

PRESS RELEASE/Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County

NYS Department of Health Awards Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County \$1.2 Million Grant to Develop Healthy Places to Live, Work and Play

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County (CCE) is pleased to announce that the Family Health and Wellness Program has received a \$1.2 million grant from the New York State Department of Health.

The 5-year grant is intended to implement “*Creating Healthy Places in Suffolk County*” and will focus on creative strategies within Babylon, Riverhead, and Southampton Towns with projects aimed at preventing and reducing obesity-related health problems

“We are aware that reducing the damaging effects of uncontrolled or undiagnosed diabetes will require community-based initiatives and actions that address healthful eating and increased opportunities for physical activity, said Susan Wilk, Project Coordinator of Creating Healthy Places in Suffolk County. “Strategies to meet this challenge will require a well-coordinated plan that addresses multi-level changes in policy, systems, and within the environment.”

Projects under the grant will include new farmers’ markets sites and community gardens, nutrition education in child care centers and after-school programs, improving walking and biking trails, and working with the owners of grocery stores and restaurants to promote healthier food options.

Volunteers, elected officials, child care providers, Master Gardeners, civic groups and not for profits are invited to assist Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County in the application of these grant funded projects. The idea is to create broad community support, awareness, and advocacy to promote individual healthy behaviors that can drastically reduce obesity and chronic illness.

Statistics show that one in three U.S. adults are obese and one in five children/teens are overweight or obese. Obesity is the number 1 behavioral risk factor for Type 2 Diabetes. However, this is a disease that can be prevented through proper nutrition and physical activity.

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Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County is a non-profit educational agency dedicated to strengthening families and communities, enhancing and protecting the environment, and fostering countywide economic development. Affiliated with Cornell University, and funded in part by Suffolk County government, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County is part of the state and national extension system that includes the land-grant universities and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

CCE’s sites and program areas include Agriculture, Marine, 4-H Youth Development, Family Health and Wellness, Suffolk County Farm and Education Center and Suffolk County Peconic Dunes Camp.

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