SAN ANTONIO – Attending Síclovía on September 29 may open the door to a healthier future for families across the city, according to a recent study.

More than half of Síclovía attendees say they improved their physical activity behaviors after attending the event, according to the preliminary findings of a study presented this afternoon at a press conference by representatives of the YMCA of Greater San Antonio and the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

“Since the inception of Síclovía, participants have shared with us how the event encouraged them to adopt a healthier lifestyle,” says Sandy Morander, President and CEO of the YMCA of Greater San Antonio. “We are thrilled that this study confirms we are having an impact on a significant number of attendees. My hope is that on September 29 even more families come out to play in the street and see that physical activity can be fun.”

The study was conducted during San Antonio’s last Síclovía event on April 7, 2013, and included surveys from 373 participants.

Preliminary results of the study, which are expected to be fully published in a scientific journal later this year, include:

- 53% of respondents reported they changed their physical activity level after attending a Síclovía event.
- 47% of respondents reported they tried a new activity at the event.
- 57% of respondents reported they would not have been physically active the day of Síclovía had it not been for the event.
- 87% of people came to the event with their family and/or friends.
- 64% of attendees came from San Antonio zip codes known for high to extremely high levels of obesity.

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“We were excited to find that Síclovía is a family-oriented event that motivated non-active people to get off the couch and try new activities that they otherwise might have missed, and also sparked people to adopt healthier behaviors after the event, too,” said Dr. Deborah Parra-Medina, professor of epidemiology and biostatistics at the IHPR at the UT Health Science Center. “Given that physical activity is scientifically proven to improve health and reduce the risk of disease, our results clearly demonstrate this event plays a role in improving San Antonio’s health.”

Síclovía is an event hosted twice a year by the YMCA of Greater San Antonio. At the event, several miles of Broadway between Lion’s Field Park and Alamo Plaza are closed to vehicular traffic to provide a safe, open space to ‘play in the street’.

Participants walk, bike and skate through the closed street, stopping at “reclovias” along the way that provide a variety of activities, including exercise demonstrations, a skate park, a pet area and a healthy food area.

Of course, diet is an important component of a healthy lifestyle and participants can walk away from Siclovia with information about how to prepare healthier food for their families. Title sponsor H-E-B will offer free cooking demonstrations to show participants how healthy eating can be easy and delicious. H-E-B has been the title sponsor of Síclovía events for the past three events.

“One of our goals at H-E-B is to improve the health of all Texans. We not only try to educate folks about nutrition and food choices, we think it’s important to engage them through contests such as the H-E-B Slim Down Showdown and fun events like Siclovia. It’s gratifying to see that these collaborative efforts are truly paying off for our community” said Kate Rogers, H-E-B’s Vice President of Partner Communication and Engagement.

Síclovía will take place on September 29 from 10am until 3pm on Broadway between Lion’s Field Park and Alamo Plaza. All ages are welcome to this free, non-competitive event. For more information and for a copy of the study visit www.siclovia.org.

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