



## THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS Healthy Cities E-Newsletter



June, 2008 - Issue #7

### Local News

#### [Walking to Fight Childhood Obesity](#) (5/28/08)

Third and fourth grade students from Oakland County, MI walked more than 1.3 billion steps in the month-long Count Your Steps contest, an initiative to combat childhood obesity, according to *The Daily Tribune*.

#### [For Kirk Douglas and Wife, the Playground's the Thing](#) (5/27/08)

*USA Today* reports that the Douglas' have been fixing up school playgrounds for 11 years. At the recent dedication of their 401st Los Angeles-area playground Kirk Douglas slid down a slide—something he does at every dedication—and called it mission accomplished.

#### [New York City Hopes to Ensure Smooth Pedaling for Bike Commuters](#) (5/25/08)

"We have to make it easier for people to get around by bikes," said Janette Sadik-Khan, the city's transportation commissioner, in an article in the *Washington Post*.

#### [How Chronic Illness Threatens Education in California](#) (5/25/08)

According to the California Department of Education, more than 32 percent of all youth in California are overweight and approximately 74 percent are unfit. As a result, chronic illnesses such as juvenile diabetes, asthma, high blood pressure and even heart disease will be endemic among California youth in the future, reports *The San Francisco Chronicle*.

#### [Massachusetts Teens Watch TV, But Not What They Eat](#) (5/15/08)

Despite widespread concern about the burgeoning waistline of America's teenagers, Massachusetts adolescents last year ate no better than they did six years earlier, while remaining glued to their televisions and computers, the *Boston Globe* reports.

#### [Blue Cross Foundation of Florida Announces 8M Initiative to Fight Childhood Obesity](#) (5/14/08)

*Embrace a Healthy Florida* will fund research and provide grants to nonprofit organizations in support of community-based programs promoting healthy lifestyles for children. The initiative will focus on five metro areas: Orlando, Jacksonville, Tampa, Miami and Tallahassee.

#### [Mayors Cooked](#) (5/14/08)

Seven mayors in New Jersey—Woodbridge Mayor John E. McCormac, Pennington Mayor Anthony Persichilli, North Brunswick Mayor Francis Womack, Clark Township Mayor Salvatore Bonaccorso, Nutley Mayor Joanne Cocchiola, and Harrison Township Mayor Mike Koestler—participated in the cutthroat competition to see who could prepare the healthiest dish as part of the Mayors' Wellness

Campaign's effort to promote healthier living and more active lifestyles, according to *The Woodbridge Sentinel*.

[General Mills Foundation and DC Mayor Fenty Launch Healthy Communities Program](#) (5/8/08)

The General Mills Foundation launched a pilot program last week targeting childhood obesity with a \$100,000 pledge to schools and organizations in Washington, D.C., reports KRNV.

[The Lost Supermarket: A Breed in Need of Replenishment](#) (5/05/08)

A continuing decline in the number of neighborhood supermarkets has made it harder for millions of New Yorkers to find fresh and affordable food within walking distance of their homes, according to a recent city study reported on in the *New York Times*.

### **National News**

[The End of Recess: Schools continue to Cut Back on Unstructured Play](#) (5/28/08)

According to *The Buffalo News*, the decline in school recess began slowly about 30 years ago, when one or two 15-or 20- minute recesses plus an hour lunch break were still the norm. The decline continues despite research showing unstructured play promotes learning while releasing energy and stress and minimizing disruptive behaviors.

[Childhood Obesity Rate Levels Off](#) (5/27/08)

*Time Magazine* reports on a new study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* which shows some evidence that the childhood obesity epidemic may finally be leveling off.

[Young Lives at Risk](#) (5/19-22/08)

In May the *Washington Post* ran a comprehensive, five-part series titled "Young Lives at Risk: Our Overweight Children". The series delved into the multi-faceted nature of Childhood Obesity and concluded that "We are all responsible for the childhood obesity epidemic: parents, government, schools, communities, companies, and the health system."

RWJF [Childhood Obesity Update-2008](#) (5/14/08)

Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, president and CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, reports on the foundation's progress in reversing the childhood obesity epidemic, since announcing a \$500 million commitment to the cause last year.

[US Surgeon General Speaks at Stony Brook University](#) (5/14/08)

On May 1, Rear Admiral Dr. Steven Galson, Acting Surgeon General of the United States, delivered an address titled "Healthy Youth for a Healthy Future." Dr. Galson's lecture centered on the importance of preventing childhood obesity, reports the *Times Beacon Record*.

[Legislating Health Habits on the Rise](#) (5/12/08)

*CaliforniaHealthLine* reports that a generation ago, attempts to legislate wellness and healthy

habits were unheard of. They're still rare now, but less so. Amy Winterfeld, health policy analyst for the National Conference of State Legislatures, said wellness-related bills are on the rise in several states.

#### [Food Costs a Factor Among the Poor](#) (5/06/08)

With food costs rising around the world, experts warn that obesity rates and related health problems are likely to increase as well, as reported in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

#### [Lawmakers Push for Better School Nutrition](#) (5/03/08)

Amy Winterfeld, health policy analyst for the National Conference of State Legislatures, reviews the progress of school nutrition legislation.

#### [Portland Pedals to Platinum](#) (4/30/08)

Portland, Oregon became the first city to receive the League of American Bicyclists Platinum award for a bike-friendly environment, according to *The Oregonian*.

#### [Mayor Bloomberg and David Rockefeller Pledge 10 Million to Plant Trees in NYC](#) (4/22/08)

New York City mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and philanthropist David Rockefeller have announced a joint pledge of \$10 million to [MillionTreesNYC](#) to plant trees in the city's public spaces, including New York Housing Authority developments and city schools.

The gift will make possible the planting of more than 18,000 trees throughout the city's five boroughs, and will enable the organization to launch an apprentice program that provides jobs to youth and supports the long-term maintenance and stewardship of the newly planted trees.

### Reports and Studies

#### [Changing Nutrition Standards in Schools: The Emerging Impact on School Revenue](#)

Thus far, few data exist to substantiate the concern that changes in nutrition standards in schools lead to a loss in total revenue, according to a study published in May 2008 issue of *Journal of School Health*.

#### [Designed for Disease: The Link Between Local Food Environments and Obesity and Diabetes](#)

This policy brief, produced collaboratively by the California Center for Public Health Advocacy, PolicyLink, and the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research examines the relationships between retail food environments, obesity and diabetes, and community income.

### Useful Websites

#### [MyPyramid.gov](#)

Sponsored by the US Department of Agriculture, MyPyramid offers personalized eating plans and interactive tools to help you plan and assess your food choices and level of physical activity.

#### [Smallstep.gov](#)

Sponsored by the US Department of Health and Human Services, smallstep offers help with portion control, healthy eating, active living and finding local programs.

## 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 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.

## Funding Opportunities

### [Responsible Sports Community Grants](#)

Responsible Sports, a philanthropic program of insurance company Liberty Mutual, invites youth sports organizations to participate in its Responsible Sports Community Grant program.

**Deadline:** July 19, 2008

### [Mattel Domestic Grant Funding](#)

Mattel and the Mattel Children's Foundation have announced the continuation of the Mattel Domestic Grantmaking Program, which provides funding for organizations benefiting children in the United States.

**Deadline:** July 15, 2008

### [2009 Youth Garden Grants Program](#)

Youth Garden Grants to schools and community organizations with child-centered garden programs.

**Deadline:** November 1, 2008

### [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

### [2008 Healthy Sprouts Award](#)

To be eligible for the 2008 Healthy Sprouts Awards, schools or organizations must plan to garden in 2009 with at least 15 children between the ages of 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 15, 2008

### Upcoming Conferences

[The U.S. Conference of Mayors 76th Annual Meeting](#) (June 20-24, 2008, Miami, FL.)

SAVE THE DATE: The Mayors' Healthy City Summit: Solutions to Reverse Obesity and Create Healthy Communities, **December 3-5, 2008** Tucson, AZ

### Upcoming Health Observation Dates

[July is Recreation and Parks Month](#)

### New Publication

[Restructuring Government to Address the Social Determinants of Health](#)

In February 2008, Prevention Institute and Trust for America's Health (TFAH) convened government officials, community advocates, and researchers to discuss the federal government's role in addressing underlying determinants of health—the community-level social and physical environments that contribute to the nation's poor health outcomes. While the focus was on federal government roles, the findings are also relevant to state and local government efforts.

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