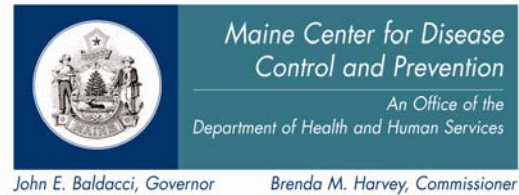


**First Lady Michelle Obama's Childhood
Obesity Initiative
Talking Points for Activities in Maine
March 1, 2010**



Areas addressed in the First Lady's new initiatives and work that is occurring in Maine:

Provide parents with tools and information they need:

- Labeling in groceries: Hannaford Bros supermarkets for the past two years has implemented the guiding stars program which identifies healthy choices in their supermarkets according to an algorithm that assigns 1, 2 or 3 stars (more stars are healthier) to foods for sale. The program has shown an increase in the sales of foods marked with stars and has also been shown to be a teaching tool for parents taking children shopping.

Hannaford is cooperating with several school lunch programs to incorporate the use of the guiding stars algorithm to show which school foods offered are healthy choices. Hannaford is doing the analysis of the foods offered using their algorithm.

- Labeling in restaurants: Maine is one of 3 states that have passed menu labeling legislation requiring chain restaurants to label their menu items with caloric information (effective 2/11). One of the features of the legislation is that parents will be able to make better choices for the children when they are eating out at chain restaurants. Through the ARRA Component I Baseline funding, Maine will be further expanding the use of menu labeling to other venues, including schools to increase the opportunity for students to choose healthier food options.
- Partnerships with Pediatricians to be sure they measure BMI: Maine is leading the nation in the adoption and use of protocols for pediatricians' to address childhood obesity. The Maine Youth Overweight Collaborative (MYOC) has been working over the last 5 years with increasing numbers of pediatric practices in the use of clinical tools which include BMI and approaches to discuss childhood overweight with the parents and children – these tools have been adopted nationwide by the National American Academy of Pediatrics. Maine continues to expand the number of pediatric offices participating in the collaborative. Additionally, MYOC has received significant other national recognition.
- Maine CDC and DOE in mid-2008 began cooperating on the concept of a child health report card that school nurses would discreetly send home to parents as a report on the child health parameters on which nurses were already collecting data, including BMI. The child health report card can be a tool to educate parents to begin making behavioral changes at home to address obesity. A BMI data collection bill was passed by the legislature requiring schools to collect and report BMI data to Maine CDC if and when they have federal funding to do so. In the interim, Maine CDC will be setting rule-making for schools that want to report data at their own cost.

Assure healthier food in schools:

- Maine passed Chapter 51 several years ago which has taken soda out of vending machines in schools.
- Maine is the first state in the country to pass legislation banning junk food advertising on school grounds.
- Legislation exists requiring DOE to do rule-making to establish nutrition guidelines for competitive foods (offered outside of the school lunch program). This has been delayed due to the school consolidation process but is expected to be taken up in the near future.
- In 2009, a legislative resolve established a Farm to School stakeholder group to study and make recommendations to the legislature on how to expand Farm to School efforts in Maine. Maine has had an informal stakeholder group over the last couple of years coordinating support for this movement in the State. Maine has a number of successful schools that have fully implemented the Farm to School approach, including curriculum development as well as involving students in the preparation of vegetables for school lunches.

Increase access to healthy and affordable food:

- New WIC food benefits began October 1, 2009. These changes make WIC food benefits consistent with child feeding guidance and the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans and may impact childhood obesity.
- Since 2003, Maine CDC/DHHS and the Maine Nutrition Network have been partnering on the Healthy Weight Awareness Campaign (HWAC), which won an award in July 2009 (Surgeon General's Community Award Campaign as part of his national childhood obesity campaign). The HWAC is a social marketing campaign addressed to the supplemental food nutritional assistance participants; encourages healthier eating and physical activity among families with children. A special focus in the last two years has been to show families how to eat healthier even on low income budgets.

Active kids – there will be initiatives led by leading athletes to get kids actively engaged 60 minutes a day:

- Since 1997, Winterkids, a non-profit in Maine, has been encouraging children to participate in winter activities to remain physically active during the winter months. Their activities include provide training for teachers in curricula that includes physical activity and healthy nutrition. In recent years, they have tapped athletes such as Maine Gold medalist Seth Wescott to generate interest and to motivate children.
- The signature program of the Governor's Council on Physical Activity is titled, "Maine in Motion" which is promoted in schools and workplaces. The program helps student and workers track their own activity on the Council's website.

- Also through the ARRA Component I Baseline funding recently announced, Maine CDC with its partners will be working to increase Physical Activity in early childhood (ages 2-5yrs), pre-school and young school age children; the intent will be to increase both physical activity levels of young children and the number of school-age children taking regular physical education classes. Specific interventions implemented are 1) increase physical activity in childcare settings 2) Promote physical activity using a social marketing campaigns directed at young children and their parents, 3) Reduce screen time using media approaches to counter excessive TV, video and computer screen time and 4) Increase the number of schools that encourage physical activity during the school day and that offer daily physical education.
- Maine has a robust Safe-Routes-to-School Program, funded through the Maine Department of Transportation, which works with local communities to encourage physical activity by identifying walking routes to school that are safe for children. This program works closely with the local Healthy Maine Partnerships.

Other areas of activity in Maine relating to childhood obesity:

Maine has a new public health infrastructure that is poised to assist with obesity prevention.

- Governor Baldacci led the effort to restructure, revitalize and streamline Maine’s public health system to make it more efficient and effective (LD 1363 enacted in 2009). There are now eight District Coordinating Councils for Public Health; each a representative district-wide body of local public health stakeholders working toward collaborative public health planning and coordination to ensure effectiveness and efficiencies in the public health system.
- There are twenty-eight local Healthy Maine Partnerships; a statewide system of comprehensive community health coalitions “established to provide appropriate essential public health services at the local level, including coordinated community-based public health promotion, active community engagement in local, district and state public health priorities and standardized community based health assessment that inform and link to district wide and statewide public health system activities. Healthy Maine Partnerships must include interested community members; leaders of formal and informal civic groups; leaders of youth, parent and older adult groups; leader of hospitals, health center, mental health and substance abuse providers; emergency responders’ local government officials; leaders in early childhood development and education; leaders of school administrative entities and colleges and universities; community, social service and other non-profit agency leaders; leaders of issue-specific networks, coalition, and associations; and business leader’ leaders of faith-based groups; and law enforcement representatives.”

www.KeepMEWell.org

- KeepMEWell was launched statewide by Governor Baldacci in January 2010. The Governor’s Universal Wellness Initiative is aimed at helping Maine reach its goal of becoming the healthiest state in the nation. KeepMEWell is part of a strategy aimed at ensuring that all persons in Maine have “access to resources and evidence-based interventions in order to know, understand, and address health risks and to improve health and prevent disease” (22 M.R.S.A., Part 2 §411).

- KeepMEWell has two main web components. The first is an assessment that Maine residents, 18 years or older, can complete. Based on their answers to a series of health questions, a personalized report will be generated, that positively reinforces areas of low risk, encourages the individual to take steps to improve areas of high risk, and provides links to local resources that can help with disease prevention and management. The second is a tool to help Mainers, especially those who are uninsured or underinsured, learn about low-cost healthcare services in their local area.

While focused on adults, we know that healthy parents help nurture healthy children.

Maine CDC/DHHS Physical Activity, Nutrition and Healthy Weight Program (PAN Program) is very active in addressing childhood obesity throughout Maine and in cooperation with many partners:

- The PAN Program, previously funded by US CDC, developed the Maine Physical Activity and Nutrition Plan 2005-2010, which includes youth objectives:
 - Increase the proportion of youth who engage in vigorous physical activity that promotes cardio-respiratory fitness
 - Increase the proportion of adolescents who consume 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day
 - Decrease sugar sweetened beverage consumption among Maine youth
 - Increase consumption of milk that is 1% fat or less among Maine Youth
 - Increase the proportion of youth who television two or fewer hours a day
- The PAN Program held four major conferences in 2007/2008 which addressed Evidence-Based Physical Activity and Nutrition interventions and evaluation, social marketing and physical activity and the built environment, all including aspects addressing childhood obesity.
- The PAN Program provided the leadership, along with DOE and the Governor's Council on Physical Activity to convene the PE4ME Planning and Oversight Team to evaluate how to increase quality physical education in Maine Schools for legislative consideration.

The Maine CDC/DHHS and Maine Department of Education Coordinated School Health Program:

- Through a cooperative agreement with US CDC, we have co-directors in the Maine CDC and DOE that address coordinated school health across Maine. Maine has received competitive funding from US CDC for more than 10 years to implement this program, focusing on school programs and policies that address youth health issues including obesity.
- As part of Healthy Maine Partnerships, school health coordinators in 42 school systems across the State facilitate a comprehensive approach from kindergarten to grade 12 that includes health education, policy changes and environmental strategies to create sustainable systemic change to support healthy eating and physical activity as well as tobacco prevention.
- All these school systems have been successful at increasing physical activity throughout the school day and through expanding intramural programs after school. All have strengthened their nutrition policies. Maine's vending machine regulations are among the strictest in the nation. All have strengthened their health education curricula.
- In addition, Maine's State level Coordinated School Health Program in Maine CDC/DHHS and DOE have been working increasingly with physician partners for more

than 4 years. Two years ago, a conference on school health was co-sponsored with the Maine Academy of Pediatrics, Maine Academy of Family Practice and Maine School Nurses Association. Healthy eating was a major focus.

- A Superintendent School Health Leadership Network meets with the Commissioner of Education three times per year to discuss weight and other health issues. Several superintendents have piloted a presentation to community leaders with a physician on the school’s role in addressing overweight this fall.
- The Coordinated School Health Program (CSHP) provides significant Professional Development and technical assistance to School Health Coordinators as they work to strengthen and implement their school Wellness Policies. CSHP has a comprehensive implementation monitoring tool that reflects best practices. For instance, in February, SHCs and their school Food Service Directors are meeting to develop action plans for implementing changes that support school nutrition.

Healthy Maine Partnerships (HMP) Initiative:

- At the state level, eight programs come together to address tobacco and tobacco-related chronic disease (including obesity) in an integrated way. Programs include: Partnership For A Tobacco-Free Maine, Physical Activity/Nutrition/Healthy Weight, Asthma, Cardiovascular, Diabetes, Cancer, Coordinated School Health, and Office of Substance Abuse. These programs provide support and technical assistance to local Healthy Maine Partnerships (HMPs), who focus on implementing supportive policies and environments.
- HMPs coordinate closely with School Health Coordinators to address childhood obesity in Maine. The HMPs throughout the state are addressing numerous objectives that address obesity. Below are some of the key objectives the HMPs are working on at the local level.

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| Increase the number of early childcare centers with polices/programs to improve nutrition education for staff and parents |
| SAUs will monitor the implementation of nutrition related polices including MDOE Chapters 51 and 435 and the [federally required] local School Wellness Policy [Required of SAUs with SHCs] |
| SAUs will increase their participation, based on their annual eligibility, in any or all federally sponsored meal programs [lunch, breakfast, after-school, summer meals] |
| SAUs will provide access to nutrition education for families |
| SAU will establish policies to improve nutritional options in school vending machines, a la carte, school meal programs, fund-raising events |
| SAUs provide parents or families with access to multiple opportunities to participate in school related programs to prevent tobacco use and substance abuse, and to promote physical activity and nutrition. [Required of SAUs with SHCs] |
| Increase the number of community organizations serving youth and organizations serving adults with policies to improve healthy eating and healthy weight management |
| SAUs increase the amount of time for supervised physical activity for all students before, during or after school [Required of SAUs with SHCs] |

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| SAUs work to increase the number of children and youth safely walking or biking to school |
| Increase the number of youth involved in after school activities in community settings |
| Develop local plans to safely connect youth to neighborhoods, schools, recreation areas |
| Increase the number of local community facilities and programs that offer access for families to be physically active together |
| Increase the number of towns with sidewalks bike paths trails open facilities other places for physical activity and comprehensive town plans that include built environment design standards for physical activity |
| Increase number of early childhood centers and SAUs with guidelines for sun screen use for children and youth during outdoor physical activity events |

SHC – School Health Coordinator

SAU – school administrative unit

Maine Nutrition Network:

The Maine Nutrition Network works with many partners to promote healthy eating in the community and schools

- “Mainely Nutrition” is in its 12th year and continues to provide over 800 teachers and school nurses in preschool through grade 12 classrooms with resources to implement appropriate and effective nutrition education in the classroom. These include training on integrating physical activity and nutrition education in the classroom, grade appropriate nutrition curriculum materials and physical activity support materials, and funds for nutrition education supplies.
- In collaboration with Maine CDC’s PAN-HW Program, the Healthy Weight Awareness Campaign, recognized by the Surgeon General in July 2008 through his Community Award Initiative, develops social marketing campaigns to directly impact families with children who are also served the State’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The campaign shows gives families with children resources and education to improve physical activity levels and healthy nutrition choices in Maine’s neediest families.

Maine Center for Public Health/Maine-Harvard Prevention Research Center:

Maine-Harvard Prevention Research Center is the only CDC funded Prevention Research Center that also receives funds from the state health department, Maine CDC. M-HPRC is funded to do research, education and dissemination regarding childhood obesity and is a key partner with the PAN Program in addressing childhood obesity prevention and control.

Let’s Go:

- Begun in November of 2006, a private sector initiative comprised of UNUM, Anthem, Maine Med Center, Hannaford, MaineHealth, TDBanknorth (all major employers in located in Greater Portland), and United way committed. 1.8 million over 5 years to address childhood obesity.
- 12 communities in Greater Portland are the service area. United way serves as organization to retain staff.
- Encourage healthy lifestyles for kids and their families – childhood obesity focused. Incorporated 5210 message as the key message for youth and families

- Stairwell initiative in all corporate partners
- Developing plan for 12 communities
- School, worksite (trying to reach parents through the workplace), community, and healthcare settings addressed.
- 5210 Goes to School – Kids Coop at Maine Medical Center takes the lead. Harvard-Pilgrim provides funds
 - Resources for teachers and school health coordinators
 - Champions in each school, different levels of involvement.
- Partnership with HMP state level initiative to coordinate resources and activities statewide

Harvard-Pilgrim Foundation

- In 2007, Harvard Pilgrim Foundation committed \$5 million over 5 years to help address childhood obesity with a focus on ages 6 – 12. Includes their service areas of Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts.
- In cooperation with Tufts University nutrition researchers, H-P developed a report to describe a blueprint for action over the years of their funding.

American Reinvestment and Recovery Act: State - Coordinated Community Grant Award.

- CDC has awarded Maine one of a select few State-Coordinated Community Grant awards under the Communities Putting Prevention to Work Initiative in the amount of \$4.28 million. In coordination with the baseline ARRA funding mentioned above, much of the resources available through this funding will directly address childhood obesity.
- In summary, Healthy Portland HMP and Healthy Lakes HMP, with the assistance of Maine's Physical Activity, Nutrition and Healthy Weight Program at Maine CDC will: 1) Promote healthy food/drink choices and increased physical activity through media campaigns; 2) Increase access to healthy foods and physical activity by establishing farm to school food systems, impacting city zoning and planning policy development, increasing safe, attractive and accessible places for exercise; and changing policies and providing support to require daily structured physical activity in afterschool/childcare settings; 3) Increase physical activity through signage for walkable/mixed-use neighborhoods, public transportation, and bike lanes/boulevards; and improve nutritional choices through signage for healthy food /drink vs. less healthy food/drink items; 4) Ensure increased use of parks and exercise facilities through subsidization of membership; and 5) Increase physical activity through Safe Routes to School programs and the creation of school activity groups.