



- Activism
- Ideas
- Partnerships
- Vision

Can we reduce obesity? **Yes.**

WELLNESS ENGAGEMENT

Health outcomes were looking bleak in Petersburg, Virginia. The locality ranked 131 out of 133 in the state. Its adult obesity rate was 36 percent, higher than the national and state rates. An intervention was needed. The community wanted it and wanted something sustainable. Associate professor Maghboeba Mosavel, Ph.D., agreed. She with members of the Petersburg community, several nonprofits, community partners, Pathways, the Petersburg YMCA, Crater Health District, several VCU schools and the Virginia State University Cooperative Extension launched WE, the Petersburg Wellness Engagement Project. Funded by the National Institutes of Health, WE conducted an extensive needs assessment. It wasn't the typical research project with a set finish. It was a start. Results included walking groups, partnerships, wellness ambassadors, capacity building, grassroots efforts and academic reports. But the real result? The formation of the Petersburg Wellness Consortium, an independent, volunteer-run coalition of more than 30 community partners working to nourish a culture of health and continue work well into the future.

750,000 The Petersburg Wellness Engagement program trained more than 20 community members to be researcher, developed community partnerships, created GIS asset maps and initiated 10 walking groups that logged 750,000 miles.