Early Childhood Obesity: Overview and Impact

Presented by
David Gardner, D.A.
May 4, 2011
NC General Assembly
North Carolina is an Orange State
NC Obesity Rates: Adults, Children and Teens

• 29.4% Obese Adults – 10th highest nationally
  • 65.2% Overweight and Obese Adults
  • 9.3% Adults have diabetes (14th highest nationally)
  • 29.9% Adults have high blood pressure (10th highest nationally)

• 18.6% Obese Children & Teens (ages 10-17) – 11th highest nationally

Source: “F as in Fat: How Obesity Threatens America’s Future 2010,” Trust for America’s Health
North Carolina Numbers

Children under 5 years old
• 539,509 (2000)
• 563,248 (2009)

Children under 5 as percent of population
• 6.7% (2000)
• 7.1% (2009)

Children enrolled in Child Care Centers
• 240,162 (2010)

Source: NC Department of Health and Human Services
NC Overweight and Obesity in Early Childhood

Low income children ages 2-5
  • 15.7% are obese

Children ages 2-4
  • 31% at risk for overweight or obesity

Overweight children
  • at greater risk for adult obesity, asthma and diabetes

Sources: NC Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Combating Obesity in North Carolina: Studies and Recommendations


• 2008-09 - *Task Force on Preventing Childhood Obesity* – Established by NC Legislature, Co-Chaired by Dr. Leah Devlin and Howard N. Lee

• 2009-10 - *Prevention for the Health of North Carolina: Prevention Action Plan* – NC Institute of Medicine, Co-Chaired by Dr. Jeffery P. Engel, Dr. William L. Roper and Robert W. Seligson

Historical Focus

• Adults and school-age children/youth

• K-12 food & meals, PE & PA

• Built environment at community level
Shift in Focus

• Early childhood strategies

• Childcare involvement

• Early investment and intervention for greater long-term gain
Combating Early Childhood Obesity

- Nationally
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
  - US Department of Agriculture
  - First Lady Michelle Obama – *Let’s Move* initiative

- North Carolina
  - Eat Smart, Move More NC
  - SHAPE NC
  - NC Partnership for Children
Building Action on Resources

• Policies
  – ESMM NC 2010 Policy Strategy Platform
  – NC Alliance for Health
  – Legislative Task Force on Childhood Obesity
  – NCIOM Prevention Action Plan
  – HWTF Fit Together NC Childhood Obesity Study Committee Report
  – RWJF Policy Recommendations

• Built Environment
  – Natural Learning Initiative – NCSU
  – Active Living by Design

• Agriculture
  – NC DOA
  – NC Cooperative Extension
  – NC Farm to Schools
Building Action on Resources

• Funding
  – Federal
  – State
  – NC Obesity Funders Alliance
  – Private

• Providers
  – Regulated Child Care Centers
  – NC Smart Start
  – Be Active NC
  – NAP SACC

• Research
  – ESMM NC University Collaborative (ECU, UNC-CH, Duke, WF, NCSU, UNCA)

• Concerned Parents and Adults
  – All of us
Time for Action

• Delays in action = Increases in obesity
• Obesity is an economy killer
• NC is resource rich
• Many NC resources are on hold
• Childhood obesity is preventable
• We cannot fail our children and their future
Contact

David Gardner, D.A.
Executive Director
NC Center for Health and Wellness
UNC Asheville
828-258-7710
dgardner@unca.edu