

# Physical Activity Among Santa Ana Residents

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C A L S T A T E  
FULLERTON



## Introduction

Project ALISA has been working with the city and residents of Santa Ana, along with many organizations throughout Orange County, to increase awareness of and the amount of physical activity among Santa Ana residents. This survey was conducted to get a better idea of what some city residents are thinking and doing with respect to exercise and physical activity.

## Sample

One-hundred-forty-seven respondents from 94 different households responded to the survey. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents were female (64.2%) and most were between the ages of 20 and 39 (84.1%). The majority of respondents had immigrated to the United States (93.2%), primarily from Mexico. Most were married (80.4%), were parents with children living at home (93.8%), and reported a household income of less than \$35,000 (94.7%).

## Important Findings

### **Respondents' perceptions of their health was in stark contrast to their actual weight status.**

- Based on objectively measured BMI, 79% of the respondents were overweight or obese, yet 55.70% reported that their health was "good" or "excellent".

### **For both the men and the women, walking was the most common form of physical activity.**

### **Beyond that, there were gender differences in the residents' exercise preferences.**

- Men were more likely to participate in sports and yard work as part of their routine; they were just as likely to want to work out alone as in the company of others.
- Women were more likely to report doing housework and participating in exercise classes as part of their routine; they preferred to exercise in the company of others and in a structured activity.

### **There were many perceived barriers to physical activity.**

- Not having enough time to exercise was reported by 38.1% and 21.1% reported that a lack of child care kept them from exercising. Other common barriers included lack of convenient facilities, no exercise partner, and the weather being too hot.

## Recommendations

1. Residents need to be better educated about the health risks of obesity.
2. Residents need to be better educated about making more active lifestyle choices.
3. Activity programs offered to residents need to be varied in type and environment to attract as many participants as possible.
4. When possible, child care should be provided to parents when participating in sponsored activity programs.