

Institute for the Advancement of Multicultural and Minority

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Reversing Childhood Obesity Through Schools and Neighborhoods

Chi Phi Chapter of Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Inc.

The Chi Phi Chapter of Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Inc., located in Tallahassee, Florida developed a program to help reverse the childhood obesity epidemic, through schools and neighborhoods that will be replicated for the other eighty chapters in the Sorority. The program was officially adopted at the October Board of Directors meeting. Chi Eta Phi Sorority is a national professional nurses Association, focusing on African American nurses issues.

Chi Phi had With approximately 30 people participating in its project, which included solo exercises and instruction in healthy nutrition. Participating children were weighed and their body mass index (BMI) measurements were assessed. The activities included solo exercises and instruction in healthy nutrition. The children were weighed and BMI measurement were assessed.

The Chapter, in order to create public awareness about obesity, developed a campaign to make local communities and neighborhoods aware of the causes of obesity, including lack of exercise, too much fast food consumption, unhealthy snacks, improper diet and the availability of junk food in schools. They noted that behavioral changes in children would influence behavioral patterns in parents, and that parents can influence meal preparation in the schools, and that strong local examples can even effect national policy regarding what foods and beverages are served in schools.

In collaboration with a local church, the Chapter was able to establish a community garden in which the children actively participated. They learned to cultivate a garden, getting involved all the way from planting the seeds to harvesting the fresh vegetables. They also discovered easy ways to eat healthier foods along the way. Additionally, the adults were encouraged to assist with maintaining the garden (it became a ministry at the church).

Follow-up BMA assessments will determine how much progress has been achieved with the participants.

IAMMM's

Partnerships to Address Obesity

- Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity
- Association of Latino Administrators & Superintendents
- Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Inc.
- Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
- Girls Inc.
- Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.
- National Alliance of Black School Educators
- National Association of Black Social Workers, Inc.
- Student National Medical Association
- The Links, Inc.

**National Association of Black Social Workers
(NABSW)
Childhood Obesity Reduction Initiative (CORI)**

NABSW, after being selected by the Institute for the Advancement of Multicultural and Minority Medicine (IAMMM) as one of 10 national partners in our initiative, developed the Childhood Obesity Reduction initiative, (CORI) – the CORI is a partnership among public, private and nonprofit organizations; communities; and families designed to create an environment in which children and youth can build the habits and experiences necessary to reduce childhood obesity and develop into healthy adults., To help reduce childhood obesity rates, CORI is focused on:

- Increasing access to and use of social, emotional and physical supports needed for healthy physical and mental growth and development of children and youth;
- Increasing access to and involvement in regular physical activity for children and youth;
- Reducing the number of children at risk for chronic obesity-related disease, e.g., Type II diabetes.
- Insuring that children and youth have access to and consume three healthy meals per day; and
- Improving parental awareness/education and action on health-seeking behaviors.

NABSW acted as facilitator for the partnership of organizations sharing a common vision for healthy communities, schools, and families. In that role, the Detroit NABSW chapter brought together diverse, cross-sector stakeholders to create a shared community agenda for children's health, bridged the gap between research and practice, developed solutions through resource sharing and collaborative efforts, and identified barriers to healthy communities.

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***The Launch of the Healthy Weight
Commitment Foundation (HWCF)***

Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, M.D., M.B.A., president and CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), spoke at the public launch of HWCF and announced that RWJF would support an independent evaluation of the organization's marketplace program.

On October 5, 2009, a coalition of more than 40 retailers, non-governmental organizations and food and beverage manufacturers announced the launch of the Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation (HWCF), a national, multi-year effort designed to help reduce obesity—especially childhood obesity—by 2015. The HWCF will promote ways to help people achieve a healthy weight through energy balance. It focuses on three critical areas—the marketplace, the workplace and schools.

Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, M.D., M.B.A., President and CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), spoke at the public launch of HWCF and announced that RWJF would support an independent evaluation of the organization's marketplace program.

RWJF will fund an independent group of scientists who will define the measures that will be used to track progress and determine whether the program is making a significant difference for our nation's children.

**Look for these articles in the next edition of the
Newsletter.**

- Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS)
- National Association of Black School Educators (NABSE)
- Student National Medical Association (SNMA)

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NABSW's historical experience with children, youth, and families was invaluable in the creation of partnerships featuring a sense of community ownership, an attractiveness to philanthropists seeking community-wide health planning, and leveraging of existing local efforts and resources.

An estimated 64% of adults and 15% of children in the United States are either overweight or obese. For more than two decades, the rate of overweight and obese Americans has been increasing at an alarming rate. The statistics are even worse for Detroit. **CORI** provided a framework for other NABSW chapters to build and maintain a coalition focused on the reduction of childhood obesity. **CORI** placed emphasis on the importance of healthy eating; emphasized the promotion of healthy, active lifestyles; encouraged assessments of Body Mass Index (BMI); and promoted understanding of the causes and prevention of obesity.

In addition to the efforts of the Detroit chapter, nine (9) other chapters were engaged in various activities and events which focused on the reduction of childhood obesity in their respective cities. The cities were: Oakland California, Jacksonville, Florida, Chicago, New Orleans, Lansing, Michigan, Houston and Austin, Texas, and Charlotte, North Carolina..

Having been provided with the IAMMM Tool Kit, chapters were able to initiate many activities and events which ranged from health fairs, projects in schools, community gardens, and community-wide forums on obesity, and presentations to community/faith based organizations.

State Regulations for Child-Care Centers Fall Short In Preventing Childhood Obesity

A recent study found that most states could easily improve regulations aimed at promoting healthy eating and physical activity among children in child-care centers “Most states got an F when compared with the model regulations,” said Sara Benjamin, Ph.D., M.P.H., who conducted the study as a research fellow at Harvard Medical School but is now an assistant professor at Duke University. Even when compared with less stringent, less specific standards, most still performed at average or below-average levels—at least when it comes to regulations requiring healthy eating or physical activity for preschool-aged children.

Benjamin and Jonathan Finkelstein, M.D., M.P.H., from Harvard Medical School, co-authored the report, which was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation through its national program *Healthy Eating Research*. The authors, encouraged states to adopt specific regulations for child care, using those in this new report as a guide. Benjamin also said states should help support child-care facilities through adequate funding and technical assistance.

For this report, experts in nutrition and physical activity assessed state regulations for child-care centers and then graded each state according to healthy eating and physical activity standards. The vast majority of the states got an overall grade of a C—even when the panel used the less than ideal standards as a benchmark. No state received an A, and just eight states got a B. One state, Idaho, still got an F, even when the experts judged the regulations using the less stringent models.

“These findings suggest that most states have a lot of room for improvement in regulations aimed at preventing obesity in young children,” Benjamin said. “This nation must do a better job at promoting healthy eating and regular physical activity in very young children, especially those in lower-income families who are at high risk for obesity.”

MICHELLE OBAMA SOUNDS WARNING OVER CHILDHOOD OBESITY

Posted by [Amanda Sterling](#)

(AP)

First Lady Michelle Obama put a spotlight on the importance of good nutrition and children's health today during a speech at the Department of Health and Human Services, continuing [her campaign for healthy eating habits](#) to fight rising obesity rates.

"Nearly a third of all children in this country are overweight or obese... and a third will suffer from diabetes at some point in their lifetimes," Obama said. "It is a major public health threat right now, so just imagine what we're going to be facing in 20 or 30 years if we don't get on this issue."

The first lady addressed practical problems surrounding good nutrition, such as long work hours, dirty or unsafe neighborhood playgrounds, a lack of healthy food options and cheap, unhealthy take-out food. She said that she struggled with these day-to-day issues herself as a parent before receiving a wake-up call from her daughters' pediatrician.



"I remember coming home from a meeting or an event, tired- just tired... Going home to an empty refrigerator and kids who were hungry. And fussy... And all they want is some pizza and some burgers... I can relate," she said.

Obama acknowledged the necessity for safe facilities and accessible, nutritious foods, and called for parents to make better choices. She warned of the dangers facing future generations if childhood obesity rates continue to increase.

"What does it mean that medical experts are now warning that for the first time in the history of our nation, the next generation may be on track to having a shorter lifespan than this generation, and their parents?" Obama asked the crowd. "None of us wants a future like that for our children."

Funding for this newsletter was provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). For more information about RWJF's efforts to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic, please visit: www.rwjf.org/childhoodobesity.