

# NATIONAL COLLABORATIVE ON CHILDHOOD OBESITY RESEARCH

ACCELERATING PROGRESS TO REDUCE CHILDHOOD OBESITY



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, the CDC, NIH, RWJF, and USDA formed a unique public-private partnership. NCCOR supports 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

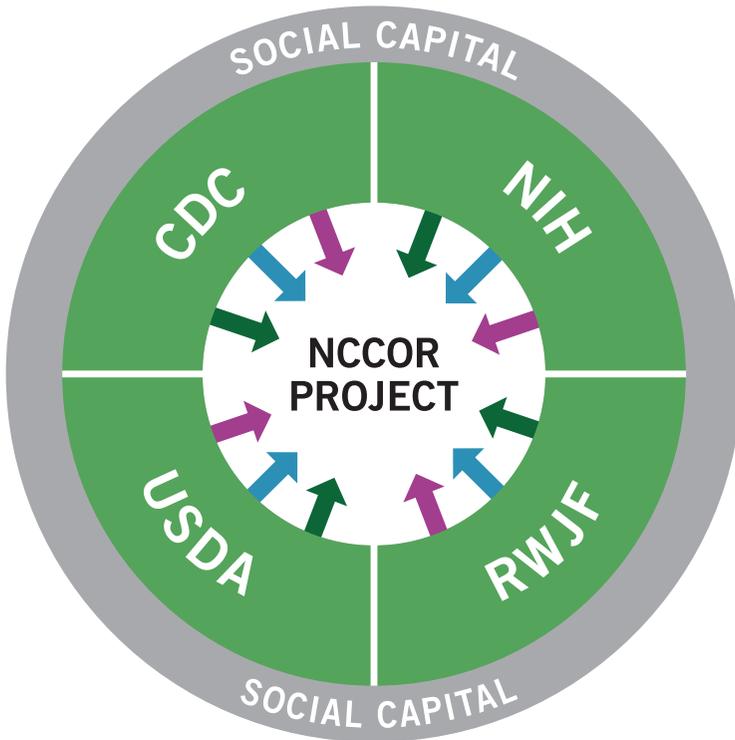
# Leveraging Partner Resources

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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

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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

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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, ideas, and connections to research, practice, and policy. NESP contributes to the ongoing refinement of NCCOR's strategic plan.

## **NESP MEMBERS**

Ross C. Brownson, PhD, *Washington University in St. Louis*

John Cawley, PhD, *Cornell University*

Terry Huang, PhD, MPH, *City University of New York School of Public Health*

Shiriki Kumanyika, PhD, MPH, *Drexel University Dornsife School of Public Health*

Amelie G. Ramirez, DrPH, *University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio*

Thomas N. Robinson, MD, MPH, *Stanford University School of Medicine*

James F. Sallis, PhD, *University of California, San Diego*

Mary Story, PhD, RD, *Duke University*

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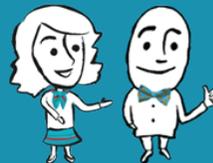
# Connect & Explore

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NCCOR connects the field to emerging issues and findings through the Connect & Explore webinar series. Nationally acclaimed experts are featured on each webinar to discuss current issues in childhood obesity research. The interactive series attracts participants from across the country, offering an opportunity to engage in dialogue with leading experts in the field and giving them an opportunity to ask questions and understand the nuances of research, policy, and evaluation.

Since 2014, NCCOR has hosted over 15 webinars including more than 35 experts. Topics range from health care-community collaborations to SNAP-Ed to childhood obesity declines. Registration and attendance for these webinars continue to rise, with recent webinars reaching over 400 people. All webinars are recorded and available as electronic resources on NCCOR's website.









# Select Projects & Tools

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## MEASURES REGISTRY

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The Measures Registry is a web-based online repository of over 1,000 articles on more than 100 discrete 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. Under a grant from the JPB Foundation, NCCOR is developing four User Guides to provide an overview of measurement, describe general principles of measurement selection, present case studies on selecting measures, describe challenges to measures harmonization, and highlight other resources.

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## CATALOGUE OF SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS

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The Catalogue of Surveillance Systems is a free online 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.

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## REGISTRY OF STUDIES

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The Registry of Studies is a web-based database that houses descriptions of significant outcome studies, including detailed information on the design of each study, measures, content areas, and populations examined. The Registry enables researchers to make critical insights and comparisons to their own studies.



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## CHILDHOOD OBESITY DECLINES

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Declines in childhood obesity rates have been reported in several jurisdictions across the United States. NCCOR established a workgroup to examine the possible drivers and contributors influencing the reported declines. Project investigators visited sites in four communities where progress had occurred and conducted an inventory of strategies within schools and early childhood education centers, health care settings, and community environments. They also interviewed leading policy and program developers and implementers, community members, and evaluators. In 2016, NCCOR released community



summary reports from four sites across the country—Anchorage, AK; Granville, NC; New York City, NY; and Philadelphia, PA—and highlighted the project during a Connect & Explore webinar.

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## ENGAGING HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS AND SYSTEMS

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NCCOR seeks to gather findings from research relevant to childhood obesity prevention that can be translated and used in clinical and community settings. The Engaging Health Care Providers and Systems workgroup helps identify partnerships and foster engagement between clinical settings and communities to support interventions addressing primary and secondary obesity prevention, including enhancing active living and

healthy eating. In 2015, NCCOR held a workshop, *Evaluating Clinical-Community Engagement Models: What Works and What Doesn't*, which examined integrated clinical and community models and programs—including those arising from community-benefit requirements. The workgroup released a white paper with key learnings and outcomes and a logic model to evaluate and measure health care-community engagement efforts.

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## HEALTH, BEHAVIORAL DESIGN AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

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NCCOR recognizes that environmental design at various levels can influence children’s social norms and behaviors related to dietary choices and daily physical activity. In 2015, NCCOR formed a workgroup to explore how behavioral design can support healthy actions by enhancing our understanding and ability to communicate and operationalize strategies that alter the experience with the built and natural environment.

The workgroup organized a workshop, *Deriving and Applying Behavioral Design Principles to Foster Active Living and Healthy Eating*, bringing together experts from a variety of academic and applied disciplines. NCCOR is developing a white paper that defines and provides an overview of behavioral design and develops a shared language across disciplines to facilitate this transdisciplinary work.

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## HEALTHY RETAIL

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Since 2014, NCCOR has worked to promote research on how to promote healthy food purchasing. There is a particular focus on low-income

households with children, especially those that participate in federal food assistance programs. While childhood obesity and its associated health problems are prevalent across income groups, overweight and obesity are particular concerns among low-income children. In 2016, NCCOR held a workshop that aimed to enhance the value of research by empowering researchers with tools and insights to improve research design and increase its applicability to federal food and nutrition assistance participants and other low-income target populations, particularly households with children.



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## SNAP-ED

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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 whom are children. NCCOR assembled a SNAP-Ed Toolkit of effective and actionable tools and interventions that embody community-based and public health approaches to nutrition education and obesity prevention. The toolkit was recently updated to include the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework: Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Prevention

Indicators, which includes a menu of outcome indicators that lend support to documenting changes resulting from multiple approaches in low-income nutrition education and obesity prevention efforts. The interpretive guide to the Evaluation Framework identifies and explains the indicators, outcome measures, and preferred methodologies for tracking success and developing state- and local-level SNAP-Ed objectives and reporting program evaluation to FNS, other funders, and program stakeholders.



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## YOUTH ENERGY EXPENDITURE

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Standardized measures to quantify the amount of energy children expend during physical activity are lacking. These measures are vital for comparing the effects of physical activity interventions and for cost and benefit research. The Youth Energy Expenditure workgroup, established in 2012, has examined the

best metric to use for youth energy expenditure values, conducted a comprehensive literature search, published a special issue of the *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, and developed a website for the Youth Compendium of Energy Expenditure Values.

# Select Past Projects

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**ENVISION** coordinated and supported statistical modeling efforts to forecast the impact of public health policies and interventions. Through Envision work, NCCOR supported a groundbreaking series of Envision papers in *The Lancet*.

NCCOR created exciting products, including a video and an infographic, to demonstrate applications of the **HEALTHY EATING INDEX** tool developed by NIH National Cancer Institute scientists.

**LESSONS LEARNED FROM GLOBAL EFFORTS** used childhood obesity as a “case study” during an interactive forum that addressed emerging and cross-cutting goals to build a Culture of Health and spur ideas for future research and action.

NCCOR was instrumental in the successful planning for the NIH **HEALTHY COMMUNITIES STUDY**, a large study to assess the effectiveness of community obesity prevention efforts in areas where childhood obesity rates are highest.

Visit our website at **[WWW.NCCOR.ORG](http://WWW.NCCOR.ORG)** to find out more about past projects.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON NCCOR:

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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)

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