Creating a Healthier State: Policy Priorities & Building a Statewide Action Network

Partnership for A Healthy Texas: Conquering Obesity

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Texas Pediatric Society
Partnership for a Healthy Texas:
Conquering Obesity
Mission: To develop and promote state policies that prevent obesity in Texas

Purpose:
• Encourage collaboration among all parties interested in policy change to reduce obesity
• Inform and educate policy makers about the consequences of obesity
• Promote evidence-based obesity reduction strategies in policy making
• Disseminate policy information and resources to stakeholders interested in obesity prevention

Leadership:
• Chair: David Lakey, MD, Chief Medical Officer and Associate Vice Chancellor for Population Health, The University of Texas System
• Vice-Chair: Clayton Travis, Advocacy and Health Policy Coordinator, Texas Pediatric Society
• Vice-Chair: Kaitlyn Murphy, Director of Government Relations, American Heart Association
Membership over the Years

**Members:**
- AARP
- Active Life
- American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences – Texas Affiliate
- American Cancer Society
- American Diabetes Association
- American Heart Association
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas
- Center for Public Policy Priorities
- Child, Inc.
- Children at Risk
- Children’s Hospital Association of Texas
- Children’s Medical Center Dallas
- The Cooper Institute
- Dell Children’s Medical Center of Central Texas
- East Texas AHEC
- FEEDING TEXAS
- Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services
- Healthy Families San Angelo
- Humana Inc.
- Live Smart Texas
- Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas
- National Council of Jewish Women
- National Federation of Independent Business
- National Wildlife Federation
- Parkland Health and Hospital System
- PE3
- Real Food Alliance
- Scott and White Memorial Hospital, Temple
- Secondary and Elementary Administrators for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance
- Sustainable Food Center
- Texas A&M School of Rural Public Health
- Texas Academy of Family Physicians
- Texas Action for Healthy Kids
- Texas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance
- Texas Association for Health Plans
- Texas Association for School Nutrition
- Texas Bicycle Coalition
- Texans Care for Children
- Texas Dental Association
- Texas Diabetes Program/Council
- Texas Dietetic Association
- Texas Health Institute
- Texas IMPACT
- Texas Medical Association
- Texas Oral Health Coalition
- Texas Orthopaedic Association
- Texas Pediatric Society
- Texas PTA
- Texas School Health Association
- Texas School Nurses Organization
- Trans Texas Alliance
- University Interscholastic League
- University of North Texas Health Science Center
- University of Texas at Austin

**Partners:**
- Comptroller of Public Accounts
- Senate Committee on Health & Human Services
- Texas AgriLife Extension Service, TAMUS
- Texas Department of Agriculture
- Texas Department of State Health Services
- Texas Department of Transportation
- Texas Education Agency
- Texas Health and Human Services Commission
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- University of Texas School of Public Health
- USDA Food and Nutrition Service
August-September 2006
• Following independent advocacy and an obesity-focused policy forum, advocates express interest in collaboration and the Partnership was formed

80th Legislature – 2007
• Six legislative priorities comprise legislative agenda
• Components of all six priorities rolled into legislation and passed
Challenges Still Exist...

PERCENTAGE OF TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN WITH UNHEALTHY BODY MASS INDEX AS ASSESSED BY FITNESSGRAM TESTS IN 2009-2010

District 56, Charles "Doc" Anderson

BMI Rank by District: 60 out of 150

All figures are Percentage of Students whose Body Mass Index needs improvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School type</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Schools</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eighty-three Texas legislators were surveyed to identify knowledge and perceptions about obesity prevention and control measures.

Legislators from both political parties and legislative chambers responded to the survey.

Sixteen legislators provided additional information through interviews administered in-person with the legislator or with an aide speaking on their behalf.

Most Texas legislators agree with the following statements:

– “Health occurs where we live, pray, play, work and attend school.”
– “Much can be done to lower the incidence of childhood obesity.”
– “Schools can have an effect on childhood obesity.”
How do We Influence Lawmakers?

• House & Senate Interim Hearings
• Legislative Appropriations Request
• Legislative Conferences
• Meet with Stakeholders
• Meet with State Agencies
• Develop Legislative Agendas
• In-District Visits
• Share Your Stories!
Partnership for a Healthy Texas: *Conquering Obesity – Lessons Learned*

- Educate legislators and key staff early. A cohesive group can have a bigger impact than individuals.
- Plan early and provide supporting information for each priority. Know how far you’re willing to negotiate on your priorities.
- Support each priority with good data and identify champions to share personal stories.
- You don’t always get 100% of what you want the first time you ask.
Partnership for a Healthy Texas: Conquering Obesity – Lessons Learned

• Remain vigilant even when things are going your way
• Keep your advocates and champions informed
• Know when and how to engage your advocates and champions
84th Legislative Priorities:

Improve Nutrition in Schools and Communities

HB 440 – Ensures public school physical education curriculum is adapted to accommodate the needs of students with mental disabilities

HB 786 - will benefit the health of our children by requiring school districts and other public sector employers to provide a reasonable amount of break time and a private space for staff who express breast milk at work. The new law also prohibits discrimination against public employees who express breast milk.
84th Legislative Priorities: Legislation that Passed

Ensure access to affordable, healthy foods

- HB262 Established limited immunity from liability for landowners offering space for community gardens

- $1.2 million allocated for Brighter Bites program, an increase from $600,000 in previous biennium

- $5.9 million for the Feeding with Impact program to steer excess produce to food banks, an increase from $2.9 million in the previous biennium
84th Legislative Session

Legislation that failed to pass

- HB 711 – Creating childhood health program grants (would rely on donations/grants/gifts), to be managed by the Department of State Health Services, to support programs related to childhood health, fitness, and obesity – Did not receive a hearing.

- HB 1172 – Recognizing before-school and after-school programs that promote healthy eating and physical activity – Did not receive a hearing.

Areas of Advocacy Interest for Next Session

• Increasing/restoring PE requirements in high school and middle school
• Built environment legislation to increase active transportation options for communities
• Understanding out of school time nutrition and physical activity practices
• Improving standards of child care providers
• Ensure healthy options are available in state vending and procurement contracts
• Healthy Food Financing
Resources from the Partnership

The Partnership for a Healthy Texas also produces resources & tools to generate and implement policies targeting obesity prevention and reduction in Texas. This includes:

- Legislative educational focused forums
- Proposed interim study topics
- Proposed legislative priorities
- Legislative summaries
- Policy briefs
- Policy primers
- Situational analyses of policy options
- Advocacy talking points related to obesity
Partnership for a Healthy Texas Website

www.partnershipforahealthytexas.org