



FAQ About the Healthy Lombard

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 does Healthy Lombard (HL) Address Awareness?

As of December 2016

- HL identifies 46 Health-related supporters with links to them from the HL website
- Board Members and Major Fitness February Fair Sponsors have their logo linked on the main page of the HL website
- The Village annually declares, per Healthy Lombard’s request, that the 2nd month of the year be designated as Fitness February Month.
- The Healthy Lombard website contains a Calendar for Health-related Community Events, a daily blog, links to all sponsors, and generated over 60,000 hits per month.
- HL maintained sites on Two Facebook Pages, Twitter, and YouTube
- HL, with the assistance of the DuPage County Health Department, hosts a 1/2-hour cable show, Health Local, that features 6 different video segments shown in its own time slot 4 times a month on Comcast Channel 19
- Maintains a working relationship with two local restaurants that resulted in a nutritionist reviewing their menus and then designating items acknowledged by HL as being a healthier choice
- Supports the DuPage County Health Department’s “Rethink Your Drink” Project through segments on HL cable show, Health Local
- Began recording board member’s volunteer hours to document community support

How does Healthy Lombard Address Activities?

In addition to promoting each supporter's events, Healthy Lombard is responsible for:

- A summer program called Flat Apple." In 2016 it was expanded to include all partners who wished to "host an event. In 2017 posting Healthy Selfies, Geocache Sites, and Public Service Announcement (PSA) creation were added as options.
- Hosting a Fitness February Fair at Yorktown Mall, on the last Saturday of February from 10 - 2 PM with sponsored display tables, stage performances and participant fitness contests.
- Sponsoring G.Y.M. Bags for 2nd graders at District 44 Schools and at St John Lutherans
- On-site taping of segments for the cable show Health Local.

- Sponsors interactive tables at:
 - The District 87 Wellness Fair
 - The District 44 Summer Activity Fair
 - The Lombard's Senior Fair
 - The Lombard Park District's Play Day
 - The Kids Corner at the Village of Lombard's Cruise Nights

- Being the State Coordinator for the Great Lakes "Apple Crunch Day"

Healthy Lombard activities often involve both children and adults because, without great adult role models, children's habits will not change.

How does Healthy Lombard Address Achievement?

Chicago Red Stars Soccer Team Mascot, Supernova, presents • Health Heroes awards in for to individuals and businesses for improving the health of their workplaces

- Participants with Impact DuPage and the DuPage County's FORWARD initiative
- Organized the "work" of Healthy Lombard into committees chaired by board members and open to partner participated
- New organizations/business are asked to be included at each of the Quarterly Meetings
- Volunteers from the College of DuPage, the National University of Health Science, and the Glenbard East High School Key Club have participated at the Healthy Lombard table at health fairs, assisted with summer activities, and submitted blogs for the website
- Receives referrals from:
 - The Lombard Chamber of Commerce
 - The Lombard Town Center,
 - Yorktown Center Shopping Mall
 - And other organizations as the group to contact on how to become involved in improving the wellness of the residents
- Yearly increase in the number of families that participate in Healthy Lombard events.
- Yearly increase in the number of supporters
- Yearly increase in the total number of communities that contact HL for information on how to begin their own programs
- Yearly increase in the number of media articles featuring news about Healthy Lombard

How Often Do Sponsors 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 – Healthy Lombard's materials and files are housed at the home of the Board President
- Funding – Healthy Lombard only funding sources are the profits from the Fitness February Fair, the DuPage Human Race, and small grants.

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