

VFHY PROMISING PRACTICES TO REDUCE AND PREVENT CHILDHOOD OBESITY – Examples

Build Community Capacity	<p>Empowered communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide capacity-building activities for the HCAT by identifying, attending and/or providing local trainings as needed in the community. • Conduct focus groups with community members to identify priorities. • Perform a community assessment of current trends, activities and concerns regarding childhood obesity. • Institutionalize HCAT strategies within member organizations. • Engage community leaders to build collective efficacy around childhood obesity prevention initiatives.
	<p>Strategic partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add community HCAT partners to expand the reach and engage other members of the community. • Diversify and strengthen the HCAT’s financial base. • Conduct a strategic planning process to further plan for implementation of HCAT activities. • Develop a mission/vision statement for HCAT to ensure understanding of shared goals. • Collect and provide data on the outcomes of the HCAT’s local initiatives to stakeholders to receive additional community support.
	<p>Increase knowledge and skills - training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and attend training to strengthen HCAT members’ abilities and skills. • Identify, attend and/or provide advocacy skills training to HCAT and community members. • Identify, attend and/or provide health and wellness training to HCAT and community members.
	<p>Increase awareness of healthy behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote recreational physical activity through community-wide media campaigns that highlight local programs, events and other resources like public walking trails and school facilities that can be used by community residents. • Identify and engage in media advocacy strategies to promote and raise awareness of HCAT activities and accomplishments. • Encouraging the distribution, stocking and promotion of local, healthy foods through incentives, outreach materials, and other strategies. • Assist stores by providing training, equipment and outreach to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). • Promote programs that support walking and bicycling for transportation and recreation. • Improve stairway access and appeal especially in places frequented by children through point-of-decision prompts and enhancements to the stairwell.

<p>Increase Healthy Options</p>	<p>Early childcare, schools, worksites and local government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement policies and practices that build physical activity into daily routines including regulatory policies mandating minimum play space, physical equipment and duration for play in preschool, after-school, and childcare programs. • Promote policies that reduce sedentary screen time through the establishment of screen time limits in preschool and after-school programs. Collaborate with these settings to encourage children to spend leisure time engaged in non-structured play, board games or reading. • Collaborate with schools to develop and implement a Safe Routes to Schools program to increase the number of children safely walking and bicycling to schools. • Enhance physical education (PE) programs with a goal of 150 minutes per week for elementary school students and 225 minutes per week for middle and high school students. • Encourage worksites to develop supportive lactation worksite policies. • Encourage breastfeeding and promote breastfeeding-friendly communities through the creation of lactation rooms and/or adoption of practices consistent with the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative USA. • Encourage early childcare facilities to provide arrangements for and support breastfeeding through appropriate staff training, providing a designated space for breastfeeding mothers or a private area with an outlet (not a bathroom) for mothers to pump their breast milk. • Implement policies and practices to promote healthy foods and beverages in after-school programs, childcare facilities and recreation centers by mandating and implementing strong nutrition standards for cafeterias and vending. • Provide incentives to programs and localities that provide healthy foods at competitive prices and limiting access to calorie-dense, nutrient-poor foods in government sponsored or regulated programs. • Ensure that local government agencies that operate cafeterias and vending options have strong nutrition standards in place wherever foods and beverages are sold or available.
	<p>Food retail and provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the supply and shelf space dedicated to high-quality, affordable fruits and vegetables at existing corner stores, markets, community stores, etc. • Promote efforts to provide fruits and vegetables in a variety of settings including farmers' markets, farm stands, mobile markets, community gardens by encouraging these settings to accept SNAP, WIC and WIC Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP). • Improve funding for outreach and education to encourage use of farmer's markets, farm stands and mobile markets in the community. • Increase access to retail stores that sell high-quality fruits and vegetables through grocer's incentives. • Expand farm-to-institution initiatives (i.e. farm to preschool, farm to school). • Include fruits and vegetables in community-based interventions that link procurement of affordable, healthy food with improving skills in purchasing and preparing food.

<p>Increase Healthy Options (continued)</p>	<p>Built environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan, build and maintain a network of sidewalks and street crossings that creates a safe environment connecting schools, parks and other destinations. • Encourage walking and bicycling for transportation and recreation through built environment improvements including the use of complete street standards. • Provide designated private space for women to breastfeed or express milk. • Involve urban-design elements and land-use policies and practices to improve conditions for active transport including walking programs. • Create zoning regulations that promote destination walking, mixed land-use as well as transit-oriented development.
	<p>Parks and recreation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote multiple forms of recreational physical activity by building and maintaining parks that are safe, attractive and near residential areas. • Improve access to public and private recreational facilities through reduced costs, increased operating hours, and development of culturally appropriate activities. • Expand active after-school program options for youth. • Establish shared use agreements with area schools and recreation centers allowing playing fields, playgrounds and recreation centers to be used by community residents in off hours. • Promote youth athletic leagues and increase access to fields with emphasis on income and gender equity.
	<p>Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve public transportation to food stores through partnerships with transportation providers or influencing business owners to provide transportation for customers. • Improve access to bicycles, helmets and related equipment for lower-income families through subsidies or repair programs. • Implement transportation and travel policies and practices to encourage active transport by facilitating walking, bicycling, and public transportation use thereby reducing car use and improving air quality. • Support strategies including changing roadway design standards including creation or enhancement of bicycle lanes. • Encourage active transportation through expanding and increasing the availability of and access to public transportation, providing bicycle racks on buses, providing incentives to car or van pool, and increasing parking costs.

Eliminate Barriers to Healthy Behaviors	<p>Reduce the promotion of calorie-dense, nutrient-poor foods and beverages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate advertising and marketing of these products near school grounds and public places frequented by youth by implementing local policies and ordinances to discourage the consumption of unhealthy foods and beverages. • Provide incentives and recognition for grocers and convenience stores to reduce point-of-sale marketing of calorie-dense, nutrient-poor foods (i.e. promote “candy-free” checkout aisles and spaces).
	<p>Reduce costs of healthy foods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to retail stores that sell high-quality, affordable fruits and vegetables. • Increase the availability and affordability of high-quality fruits and vegetables at existing retail stores in underserved communities. • Encourage distribution, stocking and promotion of local healthy foods through financial incentives, outreach materials and other strategies.
	<p>Threats to personal safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage walking and bicycling for transportation and recreation through built environment improvements like increasing neighborhood walkability, improving lighting, ensuring sidewalk continuity and safety of street crossings. • Increase the safety of walking and bicycling through roadway design standards that include bicycle lanes.
Improve Social and Economic Resources	<p>Food Access and Community Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote efforts to provide fruits and vegetables in emergency food programs and community-based interventions that link the procurement of affordable, healthy food with improving skills in purchasing and preparing food through local food pantries or other direct food relief programs, grocery store tours and community kitchens. • Attract new food stores to underserved areas to improve access to retail stores that sell high-quality fruits and vegetables in underserved communities through financial incentives, partnerships, and community engagement. • Encourage use of farmer’s markets and farm stands by residents of lower-income neighborhoods and by SNAP, WIC and SFMNP recipients by improving funding for outreach, education and transportation to food stores and farmers markets. • Promote food policy councils to improve the food environment at state and local levels. • Promote destination walking through the implementation of zoning regulations and roadway design standards that co-locate residential, commercial and school properties (i.e. mixed land-use zoning).

REFERENCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2011). *Strategies to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases: The CDC Guide to Strategies to Increase Physical Activity in the Community*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/community-strategies/index.htm>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2011). *Strategies to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases: The CDC Guide to Strategies to Increase the Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/strategies-guidelines/index.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). *Strategies to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases: The CDC Guide to Strategies to Support Breastfeeding Mothers and Babies*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/resources/toolkits.html>

IOM (Institute of Medicine) and National Research Council. (2009). *Local Government Actions to Prevent Childhood Obesity*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK219692/>

Kumanyika, S. (2017). Getting to Equity in Obesity Prevention: A New Framework. *NAM Perspectives*. Discussion Paper, National Academy of Medicine, Washington, DC. doi: 10.31478/201701c Retrieved from <https://nam.edu/getting-to-equity-in-obesity-prevention-a-new-framework/>

Pandita, A., Sharma, D., Pandita, D., Pawar, S., Tariq, M., & Kaul, A. (2016). Childhood obesity: prevention is better than cure. *Diabetes, metabolic syndrome and obesity: targets and therapy*, 9, 83–89. doi:10.2147/DMSO.S90783 Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4801195/>