




NATIONAL COLLABORATIVE ON CHILDHOOD OBESITY RESEARCH

ACCELERATING PROGRESS TO REDUCE CHILDHOOD OBESITY



A high-angle, slightly blurred photograph of four children playing hopscotch on a paved surface. The children are in motion, jumping over chalk-drawn hopscotch grids. One child in the foreground is a young boy in a white shirt and dark pants, jumping over a green hopscotch grid. Behind him, a girl in a pink dress is also jumping. To the left, another girl in a black dress over a white shirt is jumping. In the background, a child in a red shirt is partially visible. The hopscotch grids are drawn in green and red chalk, with numbers and letters in blue and green. The overall scene is bright and active, suggesting a schoolyard or playground setting.

The four largest funders of childhood obesity research work in tandem to manage projects and reach common goals; combine funding to make the most of available resources; and share insights and expertise to strengthen research.

Through enhanced coordination and collaboration, **NCCOR is accelerating progress to reduce childhood obesity.**

Building on each other's strengths, CDC, NIH, RWJF, and USDA formed a unique public-private partnership. Five years in, NCCOR continues to support future generations by:

- Collaborating to turn the tide on childhood obesity
- Supporting researchers with tools that help them work more efficiently and effectively
- Using innovation to stimulate broad thinking to generate fresh, synergistic ideas
- Increasing knowledge to find solutions by promoting new research funding mechanisms and translating and disseminating research findings
- Looking to the road ahead and building new partnerships to solve problems and stimulate new innovations



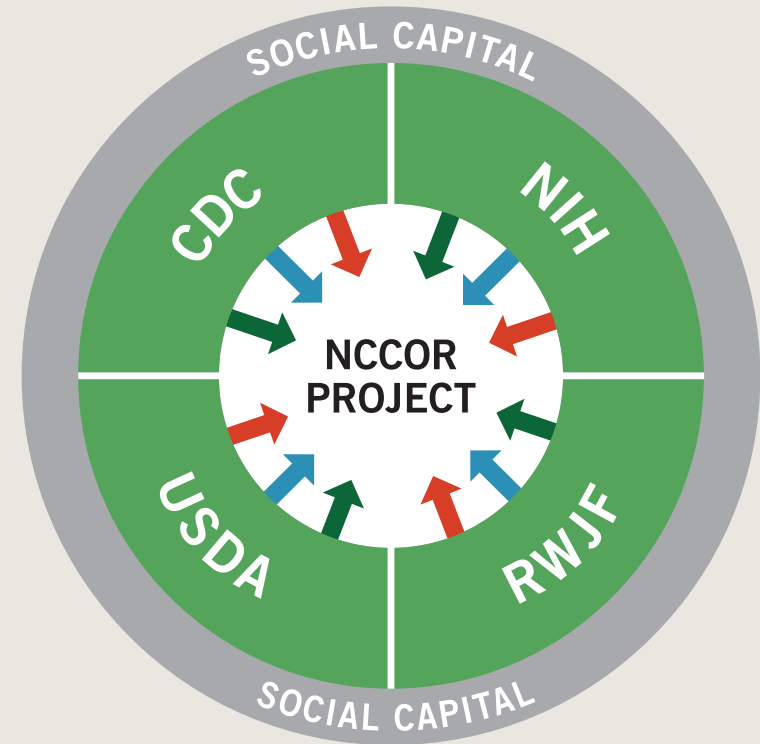
In 2010, NCCOR received one of the inaugural HHS *Innovates* Awards, which honors innovative approaches to public health issues. More than 10,000 HHS employees voted to identify the top six innovative projects. NCCOR was one of three efforts selected by former HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius for the distinction. NCCOR also received an NIH Director's Award in 2011 for its collaboration across federal agencies.



Leveraging Partner Resources

NCCOR makes a difference for childhood obesity research by leveraging each funding partner's "capital"—in other words, the time, resources, assets, and abilities used to create products and projects with a national impact. NCCOR creates social capital by working together to build relationships, cooperation, and trust. With this social capital as a base, NCCOR members create projects by leveraging one another's financial, managerial, and intellectual capital in flexible combinations that:

- Create efficiencies
- Strengthen resources and capacity
- Build and share knowledge
- Accelerate progress
- Achieve national impact



Intellectual Capital Financial Capital Managerial Capital



NCCOR Goals



1

Identify, design, and evaluate practical and sustainable interventions, especially in high-risk populations and communities.



2

Increase and improve national, state, and local surveillance of childhood obesity.



3

Improve the ability of childhood obesity researchers and program evaluators to conduct research and program evaluation.



4

Provide national leadership to accelerate implementation of evidence-informed practice and policy.



5

Work with non-health partners to integrate childhood obesity priorities with synergistic initiatives (e.g., environmental design and sustainability, food systems, food marketing, disabilities, or economics).



NCCOR External Scientific Panel

The NCCOR External Scientific Panel (NESP) advises NCCOR on strategic issues and provides guidance on specific projects or emerging work. The Panel serves as a valuable liaison between NCCOR and the extramural research community, informing the Collaborative on new science and ideas and on connections to research, practice, and policy. NESP contributes to the ongoing refinement of NCCOR's strategic plan.

External Communications

NCCOR uses multiple communication methods and social media to reach, engage, and mobilize childhood obesity researchers and other audiences. With an emphasis on translating and disseminating research and encouraging bidirectional dialogue, the Collaborative maintains a website, blog, Twitter feed, and monthly e-newsletter, and produces infographics, videos, and a webinar series—Connect & Explore. NCCOR also has an exhibit booth and publishes case studies showing impact in the childhood obesity research field.





Select Projects & Tools

-
- 15 Catalogue of Surveillance Systems
 - 16 Childhood Obesity Declines: Exploring Promising Approaches
 - 19 Childhood Obesity Research Demonstration
 - 20 Economics and Obesity
 - 23 Envision
 - 24 Food Patterns Equivalents Database
 - 27 Green Health
 - 28 Healthy Communities Study
 - 31 Healthy Food Incentives
 - 32 Johns Hopkins Global Obesity Prevention Center
 - 35 Measures Registry
 - 36 Registry of Studies
 - 39 School Wellness Survey
 - 40 SNAP-Ed
 - 43 Youth Energy Expenditure



CATALOGUE OF SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS

In February 2011, NCCOR launched a free tool providing one-stop access to over 100 publicly available datasets relevant to childhood obesity research. Datasets profiled in the Catalogue of Surveillance Systems include information on obesity-related health behaviors, outcomes, and determinants; and policies and environmental factors.

www.nccor.org/css

CHILDHOOD OBESITY DECLINES:
EXPLORING PROMISING APPROACHES

Declines in childhood obesity rates have been reported in several jurisdictions across the United States. In 2012, NCCOR established a workgroup to examine the possible drivers and contributors influencing the reported declines. An RWJF-funded investigation will examine and describe the sites where progress has occurred, collecting information on their initiatives, policies, programs, practices, and contextual factors that may have influenced declining obesity rates, as well as noting similarities, differences, and disparities among populations across sites. NCCOR is exploring opportunities to further support this work.





CHILDHOOD OBESITY RESEARCH DEMONSTRATION

In a multi-setting, multi-level community-based effort, the Childhood Obesity Research Demonstration (CORD) project involves children, parents and other family members, and communities in identifying strategies that improve children's health behaviors and reduce obesity. The project blends traditional community-based interventions with individual behavior support. NCCOR is supporting and advising this critical effort by participating on CORD's Steering Committee.

ECONOMICS AND OBESITY

NCCOR is pursuing work to address the economics research gap in childhood obesity, connect with new partners, establish a platform for economics research, and develop an agenda to stimulate research on the cost effectiveness and benefit of interventions. These efforts align with recommendations made by the NCCOR External Scientific Panel.





ENVISION

Bringing together leading modelers worldwide, Envision supports systems science modeling to help determine how to prevent obesity. As part of NCCOR's effort to build capacity for multi-level, integrated research, members examine the effects of individual, sociocultural, economic, environmental, and policy forces on children's diet, physical activity, energy balance, and body weight. Envision helped support *The Lancet* Obesity Series on global obesity trends published in 2011 and a special theme issue on systems science approaches in the *American Journal of Public Health* in 2014. Envision and NCCOR are currently working on other publication opportunities.

FOOD PATTERNS EQUIVALENTS DATABASE

To enhance food and nutrition surveillance, NCCOR supported critical updates to USDA's Food Patterns Equivalents Database and developed a related plain language fact sheet. This effort helped facilitate research goals related to intervention, evaluation, and other forms of nutrition research at the individual and community levels.





GREEN HEALTH

NCCOR members produced a 2013 *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* paper following an NCCOR-supported workshop linking environmental design, sustainability, and childhood obesity prevention. The paper supports the alliance between public health and the green building industry and lays out seven principles to guide the emerging fields of green health research and practice. NCCOR's green health efforts have exhibited the potential for transdisciplinary collaboration between public health and partners from complementary fields.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES STUDY

The Healthy Communities Study is a five-year study designed to assess the associations between community programs and policies targeting childhood obesity and body mass index, diet, and physical activity in children. The study includes over 200 demographically diverse communities and an estimated 17,000 families in the United States.





HEALTHY FOOD INCENTIVES

Increasing the number of Americans eating a healthy diet is a public health priority. Findings indicate that food choices are influenced by situational factors such as the placement of food in grocery aisles, marketing cues, and whether or not healthy foods are the default option. Healthy Food Incentives is exploring concepts from behavioral economic studies to better understand consumer food purchasing behavior, practice-based examples of purchasing patterns and economic incentives, and program evaluations.

JOHNS HOPKINS GLOBAL OBESITY
PREVENTION CENTER

Under the auspices of NCCOR and awarded to the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in September 2011, the \$16 million Johns Hopkins Global Obesity Prevention Center (GOPC) brings together basic science, epidemiology, nutrition, medicine, engineering, environmental and social policy research, and other fields in an unprecedented, innovative way. A funding mechanism established by GOPC in 2012 significantly reduces time for grant applications, greatly enhancing researchers' abilities to respond to time-sensitive topics in obesity prevention research.





MEASURES REGISTRY

The Measures Registry is a web-based portfolio of over 1,000 measures related to diet and physical activity. The tool allows researchers to more efficiently find and select measures that are critical to accelerating obesity prevention research. It is also helping to spur the use of comparable, core measures.

www.nccor.org/measures

REGISTRY OF STUDIES

NCCOR is developing a web-based registry that will house descriptions of significant outcome studies, including detailed information on the design of each study, measures, content areas, and populations examined. Currently, this information is not readily available to researchers; providing it will enable researchers to make critical insights and comparisons to their own studies.





SCHOOL WELLNESS SURVEY

Since 2006, the national School Wellness Survey—through the Bridging the Gap program—has collected and analyzed over 2,000 school districts’ wellness-related policies annually. These data provide baseline information for districts prior to implementation of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) in 2010. NCCOR is developing a plan to continue this work, aligning it both with other systems capturing related data and with federal data needs, and evaluating the effectiveness of wellness-related policies adopted following HHFKA.

SNAP-ED

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) is a federal-state partnership that supports nutrition education and obesity prevention for the 45 million low-income participants eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), half of which are children. NCCOR helped assemble a toolkit of effective and actionable tools and interventions that embody community-based and public health approaches to nutrition education and obesity prevention.





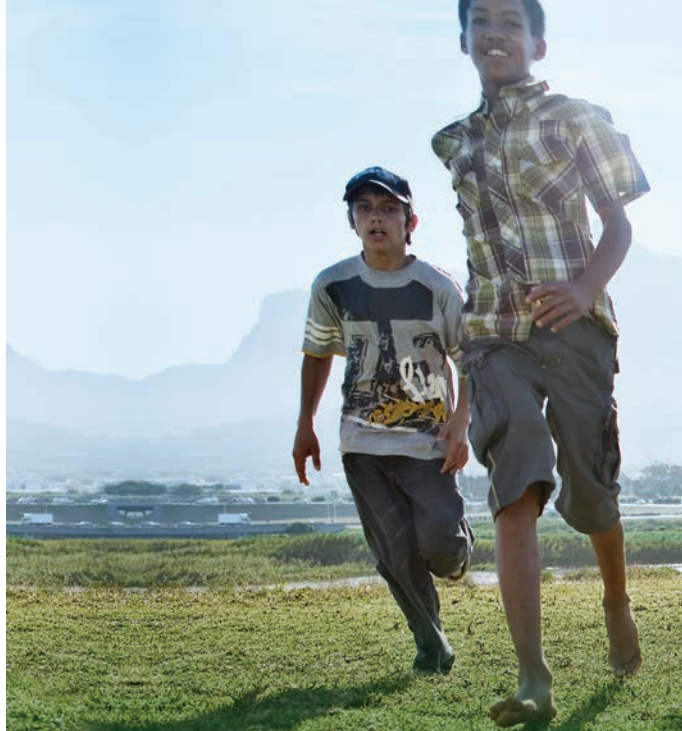
YOUTH ENERGY EXPENDITURE

The Compendium of Physical Activities with Metabolic Equivalent (MET) values for adults is a valuable tool that allows for comparisons of diverse behaviors and interventions based on a common metric. In 2008, a similar compendium was published for youth physical activities, but its data was limited. In an effort to achieve consensus on methods and measurements to improve youth energy expenditure estimates, NCCOR supported efforts to update and expand the existing youth compendium and continues to evaluate metrics for reporting. NCCOR is also working on several publications exploring methods for calculating and measuring youth energy expenditure.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON **NCCOR** CONTACT:

Todd Phillips, Director
tphillips@fhi360.org
www.nccor.org



The National Collaborative on Childhood Obesity Research (NCCOR) brings together four of the nation's leading research funders:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF)

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

October 2014



www.nccor.org

[@NCCOR](https://twitter.com/NCCOR)