



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS
Healthy Cities E-Newsletter



Mayors' Healthy Cities Campaign

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Local News

[Weight Loss Challenge for Morris Towns](#) (2/26/08)

The days of Super Size Me are over in Morris County, New Jersey. Starting Sunday, the county will be put on a diet, as 14 towns start a 100-day weight loss and waist trimming competition. *NJ.Com* reports that the goal of the "Toxic Waistline" contest, sponsored by the nonprofit Mayors Wellness Campaign and Strategies to Overcome and Prevent Obesity Alliance, is to target mid-section girth, a major cause of chronic illnesses such as diabetes, heart failure and hypertension.

[Another Blow Against Trans Fats in Foods](#) (2/18/09)

Two years after New York City banned partially hydrogenated oil, a common ingredient in baked goods and frozen French fries that has been linked to heart disease, the *New York Times* reports that local governments around the region are considering and imposing similar measures.

[Outreach Campaign to Address Childhood Obesity among Low-income and Minority Children in Orange County, CA.](#) (2/17/09)

An outreach campaign aimed at helping minority and low-income children develop healthy habits for life will soon take root in more than 100 schools across Orange County, CA, thanks to a \$3 million grant from the Saint Joseph Health System. According to the *Orange County Register*, the Healthy For Life/PE4Me program is designed to curb escalating childhood obesity in populations with the highest rates, by helping students and their parents incorporate physical activity and a nutritious diet into daily routines.

[Manhattan Borough Chief Pushes for Better Nutrition in City](#) (2/06/09)

Food and nutrition have been favorite issues for the administration of New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Adding to those efforts, Scott M. Stringer, the Manhattan borough president, is proposing his own plan for residents to eat better, according to the *New York Times*. In a report released last month, he called for the city to make healthy food more widely available by giving farmers' markets and supermarkets tax and zoning incentives, restricting fast-food restaurants and requiring city agencies to buy 20 percent of their food from local farmers.

National News

[Healthcare Initiative Launched to Combat Childhood Obesity](#) (2/23/09)

The New York City-based [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#), a joint initiative of the [American](#)

[Heart Association](#) and the [William J. Clinton Foundation](#), has announced the creation of the Alliance Healthcare Initiative—a collaborative effort with national medical associations, leading insurers, and employers to provide comprehensive health benefits to children and families for the prevention, assessment, and treatment of childhood obesity. According to *Philanthropy News Digest*, the effort represents the first time that insurance companies and corporations have collaborated in a holistic approach to addressing the childhood obesity epidemic.

[No Lunch Left Behind](#) (2/19/09)

Alice Waters and Katrina Heron, president and a director of the Chez Panisse Foundation, have an op-ed in the *New York Times* stating that it is time to take a hard look at the National School Lunch Program. Launched in 1946 as a public safety net, the authors argue that the program has turned out to be a poor investment and should be redesigned to make children healthier.

[Leading Research Funders Launch Collaborative To Accelerate Nation's Progress in Reducing Childhood Obesity](#) (2/19/09)

A new National Collaborative on Childhood Obesity Research ([NCCOR](#)) launched in February to accelerate progress on reversing the epidemic of overweight and obesity among U.S. youth. The initiative brings together the expertise and resources of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), three of the country's leading research funders.

[Obesity, Lack of Insurance Take Toll on Young Americans](#) (2/19/09)

Increased rates of obesity and lack of insurance coverage are among the many health challenges facing young American adults, according to recently-released federal statistics reported on in *US News and World Report*. A special section on young adults between ages 18 and 29 is featured in the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention annual report on the nation's health.

[Living Near Fast Food Ups Stroke Risk](#) (2/19/09)

ABC News reports that, according to a new study, people living in neighborhoods with numerous fast food restaurants have a higher risk of stroke than those living where such restaurants are scarce. "This study suggests that those living in neighborhoods with a high density of fast food restaurants have an increased stroke risk," said Dr. Lewis Morgenstern, lead author of the study and director of the University of Michigan's stroke program in Ann Arbor. But he cautioned that the findings are purely associative and do not necessarily point to a direct link between the restaurants' offerings and potentially deadly stroke.

[Good News for Bicyclists: Tax breaks, fitness and more](#) (2/17/09)

Although progress has been slow, over the last few years, bicycling accessibility issues and legislation designed to encourage bicycle commuting has gained traction in Maryland and nationally according to the *Frederick News Post*. In 1987, no state had an obesity rate over 10. Today, only a single state, Colorado, remains under 20 percent. The majority, like Maryland, are more than 25 percent.

Reports and Studies

[Support the Farm Stand](#)

You've heard of carnivores and omnivores, but what's a locavore? The latest epicurean buzzword spotlights the trend of more Americans wanting to eat locally grown food, a preference that's boosting the popularity of farmers markets. Developed by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), this article provides policy-makers with information on the benefits farmers' markets can bring to a local community's table, both economically and with respect to the health of children and families.

[Tax Increment Financing: A Tool for Advancing Healthy Eating and Active Living](#)

Developed by [Leadership for Healthy Communities](#), this policy brief examines the promise of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) as a means of funding initiatives that promote healthy kids and healthy communities. Communities have used financing mechanisms such as public-private partnerships, tax incentives and federal grants to help support healthy eating and physical activity projects.

[Overweight and Obesity Among Latino Youths](#)

Developed by [Leadership for Healthy Communities](#), this fact sheet highlights the prevalence, consequences and causes of overweight and obesity among Latino youths. While childhood obesity has increased significantly throughout the general population, children from minority communities have been disproportionately affected. Among Mexican-Americans, for example, 38 percent of children ages 2 to 19 are overweight or obese, compared with 31.9 percent of all children those ages.

[Overweight and Obesity Among African-American Youths](#)

Developed by [Leadership for Healthy Communities](#), this fact sheet highlights the prevalence, consequences and causes of overweight and obesity among African-American youths. For example, the fact sheet cites a study of more than 200 neighborhoods in which predominantly white neighborhoods were found to have four times as many supermarkets as predominantly African-American neighborhoods. The presence of at least one neighborhood supermarket is associated with an increase in fruit and vegetable consumption. African Americans' fruit and vegetable consumption increased 32 percent on average for each additional supermarket in the community

[Teen Dietary Habits Related to Those of Parents](#)

A policy brief from the Center for Health Policy Research at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) suggests that children are more likely to eat healthy foods if their parents do as well. The brief's authors express support for policies designed to promote access to nutritious foods in schools and communities.

[Improving Child Nutrition Policy: Insights from National USDA Study of School Food Environments](#)

This [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#) policy brief highlights findings from the third School Nutrition Dietary Assessment, an examination of the food environment in public schools. The brief includes recommendations such as updating the nutrition standards for meals offered through the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, as well as setting nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold in vending machines.

[Connecting Active Living Research and Public Policy: Transdisciplinary Research and Policy Interventions to Increase Physical Activity](#)

An important use of the research is to inform policy debates, but the "translation" of research to policy is an emerging science. The papers in this supplement of the *Journal of Public Health Policy* were presented at the 2008 Active Living Research Conference. The papers include evaluations of policy initiatives and research that suggests promising new policies.

[2008 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report](#)

The *2008 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report* is based on an online survey capturing responses from more than 60,000 Americans ages six and older and covers 114 different outdoor activities, making it the largest survey of its type examining participation in sports and outdoor activities. The report provides important insights into trends in participation in outdoor recreation among all Americans, with focused looks at youth, diversity and gender.

Tools You Can Use

[Mayors' Guide to Fighting Childhood Obesity](#)

The *Mayors' Guide to Fighting Childhood Obesity* provides suggested action steps that mayors and other local government leaders can take to address the childhood obesity epidemic in their communities in three areas: the community food environment, the physical environment, and the school and out-of-school environment.

Funding Resources

[Funding Sources for Healthy Food Retail](#)

This Web site is a clearinghouse for funding opportunities related to developing food retail outlets. Funding sources, which are categorized by eligibility, source and type of assistance for easy searching, include several available to local governments.

[Jenny's Heroes Community Grant Program](#)

Talk show host and philanthropist Jenny Jones has announced that she will donate an additional \$1 million to continue her community grant program. Jenny's Heroes provides grants of up to \$25,000 each to fund projects that promise long-term community benefits.

Deadline: Open

[2009 Healthy Sprouts Awards Program](#)

The [National Gardening Association](#) encourages the growth of health-focused youth garden programs through the Healthy Sprouts Awards. The awards support school and youth garden programs that teach about nutrition and hunger in the United States. To be eligible for the 2009 Healthy Sprouts Awards, a school or organization must plan to garden in 2010 with at least fifteen children between ages 3 and 18. The selection of winners is based on the demonstrated relationship between the garden program and nutrition and hunger issues in the United States.

Deadline: October 17, 2009

[William T. Grant Foundation](#)

The William T. Grant Foundation is now accepting Letters of Inquiry for its field-initiated major grants program. The foundation's current research interests include understanding how social settings such as families, schools, peer groups, and organizations work; how these social settings affect youth; and how such settings can be improved. The foundation's interests also focus on when, how, and under what conditions research evidence is used in policy and practice that affect youth, and how the use of such evidence can be improved.

Deadline: April 1, 2009

[Bikes Belong Offers Funding for Bicycle Advocacy and Facilities](#)

U.S. nonprofits and public agencies working to put "more people on bicycles more often" will be awarded grants of up to \$10,000 for facilities and advocacy projects.

Deadline: Quarterly

Upcoming Conferences

Save the Date: Leadership for Healthy Communities' 2009 Childhood Obesity Prevention Summit, May 7-8, in Washington, DC

Leadership for Healthy Communities, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is hosting a childhood obesity prevention summit on May 7-8, 2009, in Washington, DC. Keynote speakers include Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, president and CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Policy-makers from the federal, state and local level of government will be participating. More information about the summit will be available on the Leadership for Healthy Communities Web site (www.leadershipforhealthycommunities.org).

[Weight of the Nation](#)

On **July 27-29, 2009**, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity will host its inaugural conference on obesity prevention and control, *Weight of the Nation*, at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C. *Weight of the Nation* is designed to provide a forum to highlight progress in the prevention and control of obesity through policy and environmental strategies and is framed around four intervention settings: community, medical care, school and workplace. Plenary and concurrent sessions will focus on strategies implemented in these settings that have led to policy and environmental changes which may improve population-level health.

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