

Promoting healthier lifestyles at shopping centres in Brazil

The World Health Organisation advocates the significant health benefits of regular moderate physical activity such as walking, cycling, or participating in sports, which studies have shown to reduce the risks of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and certain types of cancer. Recognising the importance of physical activity, Sonae Sierra Brasil has launched a series of initiatives carried out across its shopping centres designed to promote health and well-being while strengthening social relations with the community and reinforcing its social outreach dimension.



Shopping Penha first started a sports project in 2005, offering local people over the age of 50 the opportunity to sign up for hiking, stretching, exercise classes and ballroom dancing. In partnership with CLUBE A (Unibanco), Sonda Supermarket and EKO Academy, this project aims to boost the quality of life of its target group. Provided free of charge, all activities

are accompanied by qualified physical trainers. The initiative has seen high turnout figures: around 150 students are currently enrolled in the hiking project and around 80 students are signed up for the dance classes.



Also targeted at senior members of the public, Shopping Plaza Sul commenced its Back in Bloom initiative in 2008, designed to establish closer relations with the community as well as to improve health and quality of life by promoting physical exercise for people over the age of 60 in a social and entertaining atmosphere.

In partnership with the 'Monday Academy', the project offers walking and physical exercise activities twice a week under the expert guidance of teachers. Currently there are 34 students enrolled.

Boavista Shopping has also launched a sports group, aiming to unite local residents and to stimulate interest in physical exercise; an initiative that demonstrates commitment to the health and well-being of the community as well as encouraging more consumers to visit the centre. The activities on offer every fortnight at Boavista Shopping are a warm up class involving stretching and posturing and a 5km walk around the shopping centre, under the guidance of qualified professionals. Boavista Shopping's sport group has proved very popular, attracting new participants from the surrounding area. Next year, the shopping centre will reinforce the programme by seeking sponsors, more qualified health professionals and stronger promotion in the local community.

"I like participating in this walking exercise, because I try to keep myself fit and I received an invitation to join in through a friend." - Cinara Mendes dos Santos, Boavista Shopping Sports Group

"I want to congratulate you on providing such a simple but brilliant idea for our community." - Ivan, Boavista Shopping Sports Group



"I would like to thank the Plaza Sul Shopping for this initiative providing free physical activities, because we all need exercises for a better life." - Pedro Luiz Pereira Campos, Shopping Plaza Sul 'Back in Bloom'