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ParkRx Program Gets People Moving

Healthy People Healthy Trails Initiative Supports Prescription for Outdoor Activity

Santa Barbara, California—April 21, 2017 — National ParkRx Day will be held Sunday, April 23rd 2017. National ParkRx Day promotes the growing movement of doctors prescribing outdoor activity in parks and nature to their patients to improve health. Additionally, National ParkRx Day encourages everyone to recognize that physical activity, even walking throughout your own city’s parks and trails, is an important part of being healthy. More information is available in a Park Rx Day guide:

<http://healthypeoplehealthytrails.org/docs/National-ParkRx-Day-save-the-date.pdf>

Healthy People Healthy Trails

Healthy People Healthy Trails is a local version of ParkRx here in Santa Barbara County. A dynamic group of community partners—including Sansum Clinic, Santa Barbara County Trails Council, CenCal Health, Cottage Health, City of Santa Barbara Parks and Recreation, and others—have come together to collaborate on an innovative **Healthy People Healthy Trails** program designed to *strengthen the connection between the use of local public parks and trails and individual good health.*

With technical assistance from the National Park Service, the team has developed a *Prescription for Outdoor Activity*, a guide to local trails, and an events calendar as the centerpiece of the **Healthy People Healthy Trails** concept. All together, the initiative enables health care providers, open space managers, and community organizations to share resources to aid community members in combating chronic health issues often related to the lack of physical activity.

The *Prescription for Outdoor Activity* and its companion trail guide are new tools to help community members have an active life while enjoying the outdoors by connecting to local parks and open spaces. One exciting part of Healthy People Healthy Trails is that local healthcare providers can “prescribe” walking to their patients. Working with a healthcare provider to set goals for walking helps patients get active and improve their health.

Healthy People Healthy Trails' community partners support the National ParkRx Initiative with the National Park Service to advance the use of parks and public lands to improve health and wellness among individuals and communities. Visit the Healthy People Healthy Trails website to learn more about National Park Rx Day and how you can connect to group activities on April 23rd.

“Developing the Healthy People Healthy Trails program has brought together community members in the medical and recreation fields to support health and wellness in Santa Barbara County using new tools like a prescription for outdoor activity and a companion trail guide.” said Margaret Weiss, Director of Health Education, Sansum Clinic when asked about the program. Mark Wilkinson, Executive Director for the Santa Barbara County Trails Council added, *“With the launch of the Healthy People Healthy Trails program community organizations are now supporting the National Park Rx movement designed to increase the use and enjoyment of local trails and parks to achieve a healthier lifestyle.”*

With or without a prescription, walking is one of the simplest ways to be active, it can be done almost anywhere by people of all ages and abilities. Everyone can take advantage of the trail guide and walking tips at HealthyPeopleHealthyTrails.org. The website features an array of community partners and local walking events to make it easy to find fun and interesting outdoor activities in Santa Barbara County. The goal is to develop a program that fosters use of local parks, trails, and open spaces for improving health, wellness and fitness.

Healthy People Healthy Trails

Healthy People Healthy Trails is a program to help people “get moving” in Santa Barbara County. The innovative wellness program is designed to make it fun and easy for community members in to improve their health and wellbeing through regular use and enjoyment of trails, parks and open spaces. More information is available on the web at: <http://healthypeoplehealthytrails.org>

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