



# CENTER FOR COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS

*Unleashing the Power of People Working Together*

## COMBATING OBESITY THROUGH NUTRITION EDUCATION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

### *PROMISING PRACTICES* FOR AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

CALIFORNIA WORKING FAMILIES POLICY SUMMIT  
JANUARY 18, 2007

#### Recommendations for Program Directors and Grantees:

- ❑ **Become more familiar with your program's potential for combating obesity.** Programs that intentionally embed nutrition education and physical activity into their approaches and activities are making a real difference in improving children's eating patterns and making physical activity a way of life. Become familiar with what works by drawing on the experiences and recommendations of 11 of the state's most successful programs, visiting their programs and learning from them. Contact information for programs in your area is available at [www.CCSCenter.org](http://www.CCSCenter.org). Copies of the California Department of Health Services funded *Exemplary Practices in Nutrition and Physical Activity in Afterschool Programs* will be available in March 2007.

Examples of exemplary practices include:

- 1) Approaching nutrition education and physical activity with vision, purpose and intention
  - 2) Integrating nutrition education and physical activity with youth development principles
  - 3) Offering exciting and relevant learning experiences
  - 4) Engaging families, schools and the community
  - 5) Strengthening food security
  - 6) Securing balanced, diversified and sustainable funding
- ❑ **Make nutrition education and physical activity a priority.** Because there are strong correlations between students' health and their academic performance and social behavior, making nutrition education and physical activity a priority can help your program achieve its broader goals. Developing the skills and confidence of staff members in these areas can strengthen their physical and emotional well-being and position them to model appropriate behaviors for children and young people, leading to a more comprehensive impact.

- ❑ **Develop partnerships with the education community.** The Department of Education, Department of Health Services, County Offices of Education, School District Superintendents and Site Administrators have important nutrition education and physical activity resources and can provide invaluable support. Establish relationships with them and make a commitment to form authentic partnerships that channel the energy of principals, classroom teachers and your staff members in the same direction. Work with Site Administrators to be sure your program is included in their School Wellness Plans.
- ❑ **Draw on the expertise of health-related organizations.** The California Nutrition Network, Healthy Start, Family Resource Centers, regional coalitions, community-based organizations, healthcare providers and the private sector have a real stake in combating obesity. Your ability to reach and influence hundreds, if not thousands, of students enrolled in your program provides a critical channel for their work and, in turn, their expertise can prove invaluable to your ability to draw on the best resources available. If you haven't done so already, contact these organizations and begin the process of developing a strategy for maximizing the use of your respective resources and expertise.

### **Recommendations for Local Leaders:**

- ❑ **Provide afterschool Program Directors with information about local funding opportunities.** The *After School Education and Safety Programs Act* provides core funding and requires a local match. The extent to which nutrition education and physical activity are integrated into programs is largely dependent on securing additional sources of funding for staff development, cooking classes, physical activity components, school gardens, parent engagement, and community health faires. Align your interests with theirs and consider creating a system that will enable you to keep afterschool Program Directors informed about funding opportunities as they arise. A list of afterschool programs in your community can be found at [www.cde.ca.gov/learningsupports/aspo](http://www.cde.ca.gov/learningsupports/aspo).
- ❑ **Include afterschool programs in regional, county-wide and city-wide collaborations and work groups that address the health children and young people.** Consider inviting afterschool Program Directors and leadership team members to serve as members of local collaborations, work groups and task forces that focus on combating childhood obesity and address related health issues. Engage them in learning more about strategies that are capable of changing children's eating patterns and increasing their physical activity. Keep them informed about new initiatives that may benefit youth in their programs and stay informed about the approaches they are using to achieve these goals.

### ***For additional information, contact:***

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