WE ASKED ABOUT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, HERE'S WHAT YOU SAID:

We spoke to 62 adults living in Charleston, Kennett, Mountain View, Perryville, Piedmont, and Poplar Bluff about their resources for physical activity, their motivation, and the ways they like to exercise. These phone calls were recorded, transcribed, and qualitatively analyzed. Here is what we found out.

RESOURCES IN RURAL MISSOURI

Overall, people living in rural Missouri had someplace in their town or city where they could walk and exercise. Towns with more people and less poverty tended to have more places for physical activity, and more organizations promoting exercise for residents.

- Recreation centers
- Gyms
- School tracks
- Health centers
- Parks and walking paths
- Neighborhood sidewalks

WHAT MOVES SOUTHEAST MISSOURI?

Different motives for exercise

As seen in the quotes below, people are motivated to exercise for many different reasons that include weight loss, health, stress relief, to be social, or just to keep up with the kids. People walking on trails more often said social and mental wellbeing were reasons to exercise. Those who get their exercise in other ways were more likely to be motivated by weight loss and physical health. What motivates you to exercise?

"I do it a lot because it clears my mind."

"Well me I have to do it every day because I'm a diabetic."

"We really do like being active, just to ...for social reasons also."

Different ways to be physically active

We heard from people who were physically active in all kinds of ways! Some preferred to work out in a gym, some went for walks in the neighborhood or on trails, and others got their exercise in by doing yard work or chores around the house. While some people liked to exercise alone, others got active in groups with friends and family. We found that people who were walking on the trails preferred to walk with others, while gym-goers liked to exercise on their own.

PROMOTING COMMUNITY FITNESS

1. **Enjoyment**

Time is precious. Make exercise enjoyable by including friends, music, or scenery to add value to this time.

2. **Convenience**

When resources are close, accessible, and indoors, incorporating exercise into your routine is easier to manage.

3. **Education**

Knowing how exercise benefits your physical and mental health can help you get motivated.

4. **Events**

Rural communities come out to support one another, so holding family focused fairs with competitions and community wellness resources that support local causes are a particularly good way to engage everyone in physical activity.