



NCCOR

NATIONAL COLLABORATIVE ON CHILDHOOD OBESITY RESEARCH

**Building Evidence and Advancing Practice for Healthy
Children, Families, and Communities**



As a partnership of major funders addressing childhood obesity and health—including the CDC, NIH, RWJF, and USDA—**NCCOR builds evidence and advances practice to reduce childhood obesity in the United States, creating a healthier future for all children, their families, and communities.**

NCCOR uses the following approaches to advance strategic priorities in children's nutrition, physical activity, obesity prevention, and overall well-being:

Collaborating Across Disciplines and Sectors: We recognize that collaboration with many disciplines and sectors is needed, given the complex factors that influence healthy children, families, and communities.

Developing and Promoting Tools and Resources: We develop tools and resources that support researchers, evaluation scientists, and practitioners to enhance their effectiveness, efficiency, and impact.

Translating Research into Practice: We translate research into practice to promote community-wide solutions to improve broader public health impact.

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

NCCOR EXTERNAL SCIENTIFIC PANEL

The NCCOR External Scientific Panel (NESP) advises NCCOR on its future direction and provides guidance on specific projects or emerging work. NESP 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

Shari Barkin, MD, MSHS, *Emory University School of Medicine*

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

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RESEARCH TOOLS

NCCOR's tools connect researchers, practitioners, and students with data, guidance, and the collective expertise of leading scientists. NCCOR's workgroups conduct scientific reviews and thoroughly vet datasets to ensure NCCOR's tools reflect the best available science. These efforts result in products that:

Streamline access: NCCOR's website features datasets, tools, and guides so users can avoid time-consuming searches.

Provide trustworthy information: With resources developed by leading experts, users can be confident that their work is grounded in the most reliable and current science.

Support a wide range of needs: Whether embarking on new research, seeking external funding opportunities, developing programs, or delving into the intricacies of policy evaluation, NCCOR provides tools that cover a broad spectrum of needs.

Spark impact and innovation: Each NCCOR tool builds on existing knowledge to explore new avenues in research and make a difference in children's lives.

The [Guide to NCCOR's Research Tools](#) provides an overview of the seven tools, including:

- [Creating Thriving, Activity-Friendly Communities](#)
- [Measures Registry Resource Suite](#)
- [A Guide to Methods for Assessing Childhood Obesity](#)
- [A Toolkit for Evaluating Childhood Healthy Weight Programs](#)
- [Youth Compendium of Physical Activities](#)
- [Catalogue of Surveillance Systems](#)
- [Childhood Obesity Evidence Base \(COEB\): Test of a Novel Taxonomic Meta-Analytic Method](#)
- [Implementation Science Scorecard: A Decision-making Companion](#)

Visit the [NCCOR website](#) to access these tools and over 200 other resources, including white papers, factsheets, infographics, conference posters, journal articles, and a webinar library with over ten years of free video content. The website also features the [NCCOR Student Hub](#), which provides tailored resources for educators and students.



CONNECT & EXPLORE

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 research and issues around children's nutrition, physical activity, obesity prevention, and overall well-being. The interactive series attracts participants from across the country, offering an opportunity to engage in dialogue with leading experts in the field, ask questions, and understand the nuances of research, practice, policy, and evaluation.

Since 2014, NCCOR has hosted nearly 60 webinars featuring more than 60 experts. Topics range from weight stigma to implementation science to cultural insights into childhood obesity. Registration and attendance for these webinars continue to rise, with recent webinars reaching more than 500 people each. All webinars are recorded and available as electronic resources on [NCCOR's website](#).



WORKSHOPS & EXPERT PANELS

NCCOR has convened leading thinkers from diverse fields and disciplines in a wide range of workshops. These innovative events shine a spotlight on an issue, stimulate broad thinking to generate fresh and synergistic ideas, facilitate development of research and action agendas, and often provide a springboard for NCCOR activities.

Past workshops have covered topics such as policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) research; advancing measurement for childhood obesity; implementation science; and policy evaluation. Registration and attendance for these workshops continue to rise, with recent workshops reaching more than 900 people each. Recent workshops are recorded and available as electronic resources on [NCCOR's website](#).



OPUS WORKSHOP

To focus attention on key leverage points and innovative strategies to address childhood obesity, NCCOR launched its Obesity-Related Policy, Systems, and Environmental (OPUS) Workshop Series in 2024. The series was led by co-chairs Jamie Chriqui, PhD, MHS of the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health; Tamara Dubowitz, ScD, MS, MSc of the University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health; and Shiriki Kumanyika, PhD, MS, MPH of the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine.

With community engagement as a starting point, OPUS emphasizes the importance of policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) interventions to improve nutrition and physical activity access. Despite over a decade of recommendations, progress in implementing these approaches and reducing obesity-related disparities remains limited. OPUS aimed to bridge this gap by advancing research and evaluation, tackling methodological challenges, and guiding the next generation of PSE strategies for obesity prevention.

OPUS I: Innovation, Systems Thinking, and Success Stories in Childhood Obesity

The first OPUS workshop brought together over two dozen distinguished speakers and a diverse audience to explore the design and evaluation of PSE interventions for childhood obesity. Panel discussions across the two days explored evidence, examples, and best practices in developing scalable and impactful solutions.

OPUS II: Strategies to Overcome Challenges in Implementation, Scaling, and Sustainment

Building on insights from OPUS I, OPUS II focused on advancing the design and evaluation of PSE interventions for childhood obesity. Experts explored critical methodological challenges and shared strategies for planning, engaging, and scaling whole-of-system interventions. Discussions centered on three focus areas: cross-sector collaboration, rigorous evaluation designs, and sustainable adaptation of interventions.

The OPUS Learning Guides

NCCOR's OPUS Learning Guides are designed to help professors, students, and early career researchers easily access key takeaways from the OPUS workshop series and incorporate the lessons into the classroom and applied research projects.

Resources from OPUS I and II, including slides and video recordings, are available on the [NCCOR website](#).

SELECT RECENT PROJECTS

Implementation Science

NCCOR established the Implementation Science workgroup to learn more about the gaps between implementation science (IS) research and practice. The workgroup conducted formative interviews with two audiences that implement childhood and family obesity interventions: government agencies (e.g., state and city health departments, extension programs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (e.g., private funders, local and national non-profits). The interview findings informed the development of a digital scorecard tool and case study to help practitioners identify strengths and blind spots as they move through the four phases of implementing new interventions or program.

Physical Activity Research Opportunities (PARO)

NCCOR established the Identification and Categorization of Evidence Gaps in Physical Activity Research workgroup to develop a conceptual framework to advance physical activity research. The Physical Activity Research Opportunities (PARO) framework highlights gaps in current evidence and reveals opportunities for physical activity funders, researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to strategically advance their work. There are opportunities for designing efficacy and effectiveness trials with an eye toward dissemination and implementation, developing strategies for improving dissemination and implementation, and using community- and practitioner-engaged

approaches across translational science phases to advance health for all. The PARO framework is a tool for advancing the physical activity research agenda, informing future guidelines, and building both evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence.

Advancing Measurement of Dietary Assessment for Infants and Young Children

The 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) for the first time included comprehensive dietary recommendations for birth to 24 months of age (B-24) and established dietary patterns for the second year of life. In response, NCCOR formed the Advancing Measurement of Dietary Assessment for Infants and Young Children workgroup to measure the new DGA recommendations for infants and toddlers. The workgroup published a paper in the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (JAND) titled [“Count Every Bite to Make ‘Every Bite Count’: Measurement Gaps and Future Directions for Assessing Diet from Birth to 24 Months.”](#) The paper proposes a process for identifying measurement gaps and provides research recommendations for closing those gaps.



SELECT RESEARCH ARTICLES



NCCOR and its partners have published nearly 50 peer-reviewed research articles, including the following recent publications:

[Reliability and Validity of Physical Activity Measures for Children and Adolescents: The NCCOR Measures Registry Review](#)

Researchers analyzed the individual physical activity behaviors portion of NCCOR's Measures Registry to highlight strengths and gaps in the reliability and validity literature for children's and adolescents' physical activity measures. They determined that future validation work is needed to address better inclusion of diverse populations in the Measures Registry.

[National Collaborative on Childhood Obesity Research Efforts to Advance Childhood Obesity Research: Progress and Next Steps](#)

This paper reflects on improvements in two NCCOR tools over a decade: 1) the Catalogue of Surveillance Systems, one-stop access to publicly available datasets and 2) the Measures Registry, a searchable database of diet and physical activity measures across four domains relevant to childhood obesity: individual diet, food environment, individual physical activity, and physical activity environment. The publication provides an overview of NCCOR's work to advance measurement for childhood obesity and potential next steps for the field.

[Improving Active Travel to School and Its Surveillance: An Overlooked Opportunity in Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention](#)

NCCOR held a workshop in fall 2020 titled "Improving Surveillance of Youth Active Travel to School" to identify gaps in existing active travel to school (ATS) surveillance systems, pinpoint needs of relevant decision-makers, and develop practical strategies and solutions to address those needs and strengthen surveillance where gaps exist. Following that workshop, NCCOR published this commentary, which offers insights into strengthening surveillance and data collection of ATS behavior as well as ATS environmental, policy, and program supports.



NCCOR

through THE YEARS



2014

- NCCOR launches its Connect & Explore webinar series to engage, inform, and communicate with researchers and other external audiences.
- NCCOR convenes the Lessons Learned from Global Efforts forum to guide efforts to reduce childhood obesity prevalence in the United States and worldwide.
- NCCOR hosts the Healthy Food Incentives Workshop Series to bring together researchers, practitioners, and government officials to discuss implementation and evaluation of incentives.

2015

- NCCOR forms the first strategic funding alliance with The JPB Foundation.
- NCCOR hosts the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework Workshop to discuss indicators, define outcomes measures and data sources, and discuss reporting methods for priority outcomes.
- NCCOR launches its monthly e-Newsletter.

2016

- NCCOR publishes the Measures Registry User Guides, the first of several enhancements that will become the Measures Registry Resource Suite.



2020

- *Childhood Obesity* publishes four papers highlighting findings from NCCOR's Childhood Obesity Evidence Base, which created a novel taxonomic method of data aggregation to identify successful obesity prevention strategies for young children.
- NCCOR releases several new tools and resources based on years of work, including A Guide to Methods for Assessing Childhood Obesity, a new tool on adapting measures for high-risk populations, and the Student Hub to support the next generation of researchers.
- NCCOR hosts the Advancing Measurement of Childhood Obesity Workshop Series.
- NCCOR unveils the new student hub webpage.

2021

- NCCOR publishes A Toolkit for Evaluating Childhood Healthy Weight Programs to support researchers and practitioners in building capacity for research, evaluation, and surveillance.

2022

- NCCOR reaches new audiences with the release of Create Thriving, Activity-Friendly Communities, a user-friendly resource suite to help local planners and neighborhood advocates create environments where all children can thrive.

2023

- NCCOR expands into a new research domain by adding sleep variables to the Catalogue of Surveillance Systems.
- NCCOR publishes commentary in *Am J Prev Med* on Efforts to Advance Childhood Obesity Research: Progress and Next Steps.

2024

- NCCOR hosts the Obesity-Related Policy, Systems, and Environmental Research in the U.S. Workshop series to explore lessons learned from PSE efforts to date and identified potential new approaches for addressing childhood obesity.
- NCCOR updates its logo, tagline, and mission

2025

- NCCOR launches the Implementation Scorecard: A Decision-Making Companion, a tool to help practitioners move through the four phases of implementation.
- NCCOR launches the OPUS Learning Guides, designed to help professors, students, and early career researchers access key takeaways from the OPUS workshop series.



2009

- NIH, CDC, and RWJF formally launch NCCOR to accelerate progress in childhood obesity research.

2010

- USDA joins NCCOR as the fourth funding organization. Together, the four partners jointly commit more than \$40 million and considerable scientific expertise to NCCOR-supported projects.
- NCCOR receives the HHSInnovates Award.

2011

- NCCOR releases its first tools, the Measures Registry and Catalogue of Surveillance Systems, creating standardized resources for the field.
- NCCOR's Envision Project launches, linking three data modeling networks—COMNet (Collaborative Obesity Modeling Network), CompMod (Comparative Modeling), and the Statistical Network—to forecast the impact of public health policies and interventions on childhood obesity through innovative modeling approaches.
- NCCOR receives the NIH's Director Award.
- NCCOR, the National Academy of Environmental Design, and the U.S. Green Building Council, focused on linking environmental design, sustainability, and childhood obesity prevention.

2012

- The NCCOR Expert Scientific Panel (NESP) forms to advise on initiatives and serve as a valuable link between NCCOR and the extramural research community.
- NCCOR hosts the Envision Summit.
- NCCOR publishes an article in *Am J Prev Med* on New Tools to Spur Innovation and Increase Productivity in Childhood Obesity Research.

2013

- USDA and NCCOR publish the first SNAP-Ed toolkit of evidence-based interventions in education; social marketing; and policy, systems, and environmental strategies.
- NCCOR premieres new print and video resources as part of a promotional campaign for the Healthy Eating Index.
- With the help of NCCOR, USDA released FPED updates for the 2007-2008 and 2009-2010 NHANES survey cycles.

2018

- Childhood Obesity devotes a special issue to NCCOR's Childhood Obesity Declines project, which explored how four U.S. communities used policies and strategies to reduce obesity rates.
- *The Am J Prev Med* publishes a special theme section about NCCOR ahead of its 10th anniversary, describing the formation of the collaborative, its accomplishments, and its potential.

2019

- NCCOR launches the Measures Registry Learning Modules through a partnership with The JPB Foundation.
- NCCOR launches its quarterly student e-newsletter.

SELECT PREVIOUS PROJECTS

SNAP-Ed

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) is a federal-state partnership that supports nutrition education and obesity prevention for the 41.7 million low-income participants eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), half of whom are children. NCCOR worked closely with USDA to develop, refine, and update the SNAP-Ed Toolkit—a toolkit of evidence-based obesity interventions that included direct education; social marketing; and policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) strategies and interventions. NCCOR also helped update the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework: Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Prevention Indicators—a focused menu of outcome indicators that align with the SNAP-Ed guiding principles and lend support to documenting changes resulting from multiple approaches in low-income nutrition education and obesity prevention efforts.

Childhood Obesity Declines

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 2018, study authors published a special supplement in [Childhood Obesity](#) on the findings from the project. The supplement details the strategies and policies implemented in four diverse communities—Anchorage, AK; Granville County, NC; New York, NY; and Philadelphia, PA—that experienced declines in childhood obesity prevalence from 2003 to 2011.

The Collaborative Learning Project on the Evaluation of Childhood Healthy Weight Programs

In 2017, NCCOR formed the Engaging Health Care Providers and Systems Workgroup to foster engagement between clinical settings and communities and support interventions in primary and secondary obesity prevention. The workgroup convened six focus groups to determine the utility of a peer-led collaborative learning project to evaluate community-based childhood healthy weight programs (HWP). With input gathered from the focus groups, the workgroup launched the Collaborative Learning Project in October 2018 – a web-based learning space for community-based HWP practitioners and subject matter experts to inform the development of an HWP evaluation framework. Participants interact with one another via discussions, resource sharing, and interactive sessions that address program evaluation topics such as organizational readiness, process measures, outcome measures, and program sustainability. Using the information garnered from the learning sessions, NCCOR developed the [Toolkit for Evaluating Healthy Weight Programs](#).

Visit our website at www.nccor.org to find out more about past projects.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON NCCOR, CONTACT:



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**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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