

Movement for a Healthier Life

Muévete

A manual for establishing a physical activity program in your community

A joint initiative of
The Puerto Rican Cultural Center Juan Antonio Corretjer (PRCC) and
The Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC)

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Muévete: Movement for a Healthier Life

The Muévete Fitness Manual has been developed to help groups or individuals start a physical activity program in their neighborhoods. It is written from the unique perspective of Leonilda Calderón's personal challenges of learning to develop a healthy lifestyle through physical movement that is informed by a culturally relevant practice. This material is not intended to substitute for the advice or counsel of a physician, before starting this or any fitness program, individuals should seek the advice of a healthcare professional.

Muévete is a program of the Community Organizing for Obesity Prevention in Humboldt Park (CO-OP HP). CO-OP HP is one of 10 programs of The Puerto Rican Cultural Center, Juan Antonio Corretjer. They have been instrumental in driving Muévete as an important physical activity program for community residents.

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Preface

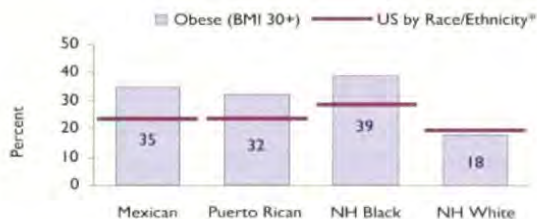


Early 2007 Muévete class at Humboldt Park Field House.

I have lived in the Humboldt Park Puerto Rican Community for more than two decades. I consider this community my home away from home. When public discussions began to occur in Humboldt Park about the obesity and diabetes epidemics in my community and how people who lived here were at increased risk of these life-threatening conditions, I took the news personally. (Not just because of how I feel about Humboldt Park, but because of my own health). I have been an obese person all my life. I was an obese child, adolescent, and young adult. When I started doing something about my weight, I was 305 pounds.

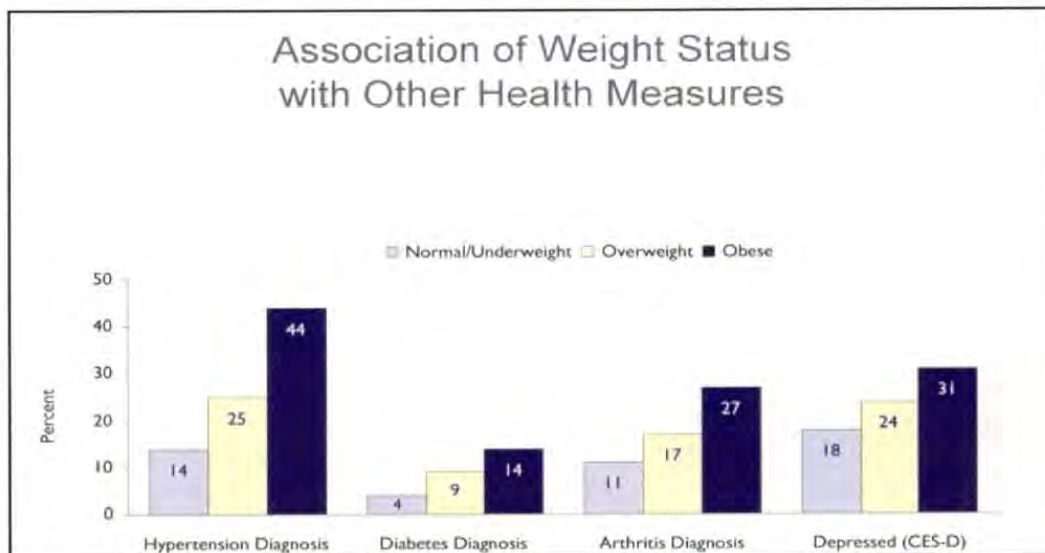
The turning point for me was when I turned thirty years old and began to recognize the effects of obesity on my body. At thirty, there was a point where my menses ended for an entire year. I went to see several specialists, and they all concluded that my weight was at a threshold that was causing a hormonal imbalance. They explained that this imbalance could bring on early menopause. I was very concerned because I have always wanted to have children. The obesity also caused other issues, for example, swelling in my ankles. Walking or even standing for long periods of time caused me pain. My cholesterol level was elevated above normal range, and I was diagnosed with borderline hypertension. My doctor told me that these conditions could cause heart failure. My doctor wanted to prescribe diuretic medication to control my hypertension - I couldn't believe I was dealing with

Percent of Adults Who Are Obese by Race/Ethnicity



* Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2000
Source: Improving Community Health Survey

such medications at the young age of 30! These were diseases that were common in my family - my grandmother died of diabetes at the age of 65, and my mother had hypertension for as long as I could recall.



Both my mother and grandmother controlled their health issues with medication, something I really wanted to avoid, if I could help it. And by the way, my family's history of these diseases made my risks even more serious. I decided to do something about my weight before the problems associated with it took over. My goal was to be proactive about my health. I was determined not to live a life controlled by medication. I knew I had to do something to protect myself and begin reversing these harmful conditions. I also knew that I was not alone in my struggle and that my community was also suffering. Therefore, in 2004, I began to look into avenues by which I could reverse the effects of hypertension, swelling, and elevated cholesterol. This was the catalyst for me as I thought about weight management and a healthy lifestyle for myself.

I decided to become more physically active and to encourage my friends and neighbors to join me. This is how Muévete was born. Motivated to take action, I now feel as though I have the ability to take control and manage my health. While I am still obese, at this writing I weigh 262 pounds. I have lost over forty pounds and I am proud of myself. I no longer take diuretic medication, my cholesterol and blood pressure are back to healthy levels, and, while my knees give me trouble from time to time, my ankles no longer hurt from prolonged standing. This manual describes the process and issues involved in developing a culturally relevant community-based physical activity program. I hope it inspires others to find ways to take control of their health while creating opportunities for their community to do the same.



Introduction

My personal weight management started with taking small steps - literally. I began educating myself regarding my current health condition. About the same time, the community was organizing around the concept of a community of wellness, which was a clear indication to me that my weight struggle were bigger than myself but an epidemic facing my community as well. I wrote a proposal for a program based on my own struggles with lack of physical activity and called it Muévete, which translates to “move!”. I thought this was a good name because movement was a key element missing from my life. I started by increasing my water intake. Then, I started walking in the park. The process began slowly. I was not only dealing with my lack of physical fitness, but I was also dealing with issues of self-esteem. I didn’t believe that I could become a fit person. I didn’t feel comfortable going to a gym because of my size. I mustered up the confidence just to walk around Humboldt Park. Getting up the courage just to do that took me three weeks. After getting off to a good start walking, my arms began to hurt. I discovered that this was due to lack of oxygen to my extremities. It took me an additional week to incorporate a rhythm of leg and arm movements. I continued to fight my own lack of confidence. I wondered how I looked while walking around the park. This is an issue that many obese women don’t talk about - it’s one of those quiet little secrets. I added hand weights to help me overcome this hurdle. I figured that the weights would help me look more appropriate to on-lookers staring at me - I wasn’t “just walking,” I was working out! This addition made me feel better and gave me the freedom to walk the park with more confidence.



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Leony instructing Muévete at Humboldt Park Field House in early 2008.

My success with walking led me to take my personal weight management program to a new level. The more I walked, the more I realized how much more I could do – how many choices I was making in my life that avoided physical activity. I’m not an athletic person, nor do I have an interest in what most people would call “athletic activities,” such as organized sports. But I was becoming more and more aware that I had to be more physically active. I tried going to local gyms and fitness facilities. But these didn’t really work for me. The atmosphere in these places was always filled with the stares and looks that made me feel like an outcast because of my size. These places made me extremely uncomfortable. Although I thought I was in the right place to fight my obesity, many attendees in the commercial clubs

communicated non-verbally that I was in the

wrong place. I rarely saw other women or men who were obese or close to my size. I talked to several other obese women and learned that it was not just me – that many of us feel uncomfortable in these public settings because of the treatment we “heavy people” receive from people who are smaller or appear to be more fit. In some of the exercise classes I had taken, there was no support from the professional staff. Even when there was support, the exercise routines and music often bored me. My efforts felt more like a chore. I felt that the options available to me weren’t the ones that I could enjoy. If I didn’t enjoy it, I knew I wouldn’t be consistent with it. I knew that I had to be consistent to help further my goal of weight management. So, I knew I had to come up with something I could enjoy. I designed Muévete to address the quiet struggle that I and other women experience when we go to commercial health clubs.

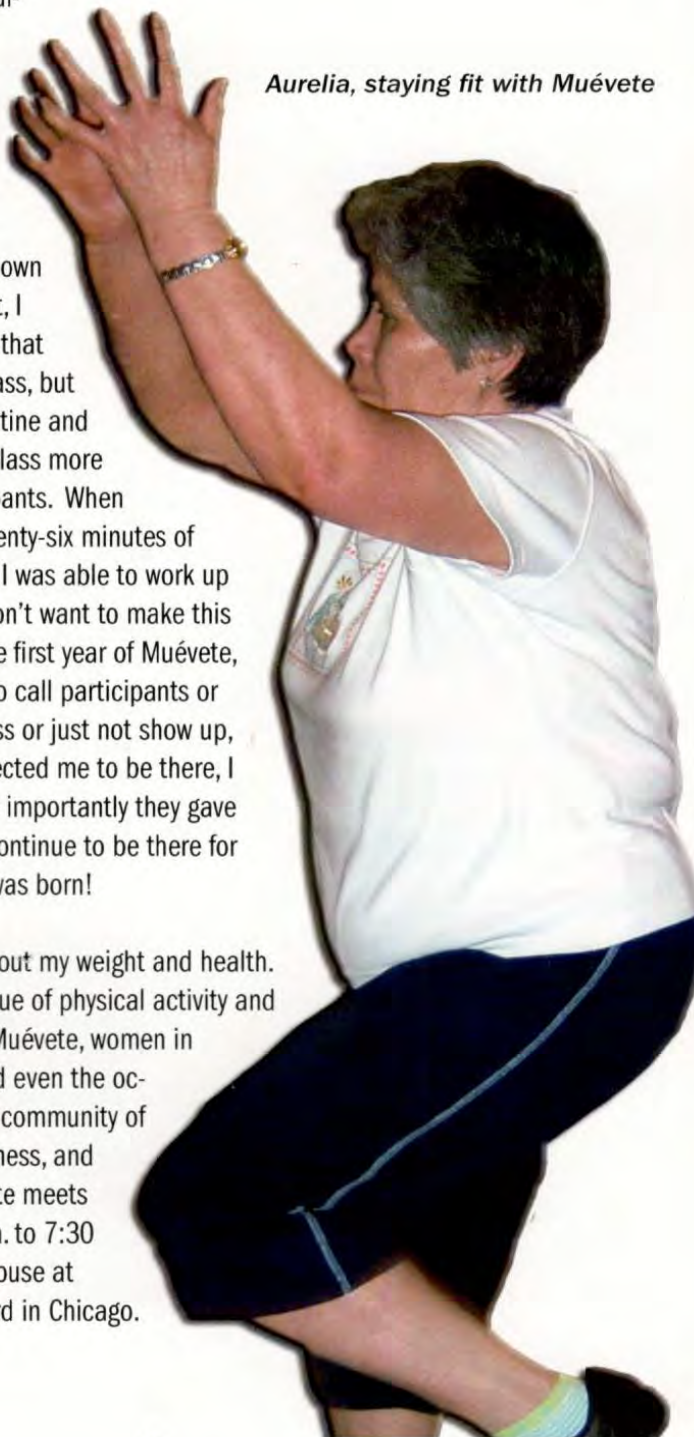
After several months, I shared the Muévete program ideas with the staff at the Puerto Rican Cultural Center. They thought the program fit well with the Community Organizing for Obesity Prevention (CO-OP) philosophy of “Building a Community of Wellness.” We started with a walking program in Humboldt Park until the cold weather set in. During the winter, the local



Park District staff allowed us to use the Humboldt Park Field House. I modified the activities for the indoors and changed Muévete from a small walking group to a dance aerobics class. I researched fitness resources and learned that I could take a fitness instructor class at the park. I developed my own choreography for Muévete. At first, I developed choreography thinking that Muévete would be an aerobics class, but soon I became bored with the routine and added dance steps to make the class more interesting for me and for participants. When I started, I was only able to do twenty-six minutes of aerobics. As the year progressed, I was able to work up to an hour of working out. But I don't want to make this sound like it was easy! During the first year of Muévete, there were many times I wanted to call participants or the Field House to cancel the class or just not show up, but knowing the participants expected me to be there, I felt a responsibility to them. More importantly they gave me the strength and courage to continue to be there for myself, and that is how Muévete was born!

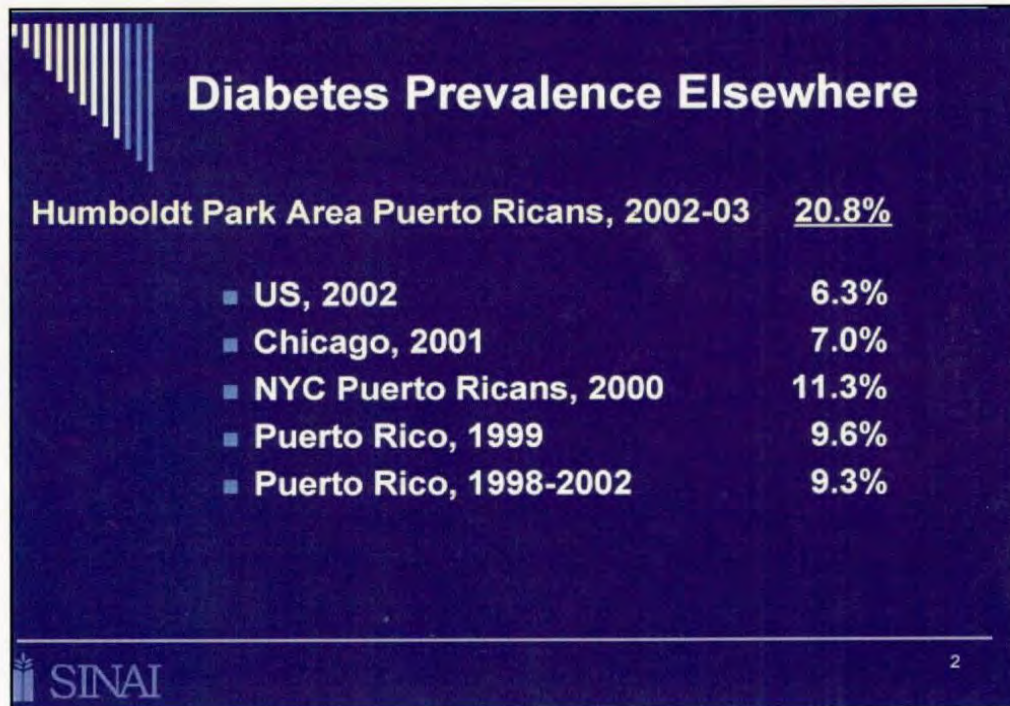
At first, the issue was personal about my weight and health. Now, the issue is a community issue of physical activity and healthy active lifestyles. Through Muévete, women in Humboldt Park, their children, and even the occasional man or two, have built a community of people who care about health, fitness, and physical activity. Currently, Muévete meets three times a week from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Humboldt Park Fieldhouse at 1440 North Sacramento Boulevard in Chicago.

Aurelia, staying fit with Muévete





Designing Your Program



I started Muévete out of concern for my own health and an understanding that women like me in my community might have similar needs and interests. My goal was to introduce regular activities into my own life that would become as normal as breathing. I also wanted to include others who were facing similar problems. My challenge was to avoid boredom and keep the activities motivating - for myself and for others who would join me. The Muévete program was designed with overweight and obese women in mind, but is open to people of all sizes. So, I needed to do things that would not seem too difficult. I started with a walking club. We began by walking around Humboldt Park. When the weather got cold, I converted the walking club into an aerobics class, and then into a dance-aerobics class. Due to my love of dance, calorie-burning aerobics has been very effective in my weight management. I also received great feedback from the participants regarding the benefits of the class. They enjoy and have come to expect a change in music and choreography every three months. The program has been successful because women of all fitness levels are welcomed and able to participate. It's a beginner's workout, so everyone can participate at their own fitness pace. Recent research by the Sinai Urban Health Institute reports that Puerto Ricans have a high incidence of diabetes. Muévete also provides support for combating this health issue in the community.



Tips for Designing Your Program:

- Pick activities that you would enjoy and that address an issue that is important to your own health - this will help to ensure that the program will remain fun and important for you and make it more likely that others will find it fun and important too.
- Build your program using the resources that are available to you and accessible to people in your community.
- Choose activities that won't cost people a lot of money.

Naming Your Program

Deciding on the name “Muévete” was the easiest part of assembling the fitness program. The name Muévete means “move” in Spanish. I chose this name because what I was lacking in my life was movement or physical activity, and I wanted to encourage myself and others to get moving. I chose a Spanish name because Spanish is the language of origin for many families in the area of Humboldt Park where the program takes place, and I wanted this program to be relevant to the members of my community. Muévete means “move,” and that’s what we do.

Tips for Naming Your Program:

- Choose a name that represents the vision of the program.
- Choose a name that has relevance to your participants - something that reflects the culture, location, language, or values of your community.
- Choose a name that will excite and inspire, as well as encourage participants.

Choosing Physical Activity

Muévete is a combination of movement, walking, aerobics, and dance aerobics, but that’s not how it started! My original idea was dance, but Muévete started with walking, then we went to aerobics, and then we integrated dance, bringing us back to the original idea of dance aerobics. Remember, the main goal is to help community residents to move more and get active in ways that are fun, affordable, and therefore sustainable.



If you discover a workout or physical activity plan that is ideal for you and the community, then choose it. You may find that not everybody likes dance or another activity that you've chosen. For instance, when conducting the Muévete program in high schools, the boys told me that my dancing was "too girly." They still participated, but they didn't really enjoy it. Dance is not for everybody. Some people prefer walking or just regular aerobics class. In fact, during a training session, one female participant would leave every time we transitioned from aerobics to dance-aerobics. She was not comfortable with dancing. It is important to choose physical activity that you like as well. Your interest in the activity will help you reach your audience. Physical activity should be based on need as well as interest. It can be anything from walking, gardening, dancing, playing with your kids (which would be the most ideal since we want to teach by example), tennis or bowling, etc. Doctors recommend at least one hour of physical activity a day for young children, more for adults. 150 minutes of physical activity is what is recommended for adults by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The idea behind Muévete is to help community members meet this ideal goal. A program that keeps people moving for at least thirty minutes, three or more times a week, would help people reach that goal - whatever form that movement takes. I chose dance, but that doesn't have to be your choice.



Cristina (center) getting down to belly dancing music.

Tips for Choosing a Physical Activity:

- Start with what you enjoy.
- Find out what others in your community would enjoy.
- Pick activity types that fit your surroundings.
- If you have access to a gym, you might do a weight training program.
- If you have access to a park, you can walk or run.
- If you have access to a swimming pool, that might be your choice.
- Consider gardening, biking, rollerblading, dancing to gospel music.
- The options are ENDLESS!!!



Participants' Abilities, Limits, and Self Care

I always advise participants to seek medical advice when starting this or any other workout regime. If anyone has a concern that they shouldn't participate, they should check with a doctor first. I am fortunate to have a good working relationship with several health care institutions and rely on their doctors from time to time when I or my participants have questions. One of my doctor colleagues developed a tip sheet for my participants that advised them about the types of pain and soreness, shortness of breath, and other effects of exercise that are "normal" and under what conditions they should seek medical attention. I always remind participants that breathing properly is key. The body should get enough oxygen through the entire class. I often have to remind participants about breathing. I tell them to inhale through their nose and exhale through their mouth. I constantly repeat this during Muévete because participants tend to forget to breathe properly or just forget to breathe altogether. I remind participants to do only as much as their body will allow them to do. If they are gasping for air, they should reduce their speed and intensity until their breathing becomes more comfortable. I advise participants that if during the workouts **anything** starts hurting – their arms, feet, legs – that it's ok to take a break, relax for a little bit, and then get back to the workout if and when they're feeling ready. Hydration is very important. I advise people to bring a bottle of water and to drink plenty of water before, during and after the workout. To help participants to not overdo it, I normally try to keep the routine to three sets of eight counts for each step so that they can do one set, two, or all three, depending on their endurance.

Tips for Advising Participants on Self-Care:

- If the instructor herself is not a trained health care professional, she should recommend that participants talk with a doctor before they join the class – especially if they're concerned about their abilities.
- Develop relationships with local physicians who can help answer questions you or your participants might have.



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- Teach and remind participants about the common sense elements of exercise (breathe, stay hydrated, stop if it hurts), but don't try to give out medical advice.
- If you aren't comfortable advising participants, talk to a health care professional yourself to find out what's ok to say and what's not.

Muévete 101: *Developing the Routine*



When we moved from walking to dance aerobics, I realized I had to develop actual routines! This was new for me. I did a one-day training with the Chicago Park District, but there may be other ways to learn the basics of instructing others in the activity you choose. I made a music CD with a variety of music – primarily Latino, R&B and hip-hop that I enjoyed dancing to - and I combine basic dance steps with aerobic steps. In my experience as an instructor, participants will follow every move you make. So, keep in mind when coordinating a routine, the most important part is to choose music that you can dance or move to. The rhythm and pace should be appropriate for the skill levels of all participants. I started with basic dance steps and monitored the participants over time. When I was sensing they were getting bored with the same music or same routine, I added more and moved to a more challenging pace. You don't want to lose people right away. Again, I would stress to start out basic. Eventually, the pace will increase as your body and the participant's body tell everyone when the group is ready to increase. You may need to show new steps slowly and repeat them a few times before you really get going.

Vicky, staying fit with Muévete



Remember, variety is also important. I change music and routine every 3 months. Finally, it's important to be flexible. I will try something new for a week to see how it works. If it is not working for the participants, or if there is no enthusiasm for the routine, or if the music was not appropriate, I change to something that we have done that they've liked before, or I come up with a new dance routine or new step so that they are not bored and I can keep the participants enthusiastic.

Tips for Developing Your Routine:

- Start simple.
- Use the same routine for a few sessions, with maybe just a few changes, so that participants get used to it and build their confidence.
- Add new steps as the weeks go on to keep people enthusiastic.
- Use music that you enjoy and that makes people naturally want to move.
- Change the music frequently.
- Go back to old routines from time to time - everyone loves to go back to what they know!

Class Structure

Muévete starts with a 15-20 minute full-body warm up which incorporates all major muscle groups. Then we go into 20-30 minutes of dance aerobics. I usually do a recording of 3-6 different songs to cover this time. I also mix different songs to allow for working on different body parts and different muscles. I stop the dancing portion with a 3-5 minute cool down, bringing our heart rates and breathing down, closer to standing levels. We end the class with a 15-20 minute toning and stretching routine. Some of the music that I have used include Salsa, Merengüe, Hip-Hop, Rumba, Belly Dancing and others. These are all music genres that have high energy and strong beats, which allow for the dance aerobics to be easy and fun.



Muévete participants Summer 2008.



Weight Loss vs. Physical Activity

Early on in the development of Muévete, some of my advisors were interested in learning whether participants were actually losing weight. To answer this question, we actually started a few classes with a “weigh-in.” But for us, this was the fastest way to lose people! They weren’t there to lose weight – or at least they didn’t really want to talk about it. I keep the class focused on the importance and the fun of being physically active – no matter the size, the fitness level, the coordination, or the grace of the participants! Your group may be more interested in weight loss. They may actually have come to the class for that specific purpose. If you’re going to talk about weight, make sure this is okay for all of the participants. If you do incorporate weight loss, I think it is important to do so in a way that is positive and that doesn’t embarrass people. I also feel it would be helpful to give people accurate information about weight loss so that they have reasonable expectations about the speed and amount of weight loss and don’t get discouraged if their weight fluctuates or levels off.

Training

When I started Muévete, my goal was simply to become more active; therefore, I didn’t do any particular type of training. When I moved the program indoors to the Humboldt Park Field House and people started joining the class, I realized I would have to start doing something that took a little bit of extra skill! I took some training with the Exercise Training Association, hosted by the Chicago Park District. Here are some resources for training if you feel you need some:

- **Exercise Training Association:** P.O. Box 547916, Orlando FL. 32854-7916
- **Exercise Safety Association:** P.O. Box 93387, Cleveland OH. 44101, www.exercisesafety.com
- **Muévete:** 2703 W. Division, Chicago IL 60622, muevete@prcc-chgo.org
- **Chicago Park District:** www.chicagoparkdistrict.com



Finding an Instructor

Looking for an instructor could be the most challenging component of developing a fitness program. Ideally, there should be at least two instructors on staff, so that one can lead the class or do promotional activities when the other is not available.

For your program to be a truly “local” program, both instructors should be from the target population of the community that they will serve.

In my opinion, the fact that I am a reflection of those that I serve helps the community identify with me and see their own interests and needs reflected in me. I am Puerto Rican, obese, a woman, and I live in the same community of those that I serve. All of these elements add to the success of the program.

I believe that Muévete participants like Muévete, at least in part, because they feel I am “one of them.” If I can do this, so can they. They feel like this program truly is for them because it’s being led by someone who is from among them. I developed Muévete because I felt this type of program was what I truly needed, personally. However, it took some arm-twisting for me to become an instructor. I was nervous about taking responsibility for other people’s health. Now I realize that being an instructor actually helps people take responsibility for their own health. In a way, I am sharing my own personal weight management goals with my community. I am not running this program because I think it’s something they need, I’m doing it because it’s something I believe **we** need. I am fortunate to have the organizational infrastructure of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center and CO-OP Humboldt Park to support the program.

Through this support, I can address challenges that may come up regarding the space we use, I have access to health care professionals, I get support in record keeping and evaluation, and promotion and advertising are paid for. While all of these infrastructure supports are extremely valuable, the only thing truly necessary is having an instructor who has a personal commitment to a healthier lifestyle for herself and her community.



*Fierce and determined
Janette at
Muévete.*



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Tips for Finding an Instructor:

- ❑ Communicate regularly to the community about the need for physical activity in your community, but do it in a way that supports and inspires – “we can be healthier!”
- ❑ Share the Muévete experience with your community – in town hall meetings, at local gatherings, by bringing CO-OP Humboldt Park and Muévete staff to a meeting in your community.
- ❑ Offer support to potential instructors – free space, free training, promotional and advertising support, a small stipend, a new cd player, use of a computer to make cds – any one of these is likely to help a volunteer come forward. All of these together would probably guarantee it!

Dealing with People's Perceptions



Muévete Spring 2008.

Most of the participants had the same problem with lack of stamina. Eventually, I built up endurance to be able to do an hour long workout, and “the regulars” were right there with me! In the first year of Muévete, new participants would give me looks of shock and disbelief.

When I first started doing Muévete, my body could not withstand many minutes of continuous aerobic activity (aerobic exercise is the kind of sustained physical activity that makes you breathe hard to keep your muscles moving, as opposed to non-aerobic exercise that just requires muscle but isn't sustained – light weight lifting). In order to be considered an aerobics class, Muévete needs to have at least 26 minutes of non-stop cardio. It took a few months for my body to get accustomed to working out consec-



Vicky (background) and Alice (foreground) toning at Muévete 2008

The first impression that people have of me is that I cannot possibly be the instructor, simply because of my size. I do not look like your average aerobic instructor. Since I don't look like the average aerobics instructor, people would ask me who the instructor was. After I introduced myself, they stared me down from head to

toe and asked the question again. This attitude is one that I have never allowed to bother me because when I started the program, I had the same concern. Nevertheless, I had finally done something to improve my quality of life and was not going to let people's perceptions of me stop me with this attitude and interfere with how I teach my class. Another impression people have when they first join is that my workout will not be challenging enough for them. This could be true for some - and I do get participants who work out once or twice and then do not come back. In my opinion, that's ok. Although fitness is for everybody, my class is not going to be for everyone. Everybody has different needs. Muévete was something I was doing for myself and, in the process, the community has benefited from it. Ironically enough, I, too probably would have had the same reaction if I went to a class for the first time and saw someone my size up in front. This feeling comes from my own self-doubt that I had when I first started this program. Remember, I started just by walking. I never imagined I'd be teaching dance aerobics to hundreds of women! People may not realize that the body truly can be conditioned - that it changes depending how you use it - or don't use it! If we use our bodies in healthy ways and push them a bit beyond their current limits, they will adapt and those limits will change. Just like playing an instrument or a sport, "practice makes perfect." The more you do, the stronger you'll get and the same goes for your participants. I have found it very important and helpful to be supportive and encouraging to my participants. I remind them that they'll get stronger and their endurance will build if they lead a physically active life.



Dealing with Drop Out and Poor Attendance

Do not get discouraged when attendance goes down. Remember that being active might be new to some people and being consistently active even newer. Also, keep in mind that parents with young children may find it hard to maintain a regular schedule given all of the other responsibilities they have. And we know that mothers often put their families' needs first and themselves and their own health needs last. In my experience, weather also plays a big role in attendance. I find that consistency is very important for keeping people in the program. I have specific days and times when I do the class and I'm there whether one person shows up or 30 people do. I find that even if they do not come every single time, if I do the activity consistently, they will come back eventually. There are people that seem to come in seasons. Some will come in the fall, then they stop coming in the winter, and as soon as the weather starts getting warm, they start coming back again. Also, keep in mind that the workout might not be challenging enough for some people, or they might simply not like it. In these cases they will attend a few classes and never come back again – and that's okay My goal is to be there to respond to the needs of as many as possible, but I know I won't be able to please everyone. If the routine is too easy for some, there are other programs where they can probably find what

they need. But if I make it too hard for too many, they may have no other options. So far, there has always been a new set of participants that come as others drop out. Even though there are cycles and people will always come and go, I have learned that I can control some of the drop-out as well. If people get bored with the routine or the music, if the space becomes too crowded, or if too many people outside of the room are just watching through windows or doors, participants can get frustrated, intimidated, or uncomfortable and stop coming back. At one point, I tried to start class with an educational topic but people complained or dropped out. So, I do have to be sensitive to the needs and interests of the group – even while I know that some drop-out is inevitable.



Lourdes and Rosio moving it at Muévete.



Muévete Fall 2008

It's not enough to get them there. I want them to stay. As new participants join, the interests of the group may change. So I'm always trying to stay one step ahead - and not just one dance step ahead!

Tips for Dealing With Drop Out Issues:

- Don't take it personally!
- Check in with the group periodically to see if they want changes.
- Try new things, but then ask how they were for people. Don't just stick with something because you think it's a good idea.

Securing Space

We have been fortunate to have the collaboration of the Humboldt Park Field House (HPFH) of the Chicago Park District. Challenges have come up with the use of the space. The central office has wanted to charge participants in the program, or misprints have occurred in the program directory. At times like these, our collaboration with local Park District staff has been absolutely critical. Through CO-OP Humboldt Park, we also have access to Park District staff at the City level. These relationships help me to keep Muévete running smoothly. Many of the participants bring their young children with them. We encourage this because it helps women to be even better role models for their children, showing them that they value fitness and health. The HPFH has offered an arts and crafts class for children during the same time of Muévete. This turned out to be a great form of childcare. When we are in a bigger space at the HPFH, children can actually take part in the class (depending on their age) or play on the sidelines while observing their mothers. If the space that you are using is not your own, familiarize yourself with the space's rules and regulations. Make sure the participants know and follow them.



Muévete: Movement for a Healthier Life

Tips for Finding Space:

- ❑ If your program isn't funded and participants don't pay, you'll need to find free space. The Park District, a local school, a local church, all may be appropriate places. Collaboration is key!
- ❑ A gym or a basketball court would be the most ideal, especially if the participants have children. This would give children the opportunity to participate in class alongside one of their parent(s).
- ❑ Comfort is key – for enjoyment and for health and safety. You want a place with climate control so it's not too hot in the summer or too cold in the winter. You don't want overcrowding or people may get hurt and will not be able to do the full extent of the exercises.
- ❑ You will probably need to provide something for young children to do or parents won't continue to come. Think about childcare, child-friendly programming, or ways to involve children in the class itself.

Publicity and Recruitment

I always have Muévete flyers handy and carry them around in case I meet someone who might be interested or I go to an event where I can leave materials. Outreach in the community has been a very effective way for me to recruit participants. I attend community events such as Local School Council (LSC) business meetings. I stop in local grocers and restaurants and always ask to leave flyers behind. Publicity is one of the most important parts of recruiting. In the case of Muévete, we use the existing resources of the PRCC and CO-OP Humboldt Park. We post ongoing ads in a community publication: ***La Voz del Paseo Boricua***. We also leaflet throughout the neighborhood, during special events and at other programs and services related to health. Once the program was established, publicity continued through word of mouth from current participants. I keep flyers available at all times, especially at the locations where the class is taking place so that people can bring them to their friends and family. I also remind participants to invite others.

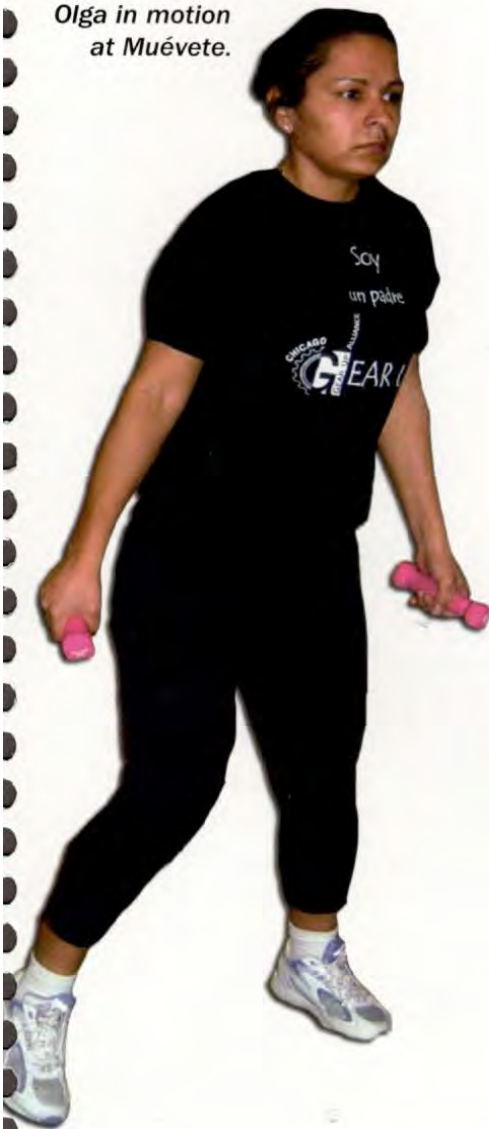


Muévete 2008



As for myself, since I often run into women who remind me of myself, I make it a point to keep flyers in my bag or purse so I can share them with others. Though I may not have difficulty talking about my struggles with weight to anyone, individually or in large groups of people, people who may be much smaller than I am may have much more difficulty. I believe that in general most people are sensitive about their weight - regardless of their size. So, when doing individual outreach, I always introduce myself first, talk about the program and what we do (not why we do it), and then hand them a flyer. I don't insist on their participation - I simply suggest. I don't tell them they need to be more active or lose weight, I simply inform them of the benefits of doing physical activity - for all people.

*Olga in motion
at Muévete.*



Tips for Publicity and Recruitment:

- Make a flyer that is unique, interesting, and locally appropriate.
- Carry those flyers everywhere! You'll never know when you need them.
- When talking about the program, focus on the positive.
- Talk about the health benefits for everyone and the enjoyment they'll get.
- Don't focus on their specific need unless they ask about it!
- Encourage participants to bring friends.



Record Keeping



Nadia (right) at Muévete

Now that Muévete has some funding and is connected to CO-OP Humboldt Park, which also is a funded initiative, there are a number of stakeholders who are interested in the potential impact of the program on the community. It has been important for me to know how many participants come to the classes. At various times, we've thought about other ways to evaluate the program. If you are interested in procuring or maintaining funding, you will most likely need information about the program that can serve as "evidence" about how it fills a need or impacts the lives of participants. We use a

number of different information gathering methods. Most importantly, I have participants fill out an emergency form the first time they join the class. I get emergency contact information - the participant's relation to the person, and the contact's day, evening and cell numbers. HPFH has a Park District form that I use. At first, I used to record participants' weight and other measurements during registration so that we could compare their starting measures with later measures and show them their progress. However, be warned! During the first year of Muévete, I would lose participants every time there was a weigh in. For the most part, some people's weight did not change significantly, and in some cases the person actually gained a couple of pounds. There are many reasons why people may not lose weight right away - or ever! How much they eat, how consistently they exercise, genetics or family history or illnesses they may have can all influence weight loss. Even building muscle could be related to people not losing or even gaining weight. Because I don't see Muévete as a "weight loss program," I decided to stop recording weight.

I am interested, however, in things other than numbers of participants. I would like to know how often people come, if participation in Muévete has led them to be more active in general, if



they have joined other classes or if they make healthier decisions because of participation. I'd like to know if they change their diets. I also want to know what they like about the class, what they'd like to see change, and what other kinds of physical activity they'd be interested in. All of this information requires either a survey, doing group discussions, or both. These kinds of information gathering have been challenging for Muévete because people really want to come in, get moving, and get home! So for now, I keep attendance records by asking people to sign in (and even this is challenging!), and we have developed a survey but are still working out a good method for getting participants to complete it.

Tips for Record Keeping:

- Don't ask participants for a lot of information you don't really need. People may be reluctant to take the time to fill out forms or paperwork.
- It is always useful to keep at least an attendance sheet. You may need to justify continued use of free space by showing numbers, or you may be able to get funding if your participation rates impress funders.
- Think carefully about evaluation of the program – don't expect changes in things like weight, blood pressure, endurance to occur just because people are in your program. Many other factors influence these health outcomes and you don't want people to become discouraged by promising changes that are difficult to bring about.
- If you do want to evaluate your program, find a collaborator or get training from someone who can help you figure out the best approach for you and your program.



Muévete, Spring 2008



Muévete: Movement for a Healthier Life

Postscript

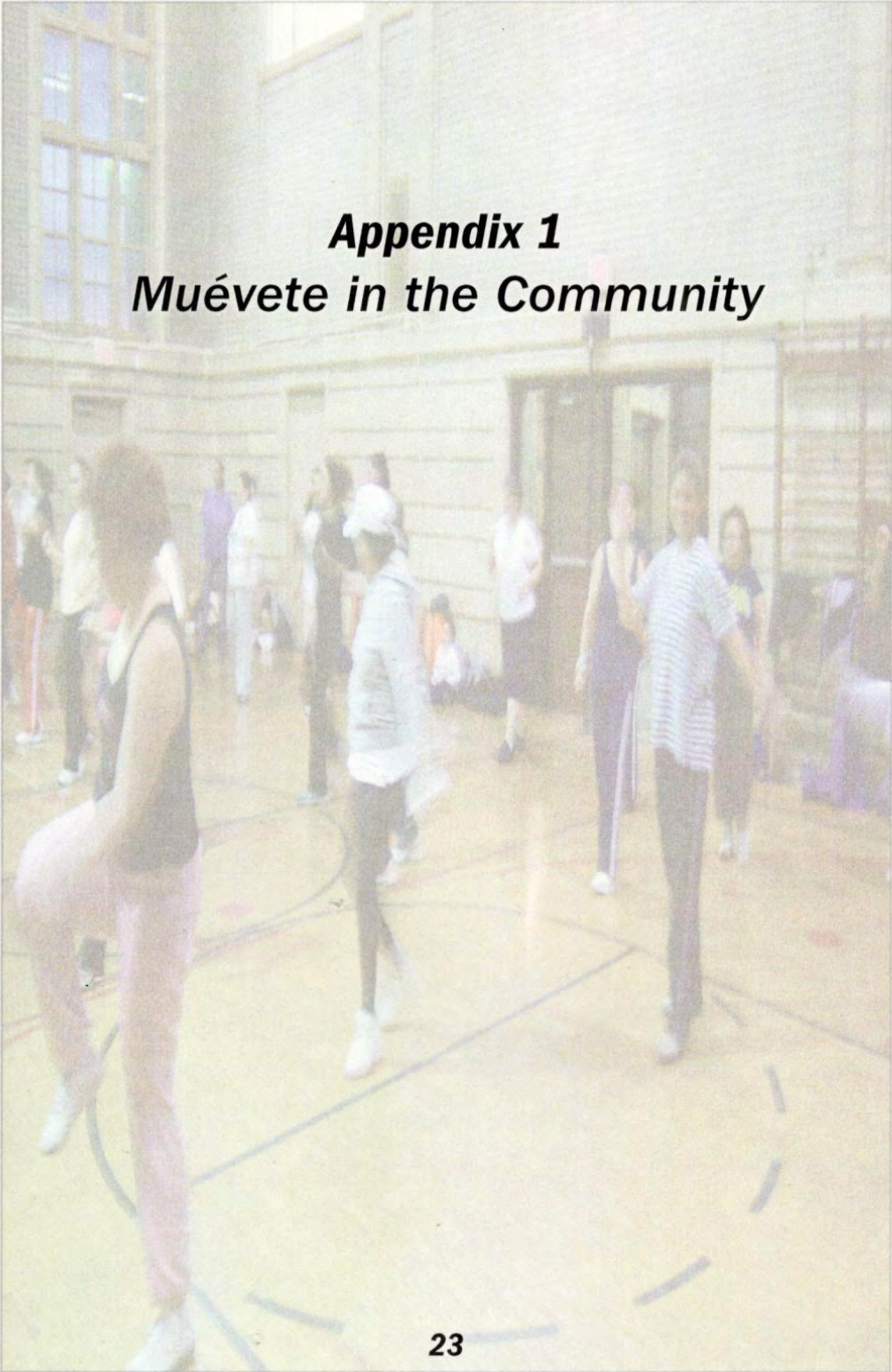
Developing a locally relevant physical activity program does not require large amounts of money or significant organizational support. Remember, Muévete started with me walking around Humboldt Park. A physical activity program could be as informal as a group of friends walking together regularly or dancing together in a basement or as formal as what Muévete has now become - an organized collection of dance aerobic classes with several sessions a week. Regardless of the form your program takes, make sure it's enjoyable, locally supported, and is true to the needs and interests of your instructors and community. I began with a small group of women walking, and now I provide fun, supportive, physical activity programs to hundreds of women a year. All it takes is a can-do spirit, commitment, and staying true to yourself. Have fun, and just remember to ***Muévete!***



Muévete in motion, Fall 2007



Appendix 1
Muévete in the Community



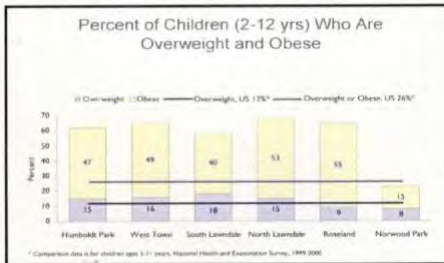


Muévete: Movement for a Healthier Life

Muévete In the Community

In addition to offering Muévete classes three times a week to adults in the community, I also teach Muévete to young children starting from the age 2 and above. At Centro Infantil Corretjer, I designed a curriculum to fit their physical activity needs, and, within this curriculum, we developed a song called “We are Children of Centro Infantil.” The song connects physical activity and nutrition. The song was a key element in motivating and inspiring the children to be physically active during the class and to eat their fruits and vegetables. With Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School and other after school programs, I led a Muévete class for students from the ages of 9 to 21. I also assisted other organizations with their already existing physical activity programs like; Go Girl Go, Erie Family Health Center Humboldt Park-La Vida Sana, La Vida Félix -Healthy Women Project and others. Muévete has also been key in providing one-time sessions to community health fairs and festivals like Sunday Park Way, Humboldt Park in Motion, Vive tu Vida! Get Up! Get Moving!, and others. In addition, I was a panelist at several conferences related to women’s health such as the Diabetes Summit, the Breast and Cervical Cancer Conference, and the Metabolic Syndrome Conference and have also assisted in health studies from Sinai Urban Health Institute and The University of Chicago. See the next page for a complete listing of Muévete in the community.

Muévete in Centro Infantil



Written by Leony Calderón, inspired by the staff & children of childcare

We are Children of Centro Infantil

We are children of Centro Infantil,

We are children of Centro Infantil,

We eat all our veggies, our rice and our beans

We are children of Centro Infantil,

We move with Muévete to grow strong and lean,

We are children of Centro Infantil,

We drink all our water we keep ourselves clean

We are children of Centro Infantil

We stay healthy because we love our bodies

We are children of Centro Infantil.



Muévete in the Community

Muévete has played an important role in establishing and providing physical activity to community residents. It also provides technical assistance and sessions at community events.

Ongoing Physical Activity- Muévete

1. Humboldt Park Field House, 1440 N. Sacramento, Chicago, IL.
Muévete meets three times a week Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 6:30pm-7:30pm
2. Kosciuszko Park, 2732 N. Avers, Chicago, IL. Muévete meets two times a week Tuesday and Thursday 1-2pm
3. Mozart Park. 2036 N. Avers Ave, Chicago, IL. Muévete meets two times a week Tuesday and Thursday 6-7pm

School Based Physical Activity –Muévete Program

1. Centro Infantil Consuelo Lee Corretjer
2. Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School and The Lolita Lebrón Family Learning Center

Muévete at Community Events

1. Erie Family Health Center Humboldt Park- La Vida Sana, La Vida Feliz Healthy Women Project
2. Association House of Chicago-Fitness 4 Kidz
3. Diabetes Summit
4. Access Community Health Network
5. Breast and Cervical Cancer Conference
6. Ames Elementary School- Go Girl Go!
7. Casa Central- Back To School Block Party
8. Humboldt Park in Motion
9. Sunday Parkways
10. Metabolic Syndrome Conference
11. Vive tu vida! Get Up! Get Moving!
12. Women's Health Festival
13. International Woman's Day 2008



Muévete Helping Others Get Started and Technical Assistance

1. West Humboldt Park Development Council- Women's Club
2. Von Humboldt Child Parent Center
3. Salvation Army Incarnation Daycare
4. Mozart Park Muévete Volunteers: Julieta Maldonado & Ada Rivera

Muévete Assistance in Health Studies & Surveys

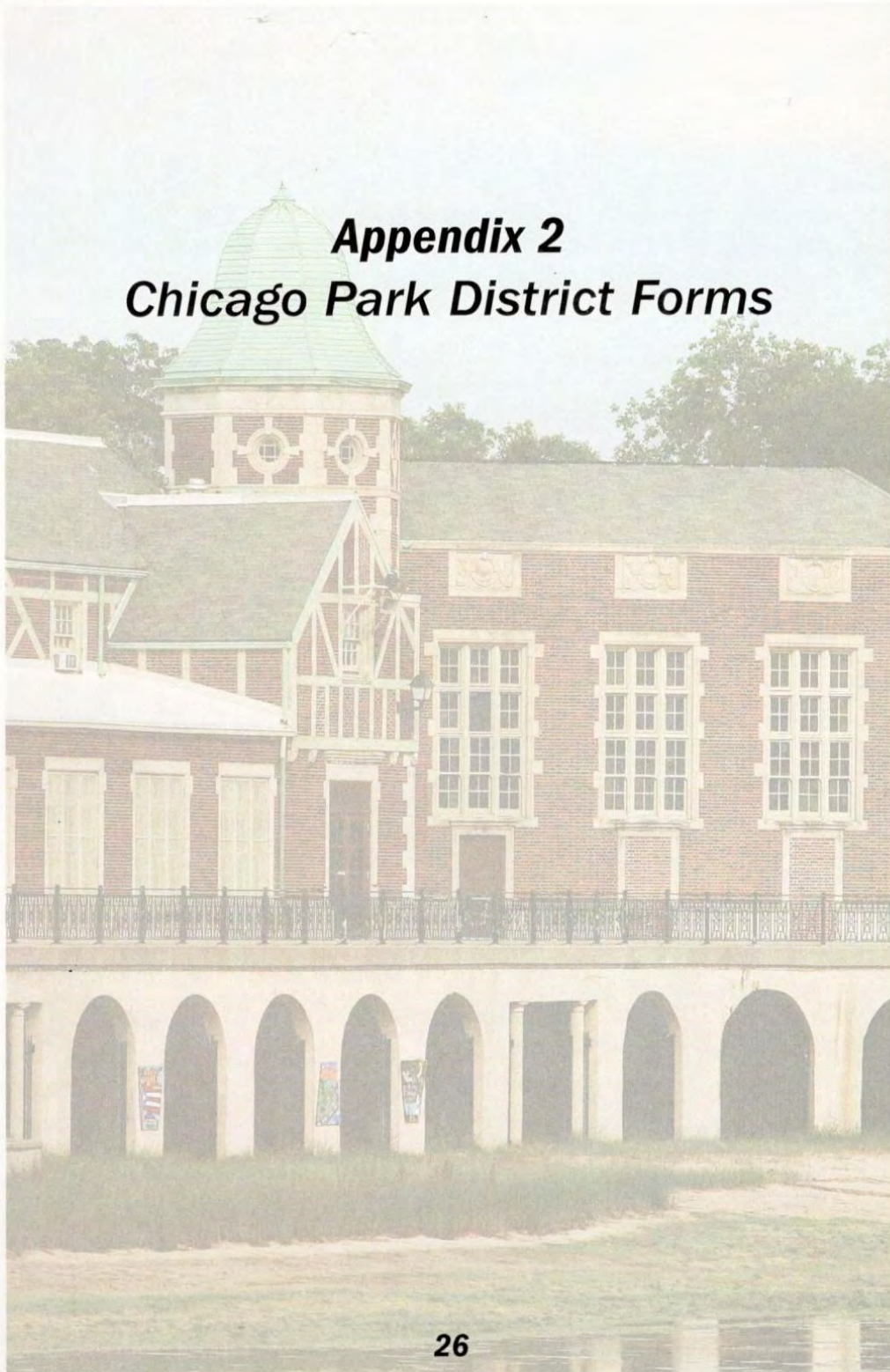
1. The University of Chicago
2. Sinai Urban Health Institute



Muévete: Movement for a Healthier Life

Appendix 2

Chicago Park District Forms





chicago park district

Participant Information

Park Name _____

NOTE: This form must be filled out in its entirety without modification or participation will be denied.

Participant Information

Participant Name(s) _____	Registered Receipt Numbers/Activity Codes/Activity Names _____		
Street Address, Apt/Unit _____	Gender _____	Birth Date _____	Phone Number _____
City, State, Zip Code _____	Email Address (optional) of Participant or Parent/Legal Guardian _____		
School (if student) _____	Grade (if student) _____	Age _____	T-shirt size* _____

*Not all programs provide T-shirts. Choose from youth sizes 2T-4T, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, 10-12, 14-16, or adult sizes S, M, L, XL

Emergency Information

Primary contact

Name (Parent/Legal Guardian if Participant is a child) _____	Participant's Physician/Hospital Name _____	Phone Number _____
Day Phone _____ Evening Phone _____ Relationship to Participant _____	Insurance Company _____	Policy Number _____

Secondary Contact

Name _____	In the event of a medical emergency, I hereby authorize and give my consent to the Chicago Park District and its employees, coaches and/or volunteers to secure from any accredited hospital, clinic, and/or physician any treatment deemed necessary for my or my child's immediate care. I agree that I shall remain responsible for any and all expenses incurred for such emergency medical care and treatment.
Day Phone _____ Evening Phone _____ Relationship to Participant _____	
Participant Special Needs, such as Allergies/Medications _____	
Signature (Parent/Legal Guardian if Participant is a child) _____	Date _____

Agreement to Participate

I hereby give permission for my child to participate in park activities, including swimming and field trips. I fully assume all responsibility for injuries she/he or I may receive or articles lost while participating in these activities or while in travel to or from said activities and field trips, and hereby release the Chicago Park District and its employees from liability for any injury I or my child(ren) may sustain.

I hereby grant permission to the Chicago Park District for the use of any and all photos in which I or my child(ren) may appear (wards of the State excluded). The usage is inclusive of, but not limited to, the publication or inclusion in brochures, posters, catalogs, handbooks, banners, and broadcast or print advertisements. I agree to waive any claim to compensation for use of said photos.

I have received, read and understand the "Program Information Sheets for Parents" (for Summer Camp and PARK Kids only) and agree to abide by the policies stated therein. I understand that this form will be due the first day of class or my child will not be enrolled. I have read and agreed to all the information contained in the above Parental Agreement and have filled out emergency information on my child(ren).

I agree to allow my information to be entered into a database that may be used in aggregate for reporting and analysis on this program.

Signature (Parent/Legal Guardian if Participant is a child) _____ Date _____

Parent/Legal Guardian Agreements

The following agreements apply to all Park District programs.

Who is permitted to pick up your child(ren)? Your child(ren) will only be released to listed person(s). Anyone picking up a child must present a picture I.D.

Name _____	Relationship to Child _____
Name _____	Relationship to Child _____
Name _____	Relationship to Child _____
Is anyone prohibited from picking up your child(ren)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If yes, who? _____	
Name _____	Relationship to Child _____

My child(ren) may walk home unescorted at time of dismissal. Yes No

I understand my child must be picked up daily by the assigned dismissal time or a \$5.00 per 30 minutes late fee will be assessed. Warning: Repeated late pick-up (more than twice) will result in the expulsion of your child from the program. If your child has not been picked up by 8:00 p.m., the park staff will contact the Police Department.

Signature Parent/Legal Guardian _____ Date _____



Muévete: Movement for a Healthier Life



chicago park district

Información del Participante

Nombre del Parque _____

IMPORTANTE: Ésta forma tiene que ser llenada completamente sin modificaciones o su participación será negada.

Información del Participante

Nombre del Participante(s) _____

Numero de recibo de registro/Códigos de actividades/Nombres de actividades _____

Dirección Exacta _____

Genero _____ Fecha de Nacimiento _____ Número de Teléfono _____

Ciudad, Estado, y Código Postal _____

Dirección Electrónica (opcional) del Participante o del Padre/Guardián Legal _____

Nombre de la Escuela (si es estudiante) _____

Grado (si es estudiante) _____ Edad _____ Medida de Camiseta* _____

*No todos los programas proveen una camiseta. Escoge su medida para niños: 2T-4T, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, 10-12, 14-16, o medidas para adulto: S, M, L, XL.

Información de Emergencia

Contacto Primario

Nombre (Padre/Guardián legal si el participante es menor) _____

Nombre del Médico del Participante / Nombre del Hospital _____ Número de Teléfono _____

Teléfono por el Día _____ Teléfono por la Noche _____ Relación al Participante _____

Compañía de Seguros _____ Número de Póliza _____

Contacto Secundario

Nombre _____

En el evento de una emergencia médica, por la presente autorizo y doy consentimiento al Distrito de Parques de Chicago y sus empleados, entrenadores o voluntarios de proveer atención médica en una entidad acreditada como un hospital, clínica, o un médico, a cualquier tratamiento que sea necesario para mi hijo/a. Estoy de acuerdo que soy responsable por todos los gastos incurridos por ésta emergencia y tratamiento médico.

Teléfono por el Día _____ Teléfono por la Noche _____ Relación al Participante _____

Necesidades especiales del Participante, tales como Alergias/Medicinas _____

Firma (Padre/Guardián Legal si el participante es menor) _____ Fecha _____

Acuerdo de Participación

Por la presente doy permiso a mi hijo/a a que participe en las actividades del parque, incluyendo natación y paseos. Asumo completamente la responsabilidad por accidentes que le sucedan y cualquier artículo que sea perdido mientras participe en éstas actividades o mientras viaje para estas actividades o paseos. Por lo tanto libero al Distrito de Parques de Chicago y sus empleados de cualquier responsabilidad causada por los incidentes que mi hijo/a pueda tener.

He recibido, leído, y entiendo la "Información del Programa para los Padres" (para el Summer Camp and PARK Kids solamente) y estoy de acuerdo a cumplir los reglamentos mencionados en ellos. Entiendo que ésta forma debiera ser presentada en el primer día de clases o mi hijo/a no será registrado. He leído y estoy de acuerdo con toda la información contenida en éste acuerdo de los padres y he proveído la información de emergencia de mi hijo/a.

Le cedo el permiso al Distrito de Parques de Chicago a que utilice cualquier fotografía en cual aparezca yo o mi hijo/a. El uso es exclusivo, pero no limitado, a la publicación o incluirlos en cualquier folleto, cartel, catálogo, manual o cualquier anuncio publicitario. Estoy de acuerdo a renunciar a cualquier demanda que requiera compensación por el uso de dichas fotos.

Estoy de acuerdo que mi información podría ser inscrita en una base de datos que puede ser usada en total para informes y estudios de éste programa.

Firma (Padre/Guardián Legal si el participante es menor) _____ Fecha _____

Acuerdo del Padre o Guardian Legal

El siguiente acuerdo se aplica a todos los programas del Distrito de Parques de Chicago

¿Quien está permitido recoger a su hijo/a? Su hijo/a solo puede ser recogido por los siguientes individuos que produzcan una identificación con foto.

Mi hijo/a puede caminar a casa sin supervisión a la hora del despido. Sí No

Nombre _____ Relación al Participante _____

Entiendo que mi hijo/a deberá ser recogido/a en la hora indicada, de lo contrario tendré que pagar un cargo de \$5.00 por cada 30 minutos que sea recogido tarde. Advertencia: Si recoge a su hijo/a repetidamente tarde (mas de dos veces) su hijo/a será expulsado del programa. Si su hijo/a no ha sido recogido hasta las 8:00 p.m., los empleados del Distrito de Parques de Chicago llamarán a la Policía.

Nombre _____ Relación al Participante _____

Nombre _____ Relación al Participante _____

¿Hay alguien que no está permitido a recoger a su hijo/a? Sí No

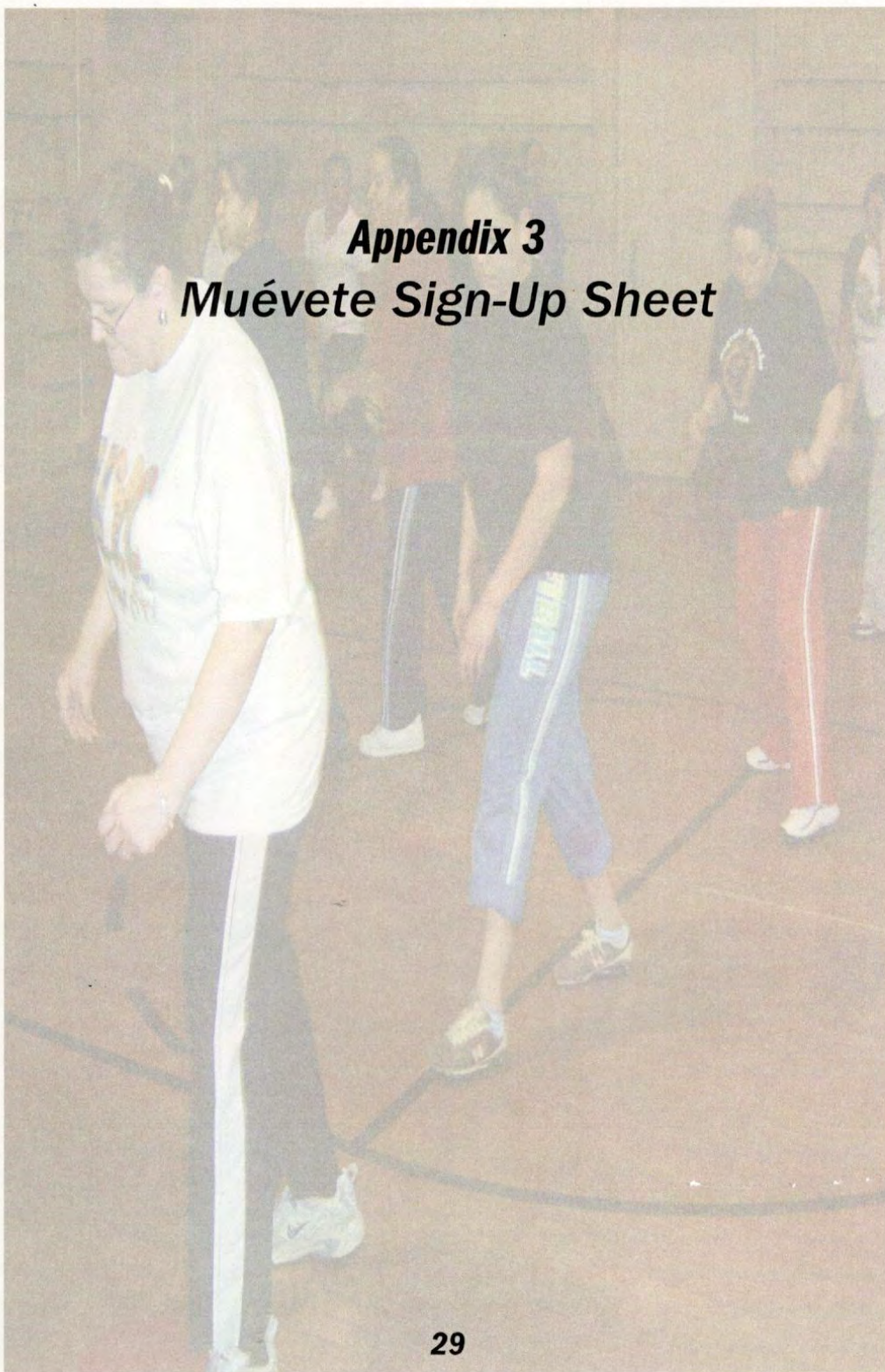
¿Si lo hay, quién es? _____

Padre/Guardián Legal _____ Fecha _____

Nombre _____ Relación al Participante _____



Appendix 3
Muévete Sign-Up Sheet





Muévete: Movement for a Healthier Life

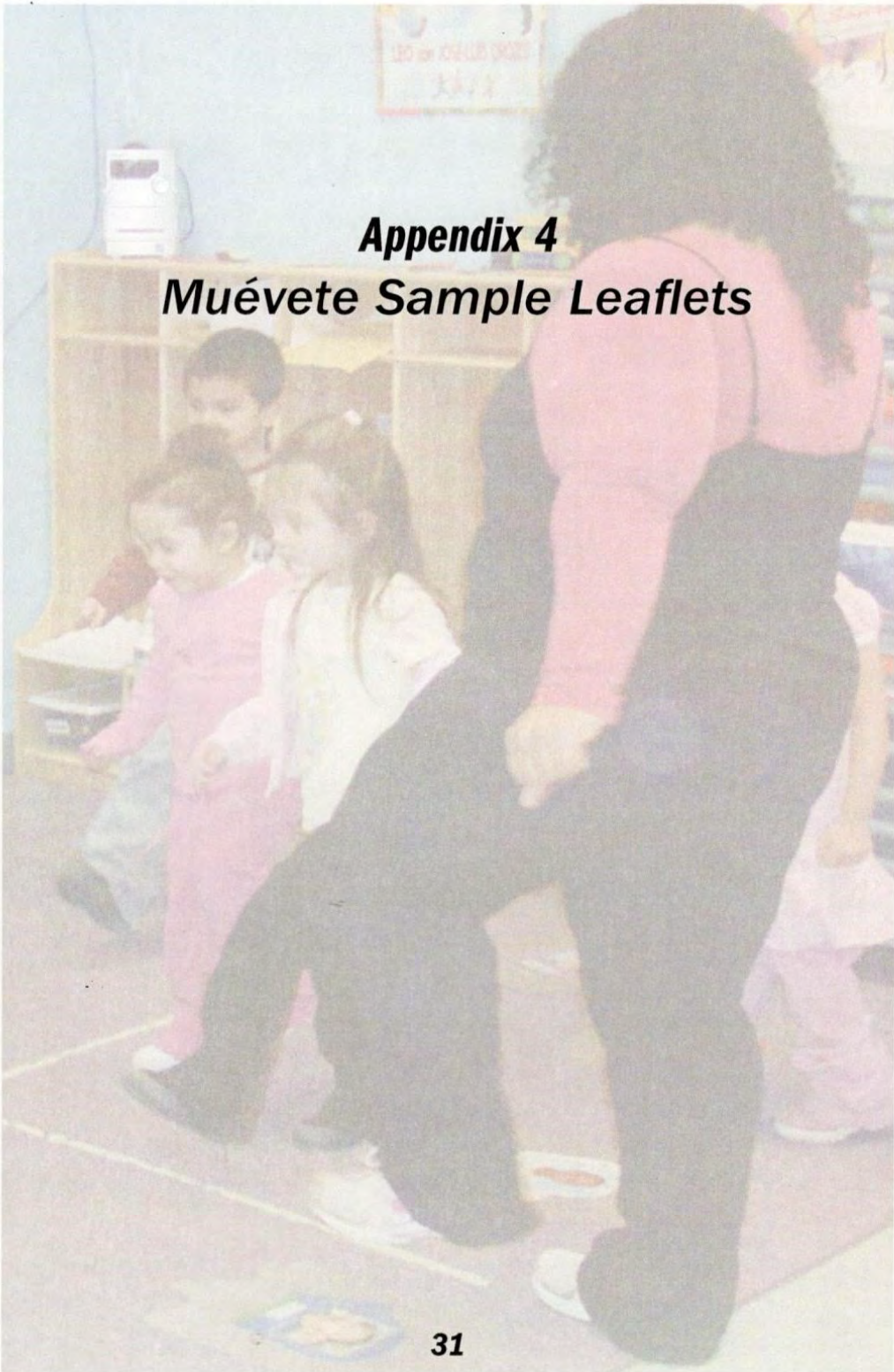
Muévete with Leony

Sign in Sheet

	Date	Name	Phone	Email
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3.				
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Appendix 4
Muévete Sample Leaflets



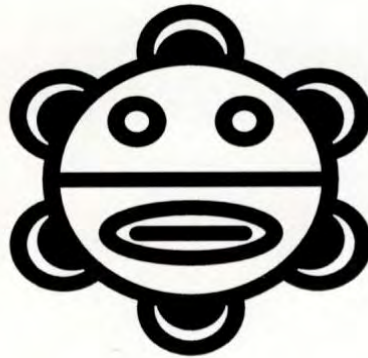


Muévete: Movement for a Healthier Life

MUÉVETE

CO-OP HUMBOLDT PARK

AEROBICS



Free!

Free!

Muévete, a program for overweight women and the entire family, is now doing aerobics every

Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the Humboldt Park Field House (1440 N Sacramento) beginning Monday, January 9, 2006, 6:30-7:30PM.

Take this opportunity to improve your health.
This program is free!

For more information, call Leony at 773-278-6737.



MUÉVETE

CO-OP Humboldt Park Walking Club



FREE!

FREE!

- Are you overweight?
- Are you thinking of eating healthier?
- Do you want to lose weight?
- Do you want to control/avoid diabetes?
- Do you want to control/avoid high cholesterol?
- Ready for a life change?

If you answered YES to any or all of these questions, then you are ready to join the CO-OP Humboldt Park Walking Club.

Monday through Friday, 6:30-7:30am
(Join us for 2 or more days a week)

Meet us in Humboldt Park
(Corner of California and Division)

For more information please call
Leony at 773-278-6737

Walk at your own pace, in good company.
You have nothing to lose but unwanted fat!

MUÉVETE
Leony • 773 278-6737
MUÉVETE
Leony • 773 278-6737
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Muévete: Movement for a Healthier Life

Free!
¡Gratis!

Move with ¡Muévete!

Aerobics

Every Monday, Wednesday & Friday

Todos los lunes, miércoles y viernes

6:30pm - 7:30pm

Humboldt Park Field House

1440 N. Sacramento Blvd.



CO-OP Humboldt Park
Community Organizing for
Obesity Prevention



Free!
¡Gratis!

Walking

Monday through Friday

De lunes a viernes

6:00am - 7:00am &

6:30am - 7:30am

We meet at

Division & California

If you would like to start your own ¡Muévete! Program we can provide Technical Assistance & Training. Call for details!
Si deseas comenzar un programa de ¡Muévete! nosotros te podemos proveer ayuda y adiestramiento. ¡Llámanos!

Call Leony 773-278-6737 e-mail (muevete@prcc-chgo.org) visit (myspace.com/muevetewithleony)

Free!
¡Gratis!

Move with ¡Muévete!

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Every Monday, Wednesday & Friday

Todos los lunes, miércoles y viernes

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Humboldt Park Field House

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Obesity Prevention



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Free!
¡Gratis!

Move with ¡Muévete!

Aerobics

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6:30pm - 7:30pm

Humboldt Park Field House

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CO-OP Humboldt Park
Community Organizing for
Obesity Prevention



Free!
¡Gratis!

Walking

Monday through Friday

De lunes a viernes

6:00am - 7:00am &

6:30am - 7:30am

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Si deseas comenzar un programa de ¡Muévete! nosotros te podemos proveer ayuda y adiestramiento. ¡Llámanos!

Call Leony 773-278-6737 e-mail (muevete@prcc-chgo.org) visit (myspace.com/muevetewithleony)



Muévete

Pillows



Leony leading Muévete Winter 2007-2008