



## Partnering to Support Physical Activity Among Families With Young Children

Community leaders were concerned about the health of their citizens. They lamented the lack of opportunities for safe physical activity for young adults and children. School district leaders wanted to enhance the infrastructure for the elementary school's physical education program. The Arkansas Prevention Research Center wanted to evaluate the effect of a community-based participatory effort to stimulate physical activity among families with young children. In Hamburg, Arkansas, in 2010-2013, these partners came together to build a 1/8-mile oval track with a developmentally appropriate playground inside the oval on property next door to the district's elementary school. With a playground inside the track's oval, parents could run and walk on the track while their children played safely within view.



A true collaboration, each partner contributed expertise and resources. The Hamburg School District made the property available and entered into a joint use agreement with the City of Hamburg. The Mayor's Office secured donations that made grading, asphalt, lighting, and fencing possible. The district's school nurse obtained grant funding for the purchase and installation of the playground equipment and injury-reducing ground cover. The Arkansas Prevention Research Center served as a catalyst, helping the project move forward, and analyzed surveys administered to parents of children in kindergarten through third grade.

Two years after its opening, the track is used daily by parents and children enjoying a safe physical activity alternative, by teachers and school staff trying to be active, and by students during PE classes.

*“The track has been a great addition to our school and community. With Hamburg being a small town, the school district serves as the focus point of the community... we work together with stakeholders to get things done... This project started off as a dream ... It quickly grew into something that formed a partnership with community and school. The track is being used today by students and parents... It allows parents to walk and exercise and gives their children a visible place to play where parents can see them at all times. It is truly a great resource for our community.”*

