public when school is not in session.

- **City of Safety Harbor:**

Safety Harbor's Bayshore Linear Trail extends about a mile along the Tampa Bay coastline. The multi-use trail provides connectivity from downtown Safety Harbor to the Ream Wilson Trail, an east-west trail in Clearwater. Safety Harbor operates and maintains 16 recreational facilities on more than 95 acres of parkland. These facilities include parks, community centers and a history museum. A county regional park and a public middle school provide open space and recreational facilities that are accessible to Safety Harbor residents. The majority of city recreational facilities offer active play areas. The city participates in the "Let's Move" campaign, the Playful City program and has been named one of the top five *Runner Friendly Cities in America* by the American Road Runners Association.

A list of all the 65 Champion Communities and best practices is at [HealthiestWeightFlorida.com/recognition](http://HealthiestWeightFlorida.com/recognition).

The Community Champions program is part of Florida Department of Health's Healthiest Weight Florida initiative. [Healthiest Weight Florida](http://HealthiestWeightFlorida.com) is a public-private collaboration bringing together state agencies, not-for-profit organizations, businesses and entire communities to help Florida's children and adults make consistent, informed choices about healthy eating and active living.

For information about DOH-Pinellas, go to [www.PinellasHealth.com](http://www.PinellasHealth.com).

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