Relevance
Obesity continues to be a critical issue throughout Texas. Long-term consequences of being obese are many and include increased risk for diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and several forms of cancer.

- 30% of Texans are obese.
- 29% of Americans are not physically active.
- Texas ranks 15th in the nation as the state with the highest adult obesity rates.
- According to the National Weight Control Registry:
  - 55% of successful weight loss participants lost weight with the help of some type program.
  - 78% reported eating breakfast everyday.
  - 75% weigh themselves at least once a week.
  - 62% watch less than 10 hours of television per week.
  - 90% exercise about 1 hour per day.

Response
Step Up and Scale Down is a 12-week weight management program that was designed to address two factors behind the obesity issue: physical activity and diet. Targeted toward adults, the program was offered in a group setting that allows participants to support and encourage each other. Many counties pair this program with Walk Across Texas to emphasize the role of physical activity in maintaining health and preventing chronic disease.

Results
- 371 people from 25 counties across the state enrolled and completed the Step Up and Scale Down program.
- 289 completed the pre and post survey. This survey assessed participants’ intent to implement targeted weight management behaviors as well as the extent to which the certain behaviors were adopted.
- 323 (87%) of participants were female.
- Starting weight was reported for 302 out of 371 participants.
- Most (72%) indicated they had tried to lose weight in the past using a variety of methods.
- BMI was calculated for 302 participants at the beginning of the program. Of those participants, 27 (8.9%) were classified as normal BMI, 86 (28.5%) as overweight, and the remaining 189 (62.6%) as obese.
- Evaluation data indicated there was evidence of the adoption of several habits that may lead to more positive health benefits down the road.
Changes in Targeted Behavior

- 67% (192) indicated they watched 2 hours or less of TV/video at the end of the series as compared to 54% (155) at the beginning.
- 60% (173) use calorie information at fast food restaurants “always or most of the time” post series compared to 25% (71) at the beginning.
- 82% (28) indicated they always plan meals and snacks post series compared to 7% (19) pre series.
- 48% (140) fill ½ of their lunch and dinner plates with fruits and vegetables at completion versus 31% (89) at the beginning of the series.
- Participants reported being active for 30 minutes or more on an average of 3.9 days when the program began and increased to 5.2 days by the end of 12 weeks.

Perceptions about Health

- At the beginning of the series, participants reported an average of 2.7 days out of the past 30 days that one’s physical health was not good. This dropped to 1.4 days after the series ended.
- At the beginning of the series, participants reported an average of 4.1 days out of the past 30 days that one’s mental health was not good. This dropped to 1.9 days at the completion of the series.
- Participants indicated 1.9 days on average out of the past 30 days that poor health kept them from doing usual activities, and 1.1 days of the past 30 at the series completion.
- 235 of the 302 participants reported their weights pre and post with an average weight loss of 6.5 pounds (range was weight gain of 12 pounds to a weight loss of 29 pounds).

Participant Comments

Participants stated the most important thing learned from the program included:

- “How it helps to walk with somebody to be motivated,”
- “Visualizing plate portions,” and
- “The balance of eating the correct portions and getting the correct amount of exercise.”