

## Interview with Teresa Penbrooke, GP RED Founder online at [www.preventobesity.net](http://www.preventobesity.net)

### Fit to Print

#### On the Same Page

*GP Red helps communities identify and prioritize ways to become active and healthy.*

As the saying goes, it takes a village to raise a child. But sometimes, the villagers don't talk to each other.

That's where [GP RED](#) comes in.

Originally called GreenPlay Research, Education and Development but better known as GP RED, the nonprofit brings together community stakeholders to identify ways to create healthier environments. GP RED often gathers officials from local parks and recreation, transportation and public health agencies around a table to come up with a plan designed to improve the overall health of a community.

"They're all working in their own silos," says [Teresa Penbrooke](#), co-founder and secretary of the board at GP RED. "What we wanted to do is bring them together."

Penbrooke is the founder of [Greenplay LLC](#), a for-profit consulting firm that advises park and recreation departments, open spaces groups and similar agencies. She helped form the non-profit GP RED in 2008 to better help communities coordinate efforts to improve the health of their residents.

Since 2009, RED has worked with Indiana University on the "Healthy Communities Surveillance and Management Project," which looks at the factors that play a role in reducing obesity and encouraging active living. Officials first worked with agencies in Bloomington, Ind. The group is creating a training process and toolkit that will be applied in 10 beta test communities, Penbrooke says, including nearby South Bend, Ind.



GP RED works with local government agencies to find ways to make their communities healthier, including more walkable.

The main goal is to get everyone on the same page, Penbrooke says. Often, different agencies are working on projects or programs that already are doing the right things, and convincing folks to work together and combine resources can help achieve bigger and faster change.

RED also works with agencies to explain the importance of active communities to key stakeholders such as elected officials, who might not see why supporting (read: funding) programs designed to create healthy, active environments is so vital.

“There’s a lot of good work going on in communities right now, and it may not be celebrated,” Penbrooke says. “We’re celebrating the small things, but looking at it from a big picture standpoint... We bring the focus to health.”

*GP is currently looking for potential beta test communities and academic partners. [Click here to contact Teresa Penbrooke if you think you can help.](#)*