



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

## Healthy Cities E-Newsletter



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### Local News

[Philadelphia Announces a New Food Charter and Restaurant Menu Labeling Law](#) (10/08/08, 11/06/08))

On October 7 at Reading Terminal Market, Mayor Nutter announced a new Food Charter that articulates the City's commitment to providing safe, affordable, locally grown, and healthy food for Philadelphians. As the Food Charter (which you can [read in full here](#)) envisions, food can be a catalyst for youth engagement and resident involvement in community gardens and farms, a means to advance public and community health through education and access to nutritious food, and a foundation for creating vital and sustainable neighborhoods. In addition, earlier this month, the Philadelphia City Council passed a menu labeling law that has been described as the strongest in the nation. The measure requires local units of restaurant chains with at least 15 stores nationwide to post calorie counts on menus and menu boards starting Jan. 1, 2010. But it goes farther than the mandates enacted by New York City and several other jurisdictions by requiring that, in addition to calories, trans fat, saturated fat, sodium and carbohydrate contents be listed on printed menus. [Read about the requirement here](#).

[School Menus Offer Locally Grown Food](#) (10/02/08)

*The Washington Post* reported that state and local officials are hoping a new initiative will help schoolchildren across Maryland appreciate local farmers and the crops they grow. As part of this effort, the state sponsored Homegrown School Lunch Week, an effort to teach children that the watermelon chunks and cucumber slices they see on their lunch trays come from nearby fields -- not the supermarket.

[Play's the Thing: City Recognized for Playgrounds, Programs](#) (10/01/08)

Henderson, Nev. was the only community in the state to be honored by KaBOOM!, a national nonprofit group dedicated to bringing play areas within walking distance of children. In the *Las Vegas Sun* Tracy Novak of the city's Parks and Recreation Department explains "It's our desire to improve the health of children in Henderson and reduce the incidence of childhood obesity."

[Armed With Pencils, Paper and Now, Pedometers](#) (10/01/08)

The *Kitsap Sun* reports on a program that provides pedometers to local elementary students. First thing in the morning on their way to their seats, students grab their pedometers from holders on the wall and snap them on. They don't come off until the end of the day. Students use the pedometers in math projects and are now more aware of the amount they do—or don't—walk.

### National News

#### [2010 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee](#) (10/27/08)

According to *Webwire.com*, Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer and Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt have announced the appointment of 13 nationally recognized experts to serve on the 2010 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee. The Dietary Guidelines are based on the preponderance of scientific and medical knowledge and offer both the general public and policy-makers ways to improve the overall health of Americans through proper nutrition. As mandated by Congress, the Dietary Guidelines are reviewed for revision every five years.

#### [Urban Sprawl and Childhood Obesity](#) (10/27/08)

Urban sprawl has typically been discussed in terms of its environmental and economic costs. But Dr. Richard Jackson has been studying its impact on our physical and mental health for nearly three decades. The dramatic reduction of physical exercise as basic as walking has coincided with a sharp increase in childhood obesity, early onset of diabetes, and mental health problems, reports the *Rochester City Paper*.

#### [Farmer in Chief](#) (10/09/07)

Author and advocate Michael Pollan explains what the next president can and should do to remake the way we grow and eat our food in this *New York Times Magazine* article.

#### [N.F.L. Sets an Active Example on Fitness](#) (10/07/08)

[Play 60](#) is the NFL's youth health and fitness campaign, focused on making the next generation of kids the most active and healthy by encouraging them to be active for at least 60 minutes a day. *The New York Times* reports that the N.F.L. picked the cause in part because it thinks children would be more likely to listen to athletes on an issue that was clearly relevant to their success: taking care of their bodies.

#### [New Study Proves Beacon Street Girls' Books Fight Childhood Obesity](#) (10/06/08)

Reuters reports on a new study from Duke Children's Hospital which demonstrated that the [Beacon Street Girls'](#) popular book series helps tween girls improve their eating and exercise habits, and significantly improve their Body Mass Index (BMI) percentiles.

#### ['Nightly News' Praises Mayor Who Put 'City on a Diet'](#) (10/03/08)

Fighting obesity with pork may not sound like the path to physical fitness – until you realize it isn't "the other white meat," but government spending. The "NBC Nightly News" on Oct. 2 praised Republican Oklahoma City Mayor Mick Cornett for using taxpayer money to encourage constituents to lose weight. Cornett claims to "have put the entire city on a diet."

#### [Kids' Cereal: Most Still Have Too Much Sugar](#) (10/02/08)

*Consumer Reports* rated the top 27 cereals marketed to kids and found most of them had a lot of room for improvement. Only four, Cheerios, Kix, Life and Honey Nut Cheerios ranked Very Good. And an international study in which the organization participated found that several U.S. cereals had more sugar and sodium than their counterparts in other participating countries.

## Reports and Studies

### [CDC Congressional Testimony: Childhood Obesity and the Impact of Food Marketing to Children](#)

On September 23, 2008, this statement was given by Julie L. Gerberding, M.D., M.P.H., Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Administrator of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to a congressional subcommittee.

### [Green neighborhoods may reduce childhood obesity](#)

In an article published in the December 2008 issue of the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, researchers report that children living in greener inner city neighborhoods experienced lower weight gains compared to those in areas with less green space.

## 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.

### [2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans](#)

The Federal Government has issued its first-ever Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. They describe the types and amounts of physical activity that offer substantial health benefits to Americans.

### [National Association for Sport and Physical Education: Tip Sheet](#)

This new tip sheet is filled with resources for classroom teachers and physical educators alike, including: links to free activities and lessons devoted to before and after school programs, physical activity breaks during the school day, employee wellness, and active transport.

### [Active Transportation for America: A Case for Increased Federal Investment in Bicycling and Walking](#)

Active Transportation for America makes the case and quantifies the national benefits—for the first time—that increased federal funding in bicycling and walking infrastructure would provide tens of billions of dollars in benefits to all Americans. By making active transportation a viable option for everyday travel, it will cost-effectively reduce oil dependence, climate pollution and obesity rates while providing more and better choices for getting around town.

## 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, categorized by eligibility, source and type of assistance for easy searching, include several available to local governments.

#### [USDA - Classroom Challenge Grants Program](#)

Funding aims to promote and strengthen agriscience and agribusiness education at the college level, as well as agriculture education in K to 12 classrooms. The ultimate long-term goal of this program is to encourage more young Americans to pursue and complete a baccalaureate or higher degree in the food and agricultural sciences. Last year, over 50 percent of applications received funding.

**Deadline:** December 15, 2008

#### [Win a \\$50,000 Grant for a New Playspace in Your Community!](#)

KaBOOM! is teaming up with Stonyfield Farms to offer two \$50,000 grants for new playspaces. For a chance to win a \$50,000 grant for a community-built playground, and the chance to help choose another group to receive the same prize, have your school or youth group collect specially-marked yogurt lids from Stonyfield Farm 6oz. and 32oz. yogurts between now and December 31, 2008. The group that sends the most lids to Stonyfield wins.

**Deadline:** December 31, 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

#### **Useful Web sites**

##### [Rethinking School Lunch Guide](#)

The Rethinking School Lunch Guide provides a planning framework containing tools and creative solutions to the challenges of improving school lunch programs, academic performance, ecological knowledge, and the well-being of our children. In its chapters experts and practitioners highlight goals and challenges, showcase success stories, and offer resources for further exploration.

#### **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 in Washington, DC. Keynote speakers will include RWJF Foundation President Risa Lavizzo-Mourey. Policy-makers from the federal, state and local level of government will be invited to attend. More information about the summit **will be** forthcoming.

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