



Childhood Obesity Portfolio

Childhood obesity is one of the priority issues being tackled by the Child Policy Research Center (CPRC). Over the last 20 years the proportion of children and adolescent who are overweight or obese has nearly tripled to one in three children nationally.

According to the 2008 Ohio Family Health Survey, approximately 500,000 children ages 10-17 (35.6%) are considered overweight or obese according to BMI-for-age standards. According to the National Survey of Children's Health, 37.1% of children ages 10-17 in Kentucky were overweight or obese, ranking Kentucky 48th in the nation. These overall statistics mask the greater burden of obesity among low income and minority populations:

- Over 40% of poor children in Ohio Kentucky are overweight or obese.
- Among black, non-Hispanic children in Ohio, 39.3% are overweight or obese, lower than the 41.2% national prevalence rate.
- Both Ohio and Kentucky children are less likely than their counterparts nationwide to be physically active for at least 4 days per week, and more likely to spend 4 hours or more in front of a television or computer screen.
- According to the 2008 Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance System (PedNSS), which assesses weight status of children from low-income families participating in WIC, 28.0% of low-income children ages 2-5 in Ohio are overweight or obese. Kentucky's rate is 32.3%

This epidemic will require a concerted response on the part of families, practitioners, communities and policymakers at the local, state, and national levels. CPRC activities focus on producing the evidence base to inform policy decisions, making timely data available to assist in monitoring progress, helping practitioners improve their ability to prevent, identify, and manage children affected by obesity, and partnering with community organizations to develop coordinated, multi-sec-

toral responses. A particular emphasis in our work is on those disproportionately affected by childhood obesity: low-income, racial/ethnic minority and under-resourced communities, families, and children.

Research and Analysis: Creating the Evidence Base

- **CCHMC community strategy** – CPRC is the designated lead for the hospital on implementing a hospital strategy to improve population health in the greater Cincinnati community with a focus on obesity, injury, infant mortality, and asthma.
- **Childhood Obesity in Ohio, 2008** – CPRC researchers collaborated on this study based on the 2008 Ohio Family Health Survey and led by the Center for Child Health and Policy at Rainbow Babies Children's Hospital, Cleveland, Ohio.
- **Health System Capacity to Respond to the Epidemic of Childhood Obesity in Ohio** – this 18 month study funded by the Ohio Board of Regents is assessing child health practitioners' knowledge, attitudes and practices in caring for obesity, health plan and community organizations responses, and the impact of childhood obesity on health services utilization.
- **Child Health and Healthcare in Florida: Focus on Obesity.** In partnership with the University of South Florida, this study is examining the scope and impact of the epidemic in Florida children.
- **National Disparities in Childhood Obesity, 2003 and 2007** – these two studies examined the degree to which within state and across state variations in rates of childhood obesity among subgroups defined by race, income, insurance and education could be explained by state characteristics.
- **State Fact Sheets on Childhood Obesity, 2003 and 2009** – in partnership with the National Initiative for Children's Healthcare Quality (NICHQ) and the Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative (CAHMI), CPRC produces fact sheets on the latest data for each state on the

disparity dimensions of the epidemic in that state ranked against other states and national averages.

Partnerships: Working with Communities and Stakeholders

- **Healthy Kids Ohio** – Under the leadership of the Center for Health Care Quality, CPRC is supporting the design and piloting of a practice based improvement collaborative to assist health providers in the Greater Cincinnati area in addressing obesity. <http://www.opqc.net/hko>.
- **Center for Closing the Health Gap** – CPRC is an active partner for the Center's Do Right! Campaign and has provided technical assistance and data, as well as in-kind support for their community gardens nutrition curriculum. <http://www.dorightcincy.org/>
- **Pioneering Healthy Communities** – CPRC has joined the leadership groups for the YMCA's designation as a Pioneering Healthy Communities in both Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. These initiatives are currently in the design phase and involve representatives from the public and private sectors. <http://www.ymca.net/activateamerica/>
- **Ohio Business Roundtable and Ohio Children's Hospitals Association** – CPRC is providing expert input into the design of a statewide initiative focused on school based strategies and employer roles in addressing the epidemic.
- **University of Cincinnati Center of Excellence in Metabolic Disorders** – CPRC is participating in the Center's design of a comprehensive approach to obesity.
- **National Childhood Obesity Policy** – CPRC faculty has led the development of NICHQ's policy agenda for obesity over the last three years and have recently been appointed to the American Academy of Pediatrics' Obesity Leadership Workgroup. http://www.nichq.org/childhood_obesity/index.html
- **Kentucky Philanthropy Commission** – CPRC faculty served as co-chair of the Committee on Child Health and Welfare for the Commission which identified childhood obesity as a priority topic for the Commonwealth. For more information go to www.kyphilanthropy.com.
- **Obesity Epidemiology Research Course** – CPRC faculty developed and taught an 8 hour intensive course on this topic as part of the 2009 Summer Program in Applied Biostatistical and Epidemiological Methods at Ohio State University. <http://sph.osu.edu/workforcedevelopment/8389.cfm>

Resources and Publications

State Facts Sheets available at www.childhealthdata.org/obesity.

Ohio Obesity Fact Sheet Available at http://ckm.osu.edu/sitetool/sites/pdfs/ofhspublic/OFHS_Brief_Cuttler.pdf

Obesity in Children and Families Across Ohio available at http://ckm.osu.edu/sitetool/sites/pdfs/ofhspublic/OFHSReport_Cuttler.pdf

Simpson L.A., Alendy C., Cooper J., Gunther-Murphy C. *Childhood Obesity: The Role of Health Policy*. Available at <http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/assets/0/78/1067/1395/1833/1835/1849/1853/25d0bc47-60da-49e4-b626-89cb87de49b9.pdf>

Simpson L.A. & Cooper J. Paying for Obesity: A Changing Landscape. *Pediatrics*, 2009. 123: S301-309

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Homer C., Simpson L. Childhood Obesity: What's Health Care Policy Got to Do With It? March/April, 2007. *Health Affairs (Milbank)*. Vol 26(2): 441-4.

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