

SAN DIEGO COUNTY  
**CHILDHOOD  
OBESITY  
INITIATIVE**

Working Together to Shape a Healthy Future

# Call to Action

San Diego County

## Childhood Obesity Action Plan

Revised 2010

[www.OurCommunityOurKids.org](http://www.OurCommunityOurKids.org)



## COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92161-2470

Dear Friends:

It is our pleasure to present this revised version of the "*Call to Action: Childhood Obesity Action Plan*" for San Diego County.

Through the *Childhood Obesity Action Plan* and the subsequent establishment of the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative, we are committed to reducing childhood obesity by promoting policy, environmental and system changes at the County of San Diego and in the community. To accomplish this, we need your support and involvement.

Since the first publication of the *Childhood Obesity Action Plan* in 2006, we have come a long way in raising awareness about childhood obesity, providing resources to support practitioners and families, and creating healthier communities. There is more to be done. Childhood obesity remains a worsening problem.

Fortunately, our county has a wealth of community partners – including you – who are dedicated to reversing this trend.

The *Childhood Obesity Action Plan* is intended to serve as a "Call to Action" to inspire agencies, institutions and neighborhoods to recognize the importance of nutrition and physical activity. We recommend adoption of one or more strategies among the seven sectors identified in the *Action Plan*. It is also meant to build momentum and support for many organizations that are already successfully addressing this issue. Working collaboratively, we can leverage resources and promising practices to ensure a healthy future for San Diego County children.

We are proud to say that the Initiative has become a nationally recognized model. We are at the forefront of implementing innovative practices and policies to curb childhood obesity.

One of the most unique aspects of this effort is that we collaborate with non-traditional partners to make these changes. This is integral to tackling not only the obesity epidemic, but other pressing issues such as improving air quality and reducing urban sprawl.

Finally, thank you to all of the dedicated members of the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative Leadership Council and community members who participate on the multi-sector domain workgroups. Their insight and commitment to a more nutritious and a physically fit future for our children has been an incredible help as we seek to improve the health and well-being of children and families throughout San Diego County.

Sincerely,

PAM SLATER-PRICE

Supervisor  
Third District



RON ROBERTS

Supervisor  
Fourth District



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Challenge of Childhood Obesity .....2

Background .....2

    Call to Action.....2

    The “Environmental” Approach.....3

    Formative Research Process .....3

    San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative.....3

    Domains of Influence .....4

Call to Action 1: Government Domain.....5

Call to Action 2: Healthcare Domain .....7

Call to Action 3: Schools and After-school Domain .....9

Call to Action 4: Early Childhood Domain .....12

Call to Action 5: Community Domain .....14

Call to Action 6: Media Domain.....16

Call to Action 7: Business Domain.....17

Next Steps.....19

    What Can You Do?.....19

    What Will the County Do? .....20

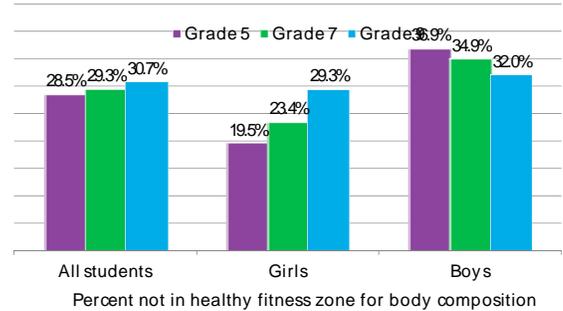
    How Will We Measure Success?.....21

Acknowledgements .....23

## THE CHALLENGE OF CHILDHOOD OBESITY

Childhood overweight and obesity is a significant and growing health concern that has reached epidemic proportions. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, childhood obesity has more than tripled in the past 30 years. The prevalence of obesity among U.S. children aged 6 to 11 years increased from 6.5% in 1980 to 19.6% in 2008 and the prevalence of obesity among adolescents aged 12 to 19 years increased from 5.0% to 18.1%. These rates are even higher in California and San Diego County. Latino and African American youth face higher rates of overweight than white and Asian youth.

**Overweight among Children and Adolescents, San Diego County, 2008-09**



California Department of Education Physical Fitness Report

Being overweight exposes children to serious health problems, now and in the future. According to the U.S. Surgeon General, overweight adolescents have a 70% chance of being overweight or obese as adults and this risk increases to 80% if one or more parent is overweight or obese. These children are more likely than children of healthy weight to suffer from cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes in adulthood. Obesity related chronic diseases are largely preventable and result in a burden on the state's economy due to exorbitant and preventable long-term costs. A 2009 study by the California Center for Public Health Advocacy estimated that overweight and physical inactivity costs California \$41.2 billion and San Diego County more than \$3 billion annually in direct and indirect expenses. As the percentage of children who are overweight increases, and as these children age, the health problems they experience will result in growing costs for medical care and lost productivity.

## BACKGROUND

### Call to Action

In October 2004, at the recommendation of Supervisors Pam Slater-Price and Ron Roberts, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to support and fund the creation, coordination and implementation of a Childhood Obesity Master Plan to end childhood obesity. This effort was designed to build upon the work begun by the Coalition on Children and Weight San Diego. Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP)—a collaboration of organizations with the goal of achieving improved health for San Diego communities—assisted in coordination of the plan. San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) staff and individuals from the private sector with expertise in the areas of healthcare, nutrition and physical activity were invited to serve on a steering committee to guide the process. With input from multidisciplinary partners, community residents and others, the steering committee developed in 2006 the *Call to Action: San Diego County Childhood Obesity Action Plan (Action Plan)*. The *Action Plan* emphasizes policy and environmental changes with the recognition that it is easier for individuals to make healthy choices to reduce and prevent childhood obesity when their physical and social environments support these choices. The *Action Plan* was revised in 2007 and again in 2010.



The objectives of the *Action Plan* include the following:

- Building awareness about the problem of childhood obesity.
- Serving as a guide for all agencies, institutions and neighborhoods in San Diego County.
- Planting a seed and building momentum for action without being prescriptive.
- Connecting those already working on this issue with new organizations and new sectors.
- Ensuring that strategies emphasize policy and environmental changes, not just individual and family efforts.
- Creating a plan document that supports community partners.

### The “Environmental” Approach

The *Action Plan* steering committee utilized an ecological model of health promotion in the development of this plan. The ecological model is focused on the environmental changes, behaviors and policies that help individuals make healthy choices in their daily lives. The foundation of the ecological model is the concept that behavior does not change in a vacuum and that a supportive environment is necessary for individuals to make healthy choices. This model takes into account the physical and social environments and their relationship to people at individual, interpersonal, organizational and community levels. The ecological model addresses multiple levels of behavioral influence and offers a comprehensive approach to preventing childhood obesity.

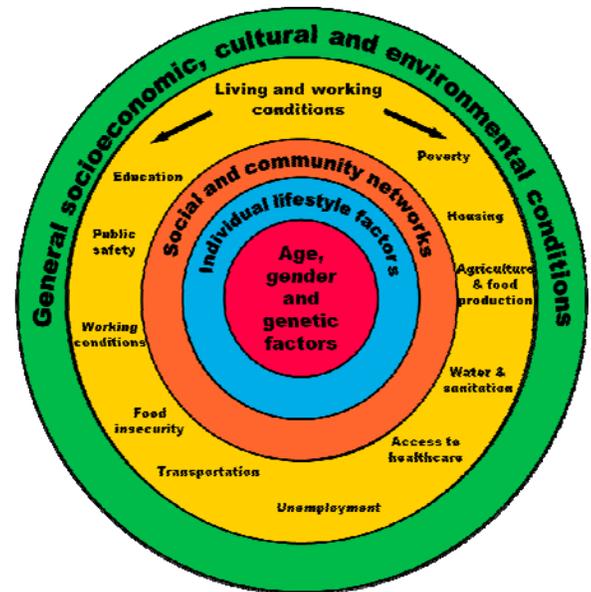
### Formative Research Process

The *Action Plan* planning process included a rigorous literature review as well as input from multidisciplinary partners and communities throughout San Diego County. Input was sought from many sources in numerous settings including work groups with experts from a variety of disciplines; community conversations with residents from different neighborhoods, races/ethnicities, cultures and backgrounds; and one-on-one interviews with key informants. Recognizing that a multidisciplinary, comprehensive approach to the problem is necessary, the steering committee identified seven key domain areas (see page 4) that have the most influence on developing environments that support healthy choices and behavior change. As partners from these domain areas and other community members became involved in the planning process, the steering committee focused on engaging those who are currently addressing the problem and engaging those who could be doing more.

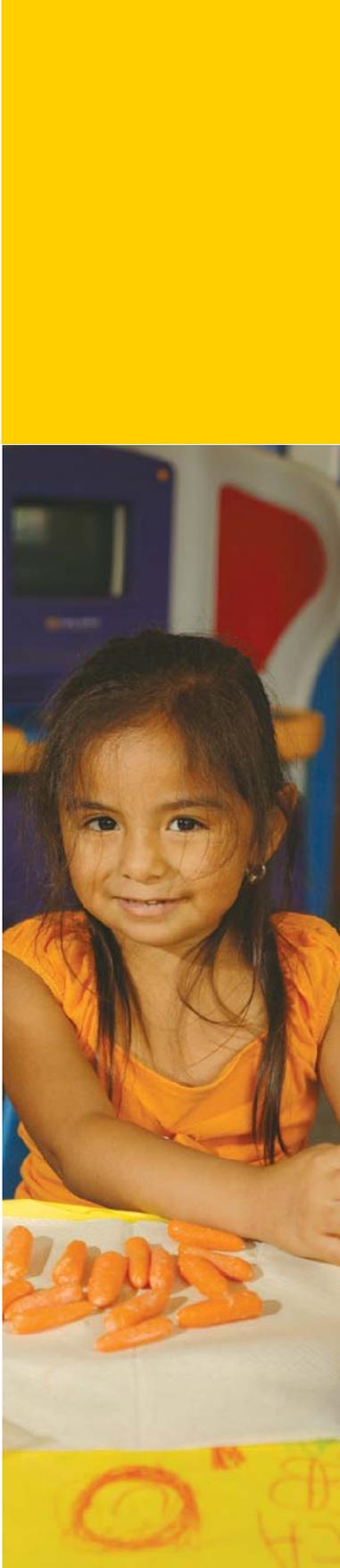
### San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative

Following publication of the *Action Plan* in 2006, the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative was formed to engage community partners and assure effective implementation of the strategies outlined in the plan. With core funding from the First 5 Commission of San Diego County and the County of San Diego HHSA, and additional capacity building funding from The California Endowment, CHIP was selected through a competitive bidding process to direct the Initiative.

The San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative (Initiative) is a public/private partnership whose mission is to reduce and prevent childhood obesity in San Diego County by creating healthy environments for all children and families through advocacy, education, policy development, and environmental change. The purpose of the Initiative is to create, support, and mobilize partnerships among multiple domains; provide leadership and vision; and coordinate countywide efforts to prevent and reduce childhood obesity. We envision healthy kids and healthy options for all families no matter where they live, work, play, worship, or go to school.



Ecological Model of Childhood Obesity Prevention



Goals of the Initiative include:

- Increasing opportunities for all children and families to access and eat healthful foods in a culturally appropriate manner.
- Increasing opportunities for all children and families to engage in physical activity in an inclusive and culturally appropriate manner.
- Increasing other opportunities to enhance economic, social, service, and built environments.
- Promoting operational excellence of the public/private partnership.

The Initiative was established as a public/private partnership and this collaborative spirit guides its work. By engaging agencies, institutions, organizations, neighborhoods, and individuals to work together to combat childhood obesity, the Initiative leverages existing resources and promising practices and inspires new partners to join the cause. The Initiative has developed an infrastructure that includes engagement of volunteer leaders or “champions” in each domain; engagement of new and existing partners in domain workgroups; ongoing domain workgroup meetings; and biannual domain council meetings, at which domain champions share their work and identify cross-collaborative opportunities. The Initiative is guided by a leadership council comprised of members of the former *Action Plan* steering committee and other key stakeholders including representatives from each domain.

### Domains of Influence

This *Action Plan* calls for every person in San Diego County to be part of the fight against childhood obesity. The following recommended strategies are presented in seven domain areas:

- Government
- Healthcare
- Schools and after-school
- Early childhood
- Community
- Media
- Business

The strategies recommended in this plan are not meant to be all-inclusive. Community partners are encouraged to develop additional childhood obesity prevention strategies based on their experience, abilities, resources, strengths and communities.

Promising local programs and activities that address childhood obesity are highlighted on the following pages. These programs successfully implement *Action Plan* strategies and strive to create an environment that supports healthy choices for children and families. For more information about these programs, please visit our website at [www.OurCommunityOurKids.org](http://www.OurCommunityOurKids.org).

## A CALL TO ACTION 1:

### Engage GOVERNMENT to advance the following strategies to prevent childhood obesity:

- A. Include health in all policies and planning documents including:
- City and county general plans
  - Regional transportation plan
  - Regional comprehensive plan
  - Community plans
  - Zoning ordinances
  - Subdivision regulations
  - Regional food systems policies
  - Agency strategic plans
- B. Modify land use and transportation plans so that safe, accessible active transportation (i.e., walking and biking) is incorporated into all communities.
- C. Enhance connectivity of the transportation system, across and between active and public transportation modes.
- D. Prioritize multi-use paths that lead to food outlets that serve healthful foods and parks or other venues that provide opportunities for physical activity.
- E. Design plans for new communities, capital improvement projects and large construction projects so that schools, parks, stores and other facilities are within easy walking and bicycling distance to residential areas and so that walking/cycling paths encourage physical activity.
- F. Establish safe routes to schools that include encourage walking and bicycling.
- G. Implement a countywide safe routes to school strategic plan to encourage comprehensive safe routes to school planning.
- H. Increase quantity, quality and accessibility of parks, natural open spaces and facilities in order to encourage physical activity among children and families.
- I. Sponsor and promote programs and opportunities for children and families to engage in safe physical activities with a focus on the following:
- Strategically use facilities and outdoor spaces for active recreation
  - Promote play and fun while addressing the needs of all community residents including high-risk populations
  - Infuse physical activity aspects into existing recreation programs and community-wide events
  - Develop strategies to increase physical activity for individuals currently utilizing parks and recreation resources in a passive way
  - Create and sustain community recreation activities for all ages and ability levels
  - Collaborate with community residents to ensure support for ongoing community beautification efforts and public spaces for active engagement that are well-maintained, well-supervised and safe
- J. Consider health impact assessment as a decision-making tool for all policies.
- K. Map and prioritize underserved geographic areas and/or populations that would gain positive health benefits from basic infrastructure improvements including proposed transportation and land use projects.
- L. Utilize redevelopment funds to enhance access to healthful foods and opportunities for physical activity in under-resourced neighborhoods.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY  
CHILDHOOD OBESITY  
INITIATIVE



GOVERNMENT  
DOMAIN

- M. Reduce incidents of crime by ensuring that crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) principles are understood and incorporated into public and private development design.
- N. Use pricing incentives and strategies to encourage healthy choices among children and families.
- O. Consider transportation needs of children and develop youth-friendly land use and transportation guidelines for use at every stage of the planning process.
- P. Increase civic knowledge and engagement in local food systems, basic land use and transportation concepts, and community and regional plans.
- Q. Develop and promote level of service standards for pedestrian, bicycle, public transit and wheelchair transport to assure that an improvement to roadways doesn't negatively impact walkers, bikers, disabled or transit riders.
- R. Establish joint use policies with school districts and other organizations to allow reciprocal use of playing fields, playgrounds, gardens, parks and recreation centers by schools and community residents.
- S. Design government facilities to promote healthy eating and active living.
- T. Establish procurement practices and policies that prioritize healthful foods and local agriculture.
- U. Adopt and implement wellness policies for government employees.
- V. Promote breastfeeding as the healthiest first food by implementing workplace lactation policies that provide safe, private and clean breastfeeding accommodations on government property.
- W. Ensure that all government owned and/or leased property has healthful food choices (e.g., in vending machines, cafeterias, concessions, etc.).
- X. Model healthy eating and active living in all government settings.

### **Role of Government Domain Partners**

Partners participating in the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative's government domain conduct the following activities to support the stated strategies:

- Provide stewardship to address and prevent childhood obesity across government departments, jurisdictions and partners in a collaborative manner
- Provide resources, support and technical assistance to stakeholders
- Provide a forum in which stakeholders can share and leverage resources and best practices

### **Healthy Communities Planning Workshops**

The San Diego County Health & Human Services Agency, the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative and other partners have collaborated on a series of workshops and meetings to bring together traditional and non-traditional partners to collaborate on building healthier communities.

- The Growing Green, Growing Healthy workshop convened public health and land use/transportation planning professionals to explore how they can work together to integrate public health into community design.
- The Healthy General Plans workshop provided hands-on training to assist cities in incorporating health elements into general plans.
- A convening co-sponsored by the Healthy Eating Active Living Cities Campaign highlighted opportunities for legislators to support community gardens and healthy food retail.

## A CALL TO ACTION 2:

### Engage HEALTHCARE systems, including health plans and providers, to advance the following strategies to prevent and treat childhood obesity:

- A. Include culturally appropriate obesity prevention, screening, counseling and referrals in routine clinical practice, based on evidence-based practice guidelines.
- B. Include obesity prevention and screening in quality assessment measures for health insurers, health plans, quality improvement organizations and accrediting organizations.
- C. Provide and participate in ongoing education and training for healthcare providers and health profession students in the following areas:
  - Obesity prevention
  - Obesity treatment
  - Advocacy
  - Cultural competency
- D. Routinely track body mass index (BMI) and provide patients with relevant, evidence-based counseling and referrals.
- E. Participate in community, county, state and national surveillance efforts to measure BMI prevalence.
- F. Include healthy weight gain and other obesity prevention messaging in routine clinical practice for pregnant women and families.
- G. Promote access to culturally appropriate health education regarding healthy eating and active living.
- H. Increase awareness of and referral to local, community-based resources for nutrition, physical activity and clinical programs and services (e.g., 211 San Diego; see page 8).
- I. Develop and improve community competency by taking into account the complex experiences, circumstances, history, diversity, environment, resources and culture that shape the communities served.
- J. Promote breastfeeding as the healthiest first food and provide lactation support to pregnant women and mothers.
- K. Collaborate with agencies, institutions, businesses and local government to strengthen healthy eating and physical activity environments.
- J. Advocate for improved reimbursement to all healthcare providers for obesity prevention, diagnosis and treatment services.
- K. Partner with WIC (Women, Infants and Children) agencies and other food assistance programs to increase availability of affordable, nutritious foods and deliver uniform nutrition messaging.
- L. Model healthy eating and active living in all healthcare settings.



## Role of Healthcare Domain Partners

Partners participating in the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative's healthcare systems domain conduct the following activities to support the stated strategies:

- Engage healthcare systems, including health plans and providers, to support and advocate for healthy systems, policy and environmental change
- Provide resources, support and technical assistance to healthcare providers and stakeholders
- Provide a forum in which healthcare stakeholders can share and leverage resources

### 211 San Diego: Nutrition, Healthy Weight, Physical Activity, and Diabetes Resource



The San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative, Rady Children's Hospital's Center for Healthier Communities, American Academy of Pediatrics California Chapter 3, Community Health Improvement Partners, Champions for Change/Network for a Healthy California, and Community Health Improvement Partners have joined with 211 San Diego, a 24/7 multilingual phone service and searchable online health and human service database, to create a comprehensive obesity and diabetes information and referral database.

This resource provides San Diego County with a free "one stop shop" for programs and services related to nutrition, healthy weight, physical activity, and diabetes. These free resources can be accessed by dialing 2-1-1 or visiting [www.211sandiego.org](http://www.211sandiego.org) and clicking on the green apple icon.

### San Diego County Regional Immunization Registry Body Mass Index Surveillance Capacity

The San Diego Regional Immunization Registry (SDIR), managed by the San Diego Health & Human Services Agency, Epidemiology and Immunization Services Branch of Public Health Services, added the capacity for body mass index (BMI) reporting in June, 2008. The addition of height and weight to the SDIR made it one of the first immunization registry-based BMI reporting systems in the nation. Supported by the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative, this new feature was implemented to provide surveillance of obesity prevalence among children and to enhance obesity screening, prevention and treatment. This function benefits three constituencies:

- For providers, automatic calculation of BMI and BMI percentiles helps identify overweight and obese children, minimizes the burden on staff to hand-calculate these measures, and may result in more reliable measures. BMI and growth charts, easily printed through SDIR, can enhance counseling for overweight patients and families.
- For clinic, medical, and program directors, SDIR can provide aggregate reports to compare BMI screening and obesity rates across clinics, geographic areas, or populations or to reveal disparities and differential effectiveness of treatment in subpopulations.
- For county officials and those planning or implementing obesity prevention programs, aggregate reports can reveal differences in overweight and obesity prevalence rates by geographic location, demographics, and institutional or policy exposure. For example, the association between overweight and school wellness policy variation or differences in the built environment can be explored.

### A CALL TO ACTION 3:

**Engage SCHOOLS AND AFTER-SCHOOL PROVIDERS to advance the following strategies to prevent childhood obesity:**

#### SCHOOLS:

- A. Adopt and implement the four goals of the California Department of Education and *The Superintendent's Task Force on Childhood Obesity, Type 2 Diabetes, and Cardiovascular Disease*:
  - Support high-quality instructional programs in health education and physical education that provide students with the skills, knowledge and confidence to develop and maintain active, healthy lifestyles
  - Implement nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold on campus
  - Increase participation in school meal programs so that no child goes hungry
  - Create a school environment that supports the health of students
- B. Prioritize resources for nutrition and physical activity with recognition of the strong connection between student wellness and academic performance.
- C. Make a broad, sustained commitment to wellness by implementing nutrition education, physical education and physical activity programs on an ongoing, year-round basis to offer student opportunities to learn and practice healthy behaviors.
- D. Provide adequate support to district wellness leads to maintain active wellness councils consisting of district and school administrators, school board members, students, child nutrition, physical education, health services and community-based organizations.
- E. Communicate information about school wellness to staff, parents, students and other stakeholders on an ongoing, year-round basis through a variety of channels.
- F. Track and report impact of wellness activities—assess nutrition, physical education and physical activity as key elements of the school improvement plan and report to the school board and other policy- and decision-makers.
- G. Develop relationships with parent groups, businesses, philanthropic groups, local government agencies and community-based organizations that can provide support for school wellness implementation efforts and projects.
- H. Adopt the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Coordinated School Health Model (see page 11).
- I. Model healthy eating and active living in all school settings.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY  
CHILDHOOD OBESITY  
INITIATIVE



SCHOOLS AND  
AFTER-SCHOOL  
DOMAIN

J. Identify ways to strengthen and enhance existing school wellness policy to address the following:

Access to free, safe drinking water	Healthy celebrations	Oral health promotion
Active promotion of healthy lifestyles	Healthy fundraising policies	Parent and youth engagement
Breakfast programs	Inclusion of charter schools	Policy on outside foods related to food safety/allergies
Connecting families to wellness resources	Inclusion of on-site preschools	Safe routes to school/walk to school programs
Eliminate food/physical activity as reward or punishment	Joint use agreements	School gardens
Eliminate marketing/advertising of unhealthy foods	Moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA) goals in physical education	Staff wellness/role modeling
Food procurement policies (i.e., farm-to-school)	Nutrition policies (sodium, whole grains, food additives, local sourcing, sports drinks)	Summer meal sites

**AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS:**

- K. Programs on school sites should, at minimum, follow districts' and/or school site wellness policies.
- L. Programs not on school sites should develop wellness policies that include physical activity and nutrition standards and promote a healthy environment for all participants and staff.
- M. All programs should serve foods and beverages that meet or exceed California School Nutrition Standards.
- N. All programs should adopt the California After School Physical Activity Guidelines:
  - Create an after school physical activity culture that fosters youth development
  - Develop and implement after school physical activity policies
  - Plan and evaluate after school physical activity, maintain a strong infrastructure for physical activity, and ensure directors and staff members support and promote after school physical activity programs
  - Develop and maintain high-quality after school physical activity that includes a wide range of physical activity choices that are safe and developmentally appropriate for all participants
  - Ensure that all students achieve and are included in the appropriate amounts of physical activity
  - Develop after school physical activity that supports and reinforces the physical education content of the regular school day
  - Build partnerships with the community to support after school physical activity

**Role of School and After-School Domain Partners**

Partners participating in the Initiative's schools and after-school domain conduct the following activities to support the stated strategies:

- Provide training, on-going communication and resources to school district wellness policy leads, wellness committees, parents, students, on-site preschools, charter schools, out-of-school providers and other community-based organizations
- Provide district representatives to serve as liaisons between the domain and school districts to provide technical assistance and resources to further wellness policy implementation
- Advocate for school policy and environmental change with school boards and other policy and decision-makers
- Support projects in other Initiative domains related to school wellness

### School District Representatives

To provide ongoing support to the more than 40 school district wellness leads, domain workgroup partners act as district representatives--liaisons between the districts and the domain workgroup. These district representatives serve on wellness councils and provide a direct link to domain resources such as wellness policy trainings, nutrition education, assistance in policy communication and monitoring, as well as funding and partnership opportunities.



### San Diego Padres “FriarFit” Program

The San Diego Padres’ FriarFit program provides resources for teachers to assist them in teaching the current fitness and health curriculum requirements as set out by the California Department of Education, as well as resources and activities to help individuals and families become more healthy and active. A program highlight is the “Instant Recess” DVD that increases physical activity in the classroom to promote learning.

Domain partners collaborated with the FriarFit program by providing a series of trainings for parents to engage them in school wellness policy implementation.

### Support of Coordinated School Health

A coordinated school health program model consists of eight interactive components:

- Health education
- Counseling, psychological & social services
- Physical education
- Healthy school environment
- Health services
- Health promotion for staff
- Nutrition services
- Family/community involvement

Solving the nation’s most serious health and social problems requires an integrated effort that involves schools, families, healthcare workers, the media, religious organizations, community organizations that serve youth, and young people themselves. Schools can provide a facility where agencies work together to maintain the well-being of young people.

In support of coordinated school health, domain partners in April 2009 recognized six schools with “Healthy and Ready to Learn Awards.” Awardees were given mini-grants to further their work in the coordinated school health components of family/community involvement, health promotion for staff and healthy school environment. Winners included San Ysidro High School, Albert Einstein Elementary School, and Field Elementary School. East Lake High School, Farb Middle School and McMillan Elementary School received honorable mention.

## A CALL TO ACTION 4:

**Engage the EARLY CHILDHOOD community to advance the following strategies to prevent childhood obesity among children ages 0 - 5:**

### EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROVIDERS:

- A. Provide a support system for families to encourage healthy eating and physically active lifestyles in an inclusive and culturally competent manner. Examples include:
  - Sharing information on healthy alternatives
  - Including parents in decisions on healthy eating and physical activity
- B. Adopt and implement effective wellness policies that include the following elements to promote healthy nutrition and physical activity for children:
  - Adequate physical activity each day including outdoor free play time
  - Nutritional standards for meals, snacks and beverages
  - Elimination of unhealthful foods
  - Healthy role modeling by staff and caregivers
  - Elimination of food/physical activity used as reward or punishment
  - Limited screen/TV time
  - Healthy celebrations
  - Promotion of and support for breastfeeding
  - Promotion of oral health
- C. Encourage parents to use healthy food and physical activity environments as criteria for selecting early childhood programs (e.g., sites that have implemented effective wellness policies).
- D. Model behaviors that demonstrate healthy eating and physically active lifestyles for parents and children.
- E. Partner with other community organizations (e.g., businesses, government, schools, faith communities) to support healthy and active environments.

### Role of Early Childhood Domain Partners

Partners participating in the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative's early childhood domain conduct the following activities to support the stated strategies:

- Develop and provide resources, support and technical assistance to early childhood educators
- Provide a forum for the early childhood community to network, share resources and partner with others



### I am Moving, I am Learning

MAAC Project Head Start implements the “I am Moving, I am Learning” (IMIL) approach to address childhood obesity. IMIL is a research-based physical activity initiative implemented by Head Start programs. The program includes education for children, parents, and staff on making healthy food choices as well as physical activities as part of the everyday routine.

IMIL promotes structured movement, which includes physical activities such as walking, running, hopping, galloping, skipping, twisting, stretching, kicking, dribbling, and catching. This approach assures that children get at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day. Additionally, MAAC Project staff provides nutritional counseling to families of children at risk for overweight and educational materials on healthy lifestyles to parents.



### Farm to Preschool Pilot Program

North County Community Services Child Development Centers is piloting a Farm to Preschool program in collaboration with Occidental College. This two-year program is founded on the simple idea that children should eat well and be healthy. The project has been designed to influence early childhood eating habits and expand the farm to school network of programs to bring farm fresh foods to childcare and preschool programs.

As part of the program, Occidental College is conducting a rigorous scientific investigation of ways to improve preschool menus, parents’ nutrition knowledge, and students’ diets and food preferences. With the support of the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative and the YMCA Childcare Resource Service, the program will involve partnerships with local farmers and produce distributors to improve school menus, educational and interactive workshops for parents, and age-appropriate nutrition classroom curricula for students.

## A CALL TO ACTION 5:

**Engage COMMUNITY residents and organizations to work together to advance the following strategies to prevent childhood obesity in an inclusive and culturally appropriate manner:**

### COMMUNITY RESIDENTS:

- A. Increase knowledge about the importance of healthy eating and physical activity.
- B. Increase understanding that a community's design, its food availability and its physical activity environments are directly linked to residents' health.
- C. Increase understanding of the role of policy, environmental, and systems change in the prevention and reduction of childhood obesity.
- D. Engage faith communities and community-based organizations in creating physical activity and healthy eating improvements.
- E. Take action and provide leadership to create healthy changes in settings such as workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods.
- F. Model healthy behaviors among friends, family, and co-workers.

### COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS:

- G. Adopt policies and practices that support health and wellness.
- H. Provide healthful foods, nutrition education and opportunities for physical activity.
- I. Enlist and empower community residents to advocate for healthy policy and environmental changes.
- J. Foster the development of a new generation of health leaders by engaging youth in advocacy efforts.
- K. Partner with traditional and nontraditional stakeholders to create healthy policy and environmental change.
- L. Engage community residents in meaningful decision-making processes related to healthy eating and active living.
- M. Collaborate with other agencies, institutions, and government organizations in order to strengthen healthy eating and physical activity environments.
- N. Model behaviors that demonstrate healthy eating and active living within community-based organizations.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY  
CHILDHOOD OBESITY  
INITIATIVE



COMMUNITY  
DOMAIN

## Role of Community Domain Partners

Partners participating in the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative's community domain conduct the following activities to support the stated strategies:

- Engage community, faith, youth, grassroots, and public organizations to support and advocate for healthy policy and environmental change
- Provide resources, technical assistance, and support to organizations in making policy and environmental changes

### Faith Advisory Councils

The Initiative's Faith Advisory Councils work with the Community Domain to support faith leaders in modeling healthy practices and advocating for improvements in the food and physical activity environment. Faith Advisory Councils operate in multiple regions of the county. Through these councils, the Initiative helps connect faith leaders to advocacy tools, resources, and emerging issues that help eliminate barriers to healthy eating and physical activity. To date, Faith Advisory Councils have provided faith leaders with a venue to:

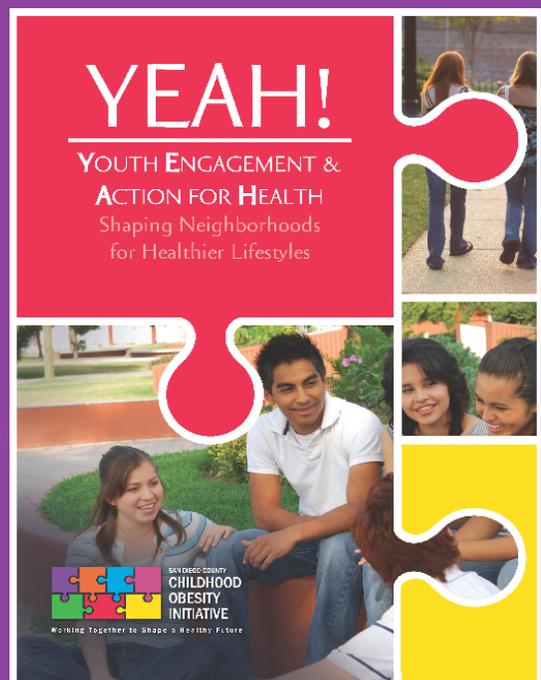
- Learn about childhood obesity from a policy and environmental change perspective.
- Engage faith communities to support and advocate for healthy policy and environmental change.
- Network with each other to share best and emerging practices.
- Build the capacity of faith leaders to educate members on the importance of healthy living and supportive environments.
- Connect with elected officials and city representatives to partner on community health improvement strategies.
- Develop community-based solutions to the childhood obesity epidemic.

### Youth Engagement and Action for Health! (YEAH!)

The Youth Engagement and Action for Health (YEAH!) manual is based on two pilot projects developed through the Government Domain of the Initiative and two recruited cities, La Mesa and Chula Vista. This youth engagement project was a hybrid of the California Department of Public Health's Network for a Healthy California Communities of Excellence in Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Prevention (CX3).

From the successes of these pilot projects a workgroup was formed to create the YEAH! manual to provide leaders of youth groups with a guide to plan and implement projects designed to create healthier neighborhoods. This manual was a project of the Initiative and was developed through a partnership with the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency Department of Public Health Services, the City of La Mesa, WALKSanDiego, Healthy Eating Active Communities (HEAC), California Project LEAN, Excel Youth Zone and Community Health Improvement Partners. Funding was provided by The California Endowment and Kaiser Permanente.

After the manual was completed, trainings were conducted for more than 60 participants from multiple agencies across San Diego County. Projects utilizing materials from the YEAH! manual are currently underway with the support of the Initiative and its partners.



## A CALL TO ACTION 6:

### Engage the MEDIA industry and other partners to advance the following strategies to prevent childhood obesity:

#### MEDIA:

- A. Cover the issue of childhood obesity from the framework of greater social and environmental factors rather than solely as a product of individual behavior.
- B. Create opportunities for discussion of childhood obesity and its environmental factors in traditional, social and emerging media.
- C. Recognize the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative as the local authoritative voice on childhood obesity.

#### OTHER PARTNERS OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY CHILDHOOD OBESITY INITIATIVE:

- D. Recognize the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative as a coordinating body to connect the media with the appropriate partner at the right time on the right issue.
- E. Use common language when speaking about childhood obesity and the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative.

### Role of Media Domain Partners

Partners participating in the Initiative's media domain conduct the following activities to support the stated strategies:

- Foster relationships with and provide support to local media to encourage portrayal of childhood obesity from the framework of greater social and environmental factors rather than solely as a product of individual behavior
- Serve as a clearinghouse for the media to provide information on childhood obesity prevention and healthy food and physical activity environments
- Create and sustain social media opportunities for discussion of childhood obesity
- Provide expertise on developing promotional and outreach strategies for activities that support the mission of the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative
- Provide a collaborative platform for partners to coordinate sustainable promotion of San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative activities
- Provide technical assistance, resources and support to assist partners to use common language when discussing the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative and policy/environmental change
- Publicly recognize efforts of media and other partners that meet the goals of the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative

### San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative Partner Recognition Program

The San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative is successful because of the work of its partners. Their dedication, vision, expertise and commitment to creating a healthier community for all San Diego families serve as the foundation for success. The Initiative's partner recognition program acknowledges our partners in multiple ways. Domain partners are highlighted monthly in our newsletter to promote individuals who share our dedication. Partner recognition certificates are publicly awarded to individuals throughout the year. In addition, all partners who have signed a commitment of support form are listed in the partner directory on the Initiative's website at [www.OurCommunityOurKids.org](http://www.OurCommunityOurKids.org).



## A CALL TO ACTION 7:

### Engage **BUSINESS** to advance the following strategies to prevent childhood obesity:

- A. Understand the business case for wellness and adopt the following practices:
  - Create a workplace environment that supports a safe, healthy lifestyle
  - Recognize wellness and employee health as an investment and priority for upper management
- B. Adopt comprehensive worksite wellness policies that support employee and family health and address the following elements:
  - Creation of wellness teams within businesses
  - Incentives for employees to participate in healthy behaviors (e.g., physical activity or use of public transportation)
  - Access to healthy foods (e.g., in vending machines or cafeterias)
  - Workplace lactation accommodation
  - Healthy meeting guidelines
  - Flex time to allow employees to participate in physical activity
  - Partnerships with other businesses and organizations to improve community health
  - Promotion of the ICANATWORK® campaign
  - Encouragement of employees to share or practice their healthy habits outside of work with families and children
- C. Mentor other businesses in adoption of wellness policies.
- D. Make healthy food easily accessible for all consumers.
- E. Create and support the development of programs that incentivize the purchase of healthy and local foods (e.g., Fresh Fund, see page 18), particularly among low-income consumers.
- F. Promote the development of healthy food retail establishments (e.g., farmers' markets, local food/produce outlets) in all communities, with special emphasis on eliminating food deserts—areas with limited access to affordable, nutritious foods.
- G. Promote the acceptance of food stamps and WIC at retail establishments that offer healthy food options.
- H. Offer healthy food and beverage options at restaurants.
- I. Provide healthy food and beverage options for kids' meals at restaurants with the less healthy option as the secondary choice.
- J. Locate businesses within close access to public and active transportation (i.e., walking and biking) routes.
- K. Partner with other community organizations (e.g., government, schools, healthcare systems, faith communities) to support healthy and active environments.
- L. Encourage the development of healthy retail and business establishments through incentive programs and simplified permitting processes.



- M. Develop marketing strategies that promote healthy food and physical activity options.
- N. Model healthy eating and active living in all business settings.

### Role of Business Domain Partners

Partners participating in the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative’s business domain conduct the following activities to support the stated strategies:

- Engage community, faith, youth, grassroots, and public organizations to support and advocate for healthy policy and environmental change
- Provide resources, technical assistance, and support to organizations in making policy and environmental changes



#### Whole Foods Market Partnership

A leader in natural and organic foods, Whole Foods Market (WFM) has taken its commitment to good nutrition beyond its supermarket doors and into schools. In early 2010, WFM Hillcrest brought together San Diego Unified School District food services and local growers to begin dialogue on local food procurement in schools. The resulting informal Farm to School Task Force sought to improve the quality of school meals through whole and locally-sourced foods—a goal of the company’s national “School Lunch Revolution” campaign. Recognizing the economic, environmental and health benefits of local foods, WFM invited the Initiative to co-lead the effort to expand the project’s reach countywide. In partnership with WFM, the Initiative brings together farmers, school food service directors, and distributors to address challenges schools may face in sourcing local foods due to institutional constraints.

In addition to promoting farm fresh foods, WFM is supporting healthy learning environments through its 5% Day Program, a community giving program that allots five percent of one day’s net sales to a designated non-profit. Through combined efforts at both its Hillcrest and La Jolla stores, WFM donated \$9,546 to the Initiative to support the development of two new school gardens. The Initiative will connect the gardens with other activities taking place throughout the county to support school garden sustainability and plans to include garden-raised vegetables into school meal programs and snacks.

#### Fresh Fund

Fresh Fund is a cash incentive program designed to make the benefits of fresh, locally grown produce accessible to everyone in the neighborhood. Launched in 2008 at the City Heights Farmers’ Market by the International Rescue Committee and managed by the San Diego Farm Bureau, Fresh Fund provides eligible community residents with a cash incentive to purchase farmers’ market produce. The program provides up to \$20 each month in Fresh Fund “dollars” to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI/Disability) recipients.

Started in City Heights with grants from the Wholesome Wave Foundation and Price Charities, Fresh Fund has been expanded to other markets throughout San Diego County. Fresh Fund has proven to be a cornerstone of local farmers’ markets and has multiple benefits. Each Fresh Fund dollar first serves an individual or family, then puts money in the pocket of a local farmer. This model helps sustain farmers’ markets and circulates money in the local economy and community.

## NEXT STEPS

Much effort is needed to assure the continued implementation of recommended strategies and the sustainability and ongoing support of the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative. Working together with a common purpose, we are making a difference in preventing childhood obesity by creating healthy environments that support the health and well-being of children and families in San Diego County.

### What Can You Do?

Partnering organizations and community residents are encouraged to:

1. Review the calls to action and recommended strategies presented in this plan across all seven domain areas.
2. Determine which recommended strategies you are currently implementing and identify new strategies you can implement.
3. Make a commitment to adopt new strategies.
4. Become a partner of the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative by completing the “Partner Commitment of Support” form (see below) available online at [www.OurCommunityOurKids.org](http://www.OurCommunityOurKids.org).
5. Work with other organizations and individuals within and across domain areas to coordinate efforts.



**Become A Partner**

---

**PARTNER COMMITMENT OF SUPPORT**

<b>First Name</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>Last Name</b> <input type="text"/>
<b>Position</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>Organization</b> <input type="text"/>
<b>Title</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>Address</b> <input type="text"/>
<b>Phone</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>Fax</b> <input type="text"/>
<b>Email</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>Webpage</b> <input type="text"/>

**Listing Options (see note below)**

<input type="checkbox"/> Please do not list me as a partner in promotional materials or on the website	<input type="checkbox"/> Please list only my name, website, and organization on the website
--	---

**Areas Of Interest:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare
<input type="checkbox"/> Schools and After-School	<input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood
<input type="checkbox"/> Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Community
<input type="checkbox"/> Business	

<b>Areas of Expertise</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>Other (please state)</b> <input type="text"/>
---	---

Please add my name to the mailing list to receive the electronic newsletter.

## What Will the County Do?

A county that is healthy, safe and thriving is the vision that guides the County of San Diego. On July 13, 2010, the Board of Supervisors adopted the County's *Health Strategy Agenda: Building Better Health*, which serves as a blueprint for improving community health and quality of life over the next decade. With input from staff, advisory boards, partners and community stakeholders, four major themes were identified that now frame the specific strategies for *Building Better Health*:

- Building a **Better System** by providing health services that maximize quality, eliminate waste, and focus on results.
- Supporting **Healthy Choices** by empowering residents to take action and responsibility for their health.
- Pursuing **Policy and Environmental Changes** for healthy communities to make it easier for residents to make healthy choices.
- **Changing the Culture** within the organization to support positive health outcomes.

The *Health Strategy Agenda* will transform the way the County does business through prevention efforts that reflect systems change, incorporate strategies that address the social determinants of health, and advance changes to the built environment. One key component in this effort is the **Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW)** program, a two-year, \$16 million grant from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to implement evidence-based initiatives that impact system, policy and environmental changes to prevent obesity and minimize the burden of chronic disease in this county. These initiatives include:

### Physical Activity:

- Provide policy direction that supports co-benefits between public health, climate change, land use and transportation development.
- Promote healthy transportation including walking and biking, backed up by accessible and safe public transit.
- Integrate public health considerations into land use and transportation planning documents and modeling tools.
- Promote accessible and safe places for physical activity.
- Increase opportunities for physical activity in before/after-school programs.

### Nutrition

- Increase access to healthy and locally grown food in schools, foster group homes, senior meal sites and other locations.
- Develop a regional food systems policy and support other food systems strategies that benefit our local agriculture systems and the health of our community.
- Increase the number of farmers' markets that are participating with nutrition assistance programs.
- Develop and expand community and school gardens through easing permitting processes and encouraging joint-use agreements.
- Support expansion of lactation policies at worksites.
- Expand participation in school and summer feeding programs for kids.

The goals of the CPPW grant are achieved through partnerships between the County's Health and Human Services Agency, community partners, and contracted agencies including University of California San Diego's Division of Child Development and Community Health, San Diego County Office of Education, San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego State University's Graduate School of Public Health, Community Health Improvement Partners and the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative.



## How Will We Measure Success?

The Initiative has developed an evaluation plan that addresses current and potential evaluation efforts. Although current resources do not support full implementation, the Initiative continually weaves many aspects of the plan into the overall efforts of the Initiative as well as the work of the domains. The evaluation plan is one of continuous feedback, with reassessment and revision occurring on an annual basis. The model includes evaluative efforts at many levels: leadership and organizational, the work of the domain sectors, and outcomes. The evaluation plan addresses measurement of multiple levels of outcomes, including:

1. Direct outcome measures of body mass index (BMI);
2. Proximal outcomes of changes in environment, policy, and behavior change; and
3. Process evaluation measurements focused on domain activities and outputs.

### BMI Measurement

We accept the scientific evidence that BMI is an adequate measure (not for diagnosis, but for surveillance) of childhood progression of weight status over time, especially on a population basis, and recognize the final outcome of child weight within recommended guidelines as a viable approach for measuring attempts to impact childhood obesity over the long term.

We will continue to work on accessing multiple data sources of childhood BMI for surveillance purposes. Especially important are issues of reliability of data, and coverage of gaps (either geographic or age) in available data sets. Of particular importance are data on younger preschool children and pregnant mothers, areas where early primary prevention efforts are receiving increasing attention. Establishment of the BMI measurement capacity within the San Diego Regional Immunization Registry (see page 8) is a significant step forward in this effort and support for expanding and facilitating its use is important.



### Proximal Outcomes

A first step in determining strategies is to define what characterizes a “healthy” community. The Initiative is working with the County of San Diego’s Community Health Statistics Unit and other partners to develop a set of community health indicators. We plan to describe, for the county, in geographic areas (neighborhoods and collection of zip codes) as small as possible, environmental characteristics that can be used to set priorities as well as to measure progress. We want to provide visual maps and comparative data so that communities in San Diego County can see the characteristics of their environments as well as changes over time. The decision to select and measure specific community indicators is dependent upon resources for collection, analysis, and interpretation.

The evaluation plan includes selection of “sentinel” communities within San Diego County to allow the Initiative to concentrate of its strategic efforts within these communities, making it more feasible to conduct intensive measurements and analysis. Selecting sentinel communities provides the opportunity to test strategies, evaluation measures, and dissemination of information learned via evaluation. This approach will also facilitate convergent assessment strategies in the same community, adding to validity of findings. In addition, because community engagement is a hallmark of the Initiative’s efforts, use of sentinel communities will allow the Initiative to work closely with residents to insure that meaningful measures are employed and that data collected are shared and become a platform for future strategies to impact childhood obesity. The entire region will benefit from this type of asset-based community planning and development.

## How Will We Measure Success? (continued)

### Domain Activities

The systematic evaluation of domain activities is essential to the ongoing sustainability of the Initiative. It is only through this evaluation that the Initiative's partners, funders and community members can objectively assess what has been accomplished, what can be sustained and what areas need to be addressed. Evaluation also allows the domains to reflect about their successes and challenges and refocus efforts, as needed. The evaluation of domain activities includes a two-tiered process that involves integration of data derived from domain workplan updates into an annual report and enhanced evaluation of selected domain activities to provide a more in-depth analysis of specific work plans and activities.

The evaluation plan described above was developed to guide the Initiative in developing its evaluation efforts. Much has been accomplished and will continue to be accomplished utilizing existing resources and volunteer efforts of academic and evaluation experts, along with hired evaluation consultants. We recognize that a robust evaluation effort will require defined responsibility and budgetary commitment to implement the plan. This may include requests to existing and new partners, as well as grants for implementation of specific evaluation plan components.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Supervisor Pam Slater-Price and Supervisor Ron Roberts would like to thank the individuals and agencies listed below for their efforts related to this revision of the *Call to Action: San Diego County Childhood Obesity Action Plan*:

### San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative

#### Leadership Council

R. Chris Searles, MD, FAAFP  
Co-Chair  
UCSD Family and Preventive Medicine

Christine Wood, MD  
Co-Chair  
Kids Eat Great, Inc.

Wilma Wooten, MD, MPH  
Co-chair  
County of San Diego Public Health Officer

Sue Botos  
San Diego Padres

Naomi Butler  
County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency

John Lucero Criswell  
San Diego Hunger Coalition

Tracy Delaney, PhD, RD  
County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency

Cheri Fidler  
Rady Children's Hospital Center for Healthier Communities

Kristin Garrett, MPH, FACHE  
Community Health Improvement Partners

Stephanie Gioia  
Office of San Diego County Supervisor Ron Roberts

Charlie Huff-McTyer  
UCSD Division of Community Pediatrics  
San Diego Nutrition Network

Christine Lafontant  
County of San Diego Department of Parks & Recreation

Debbie MacDonald  
YMCA Childcare Resource Service

Randall Marks  
First 5 Commission of San Diego County

Sandra McBrayer  
Children's Initiative

Cheryl Moder  
San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative  
Community Health Improvement Partners

Jill Monroe  
Office of San Diego County Supervisor Pam Slater-Price

Phil Nader, MD  
UCSD Division of Community Pediatrics, Retired

Dana Richardson  
Community Health Improvement Partners

Maria Sebiane, MD  
North County Health Services  
American Academy of Pediatrics

Sandy Silverman  
San Diego County Office of Education

Howard Taras, MD  
UCSD Division of Community Pediatrics

Nicholas Yphantides, MD, MPH  
County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency

#### Childhood Obesity Action Plan Revision Committee

JuliAnna Arnett  
San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative

Naomi Butler  
County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency

John Lucero Criswell  
San Diego Hunger Coalition

Tracy Delaney, PhD, RD  
County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency

Cheri Fidler  
Rady Children's Hospital Center for Healthier Communities

Stephanie Gioia  
Office of San Diego County Supervisor Ron Roberts

Debbie Macdonald  
YMCA Childcare Resource Service

Cheryl Moder  
San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative

Erica Salcuni  
San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative

Christine Wood, MD  
Kids Eat Great, Inc.



**For more information, please contact:**

San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative

[www.OurCommunityOurKids.org](http://www.OurCommunityOurKids.org)



Core funding provided in part by:



Facilitated by:



COMMUNITY HEALTH  
IMPROVEMENT PARTNERS  
*making a difference together*