



## **FAQ About the Healthy Lombard Foundation**

### **What is Healthy Lombard?**

Ten community organizations joined together in the Village of Lombard in 2009 to make a difference in the health of future generations. They created Healthy Lombard, a non-profit initiative, to address the problem of childhood obesity and to promote a healthy lifestyle for everyone. Today, Healthy Lombard (HL) represents over 35 partner businesses, organizations, school districts and governmental entities and is voluntarily directed by Jay Wojcik, the retired director of communications for Lombard School District 44.

### **Why was Healthy Lombard created?**

In 2009, Founder Jay Wojcik was thinking about her "Bucket List" and decided it should include leaving some sort of a positive mark behind after she leaves this earth. Hearing that the Lombard Village President Bill Mueller (now deceased) had been thinking about doing "something healthy in the village" for a while, she approached him with an idea. Jay had seen first hand in her job at Lombard Elementary School District 44 and, as a member of the Lombard Kiwanis Club that often interacts with local youth, that Lombard was not immune from the epidemic of Childhood Obesity. So, she approached Mueller asking him if he would work with her to address the obesity epidemic and develop a solution for this problem that was undermining the future of Lombard's youth as well as millions of children nationwide. Also at stake was the fact that Childhood Obesity was increasing the prevalence of chronic health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, etc., in children and costing the American economy \$147 billion annually.

Together they put together a coalition to inform the community of the crisis and encourage programming to turn it around using many of the community representatives that already were members of her Kiwanis Club.

### **Who comprised the initial Coalition?**

Both members of the Kiwanis Club who represented the Village, the Park District, the Library, the Tri-Town YMCA, Operation Pull Your Own Weight, Elementary School District 44, and Harris Bank as well as a representative from Best Buy, the Lions Club of Lombard, and the Lombard Rotary Club.

### **What Was the First Step?**

The first two years were spent gathering interested partners in the community and assessing what was already being done because Healthy Lombard saw its initial role as an “Umbrella Organization” and a clearinghouse for those looking for activities and programming to prevent obesity among children. This information was then disseminated through a “donated” website which contained links to every partner, a calendar of events, and a photo gallery. This site became a “one stop shop” for finding healthy resources and activities.

### **What was the Second Step?**

Each of the 10 original partner donated \$100 as seed money to provide a base for funding kid-centered activities.

### **What was the Third Step?**

The third step was three-fold. First, to seek out and add more members. Second to create a “Triple A” Approach to Health that included Awareness, Activities (sponsored individually and jointly by partners). And third, to recognize and celebrate Achievement.

### **How Often Do Partners Meet?**

Healthy Lombard hosts 4 meetings per year. The meetings begin at 7:30 AM and end by 9AM. They are held at MAXFIELD’S Restaurant on Roosevelt Road.

### **Have you received any grants since 2009?**

- Best Buy (\$1000) to help cover the cost of the GYM Bags.
- Comcast Cares Day (1500) for helping with Prairie Path Clean Up.
- FORWARD (\$1500) to cover cost of filming equipment.
- (SHIP) State Health Improvement Program (\$1000) to initiate a Workplace Wellness Plan at the Lombard Westin Hotel.
- Health Mart Health Grant (\$500).
- TCF Bank (\$1000)

### **What challenges doe Healthy Lombard Face?**

- Staff - There is no staff, only a volunteer Board of Directors.
- Location - The Foundation is housed at the Board President home.
- Funding – Healthy Lombard uses the profits from member donations and other activities such as a Shoe Drive and the DuPage Human Race sponsorships.

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