

News Release  
Berny Unruh - Phone Number 785-628-9430  
Cottonwood Extension District Agent  
Family and Community Wellness  
February 21, 2020

## Walk Kansas has a Power 9 Theme in 2020

Spring is just around the corner and the Walk Kansas registration is open. Walk Kansas is a team-based program that will help you and others lead a healthier life by being more active, making better nutrition choices, and learning positive ways to deal with stress.

Living a healthier lifestyle doesn't mean changing everything at once. It's about understanding lifestyle choices you make each day and improving these habits one step at a time.

This year the theme is based on the Blue Zones Project. Power 9 is a list of nine healthy lifestyle habits shared by people who have lived the longest. There are currently five Blue Zones in the world with just one in North America. What exactly is a Blue Zone? Blue Zones are places where a large percentage of people live an active lifestyle well into their 90's. The five Blue Zones communities include: Loma Linda, CA; Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica; Sardinia, Italy; Ikaria, Greece; and Okinawa, Japan.

So how does this Power 9 fit in with the signature Extension program known as Walk Kansas? Although physical activity is at the heart of this health initiative, the 2020 program will introduce to you to healthful eating styles, help you form social connections that support healthy living, offer strategies to help lower your level of stress, help you focus on your sense of purpose and more.

How can you join Walk Kansas in 2020?

- Recruit or join a team (6 people, with one person designated as the captain).

- Registration is online at [www.walkkansas.org](http://www.walkkansas.org) Cost to participate is \$10 per person and this will be paid at the Cottonwood Extension Office – Hays, 601 Main Street. The program includes access to the online tracker, a weekly newsletter, program resources, and local activities. A program T-shirt can be ordered for an additional fee.
- To participate, each person logs minutes of activity and reports daily/weekly. Cups of fruits/vegetables and water consumption can also be tracked.

Anyone, young or old, can participate in Walk Kansas! Technology allows participants to stay connected even if they don't live close by. Teams can include co-workers, family members, neighbors, school classmates, members of civic or community organizations, faith-based groups and 4-H clubs. The team concept is important so team members must agree to support and encourage one another.

If you have questions, please give us a call at the Extension Office at 785-628-9430.

*Berny Unruh is the Family & Community Wellness Agent for the Cottonwood District.  
You may reach her at: (785)628-9430 or [bunruh@ksu.edu](mailto:bunruh@ksu.edu) K-State Research & Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*