

A young girl with brown hair in pigtails is climbing a green metal frame, likely part of a playground structure. She is wearing a grey t-shirt with colorful polka dots, purple shorts, and bright yellow sneakers. She is looking upwards with a focused expression. The background is a clear blue sky with scattered white clouds.

MOVING FORWARD

ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

2017 Annual Report



PROGRESS THROUGH COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

Since 2008, four leading research funders—the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)—have collaborated to accelerate efforts aimed at slowing and reversing the epidemic of childhood obesity in the United States. These organizations established the National Collaborative on Childhood Obesity Research (NCCOR) because they knew that they could get more done, more quickly, and have a greater impact by working in partnership than by working alone.

The partners recognize that to have a substantial impact on the childhood obesity epidemic, attention must be paid to both eating behaviors and physical activity behaviors. Physical activity is an area of growing collaboration among NCCOR partners. This work has been supported in recent years by the convergence of several key developments in this arena, and NCCOR has used them to engage diverse audiences, increase the dissemination of research, and stimulate innovative thinking to result in solutions.



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RIDING THE WAVE

In recent years, several key documents were published that guided NCCOR's work in physical activity during 2017:

- ➔ **An updated *National Physical Activity Plan* was published in 2016.** The Plan presents a comprehensive strategy for increasing physical activity in all U.S. population segments. Two of its priorities—establish a comprehensive surveillance system and promote physical activity policy development—are particularly relevant to promoting and evaluating physical activity among children and youth.
- ➔ **A paper published in the *American Journal of Public Health* in 2016 laid out a vision for “Public Health 3.0.”** This vision emphasizes cross-sector collaboration, environmental policy, and systems-level actions to affect social determinants of health. These themes can all be applied to physical activity promotion efforts.
- ➔ ***Step it Up! The Surgeon General's Call to Action on Walking and Walkable Communities* was released in 2015.** This document laid out five goals for increasing physical activity in the United States:
 - Make walking a national priority.
 - Design communities that make it safer and easier for people to walk.
 - Promote programs and policies to support walking.
 - Provide information to encourage walking and improve walkability.
 - Fill surveillance, research, and evaluation gaps related to walking and walkability.

In addition to the publication of these documents, the 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans development process was launched in 2016. This update to the 2008 Guidelines will ensure that physical activity programs, policies, and education efforts are informed by the most up-to-date evidence and recommendations on physical activity and health.

Accelerating Progress

As a recognized leader in childhood obesity research and prevention, NCCOR built on these documents and initiatives to advance physical activity research and practice by:



Launching new tools and products.

By developing and continuously updating collections of data sources, user guides, and other tools, NCCOR is a central resource that helps meet researchers' evolving needs.



Connecting and sharing information with the field.

NCCOR provides a forum for cutting-edge work by amplifying research findings through translation and dissemination and by bringing together leading thinkers from many fields to synthesize their expertise.



Looking ahead for emerging opportunities.

NCCOR continues to explore ways to promote healthy eating and active living; enhance coordination and collaboration among researchers, investigators, and practitioners; and seek effective approaches that can broaden and accelerate childhood obesity declines.

Youth and Physical Activity

A robust body of evidence shows that physical activity can reduce illness from chronic diseases and premature death. In children and adolescents, physical activity can improve bone health, cardiorespiratory and muscular fitness, body composition, and mental health. Even so, national surveys show that many youth do not achieve the recommended amount of physical activity. Data from the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey from 2011–2015 show that the prevalence of physical activity among youth is low and not improving over time. These findings underscore the urgency to encourage greater physical activity among children and adolescents.



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LAUNCHING NEW TOOLS AND PRODUCTS

In 2017, NCCOR released several exciting new tools with a special emphasis on physical activity—two of the Measures Registry User Guides and the Youth Compendium of Physical Activities. In addition, NCCOR released a white paper on *Health, Behavioral Design, and the Built Environment*.



Measures Registry User Guides

The Measures Registry is one of NCCOR's most popular tools. This critical resource for researchers and practitioners is a free online repository of diet and physical activity measures. Launched in 2011, the Measures Registry contains more than 1,200 articles on diverse tools and methodologies that can be used to assess individuals' diet and physical activity, as well as the environments in which those behaviors occur.

Even with the Measures Registry, researchers may have difficulty selecting the most appropriate measures for their work. To help researchers in this task, NCCOR developed four Measures Registry User Guides. The User Guides, funded through a strategic alliance partnership with The JPB Foundation and published in February 2017, focus on four core areas



Measures Registry

of childhood obesity research: individual diet, food environment, individual physical activity, and physical activity environment. The User Guides provide an overview of measurement, describe general principles of measurement selection, and present case studies that walk researchers through the process of using the Measures Registry to select appropriate measures. The User Guides make an important contribution to the fields of physical activity and nutrition research and practice by promoting more consistent use of measures, which will allow for greater standardization and synthesis among domains.

Youth Compendium of Physical Activities

Knowledge about the amount of energy required to carry out various types of physical activities is vital for connecting physical activity behavior and health and for planning and evaluating programs. However, researchers and practitioners measuring energy expenditure in youth have long had to rely on adapted adult values when working with children, which was inappropriate because the energy costs of physical activity change as children grow and mature.

The Youth Compendium of Physical Activities, released in October 2017, was the capstone of a 5-year collaboration between NCCOR, CDC, NIH, and leading researchers in the field of youth energy expenditure. This one-stop, easy-to-search tool provides measures of energy expenditure for 196 activities in which youth commonly engage, including sedentary activities, standing activities, games, and

walking and running. It is designed for a range of users and a variety of purposes, including research, public health policy making, education, design and implementation of physical activity programs, and comparison and evaluation of school- and community-based physical activity initiatives. A scientific paper published in 2017 describes the data sets and analytic procedures used to develop the Youth Compendium.

During development of the Compendium, the project team made several other valuable contributions to the field by publishing an updated literature review of energy expenditure values, two scientific papers on metrics to measure youth energy expenditure, and a journal supplement of manuscripts presenting previously unpublished energy expenditure values on nearly 100 physical activities in youth.

Behavioral Design White Paper

It is increasingly recognized that environmental design at various levels—from a school classroom to a community environment—can influence children’s social norms and physical activity behaviors. However, the actual effects of specific aspects of the built environment on health-related behaviors are less clear.

In 2015 and 2016, NCCOR convened a series of meetings with experts representing a diverse array of disciplines to discuss evidence and methods that inform behavioral design to develop guiding principles that can foster active living and healthy eating. These discussions led to a white paper, released in March 2017. The paper provides an overview of behavioral design and its underlying conceptual domains, articulates principles to guide research and practice, and discusses the application of behavioral design in various contexts to promote healthy eating and active living among children.

Environmental design can influence children’s social norms and physical activity behaviors; however, the actual effects of specific aspects of the built environment on health-related behaviors are less clear.



NCCOR Workgroups and Projects

NCCOR workgroups provide the structure for members to come together and work on issues of shared interest. Some workgroups continue for extended periods and encompass multiple projects; others focus on one project and disband once the work is complete.

Workgroups give NCCOR the flexibility to respond to emerging issues and engage groups and individuals with interest in and experience relevant to childhood obesity. The following workgroups and projects were active during 2017:

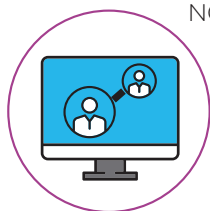
- Advancing Measurement of Diet and Physical Activity
- Childhood Obesity Declines
- Engaging Health Care Providers and Systems
- Food Systems
- Health, Behavioral Design, and the Built Environment
- Healthy Communities Study
- Healthy Food Financing Initiative
- Physical Activity
- SNAP-Ed Toolkit and Evaluation Framework
- Youth Energy Expenditure

CONNECTING AND SHARING INFORMATION WITH THE FIELD

A vibrant childhood obesity research community is built on open communication and continual dialogue. However, as a field with many players and diverse disciplines, it can be difficult for researchers and practitioners to stay current on all developments. NCCOR's role as a central conduit for information helps spread new research findings and practice. During 2017, NCCOR continued to connect with the field through various existing channels and explored new channels.



Connect & Explore Webinars



NCCOR held several webinars in 2017 through the Connect & Explore series. These webinars bring nationally known experts together to discuss current issues in childhood obesity research and practice. Most of the webinars this year focused on physical activity and highlighted NCCOR's new tools and resources.

→ **New NCCOR Measures Registry User Guides: Selecting the Best Measures, Part 1.** MARCH 29.

Authors of the two diet-related User Guides provided an overview of the content and explained the case studies, which walk users through several measure-selection scenarios.

- **Sharon Kirkpatrick, PhD, RD**, University of Waterloo, Canada
- **Leslie Lytle, PhD, MS**, University of North Carolina
- **Allison Myers, PhD, MPH**, Counter Tools
- **Amanda Raffoul, MSc**, University of Waterloo, Canada

→ **New NCCOR Measures Registry User Guides: Selecting the Best Measures, Part 2.** APRIL 12.

Authors of the two physical activity-related User Guides provided an overview of the content and explained the case studies.

- **Jordan Carlson, PhD, MA**, Children's Mercy Kansas City
- **James Morrow, Jr., PhD, MS, FACSM, FNAK**, University of North Texas
- **Pedro Saint-Maurice, PhD**, NIH
- **James Sallis, PhD**, University of California, San Diego
- **Gregory Welk, PhD**, Iowa State University

→ **Built Environment Interventions to Increase Physical Activity.** OCTOBER 11.

Leading members of the Community Preventive Services Task Force highlighted their new report *Interventions to Increase Physical Activity: Built Environment Approaches Combining Transportation System Interventions with Land Use and Environmental Design*.

- **Ross Brownson, PhD**, Washington University in St. Louis
- **Jamie Chiqui, PhD, MHS**, University of Illinois at Chicago, Institute of Health Policy Research
- **Christopher Kochtitzky, MSP**, CDC

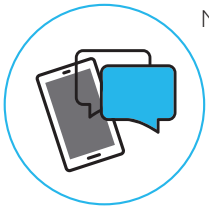
→ **Introducing the Youth Compendium of Physical Activities: A Breakthrough Resource for Childhood Obesity Research.** DECEMBER 5. Members of the Compendium team discussed a key issue in its development—how to account for age and evolving maturity when establishing energy expenditure values for children—and described this new tool.

- **Nancy Butte, PhD, MPH, RD**, Baylor College of Medicine
- **Scott Crouter, PhD, MS**, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- **Karin Pfeiffer, PhD, MS, FACSM**, Michigan State University

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Social Media

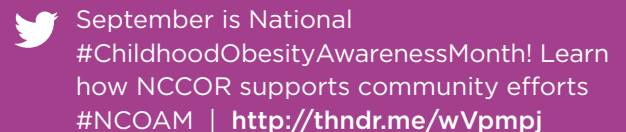


NCCOR used social media in new and innovative ways this year to present new tools and resources. This year's social media activities shifted to a heavier focus on graphics and imagery.

NCCOR's promotion of National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month in September was a strong example of our social media outreach. Activities centered around the theme "community efforts to reduce childhood obesity."

- NCCOR began on **AUGUST 31** with a **blog post** discussing all the ways NCCOR promotes community efforts to reduce childhood obesity, from supporting initiatives to learn from communities and sharing evidence and lessons learned, to creating resources and tools to advance community-level approaches.
- On **SEPTEMBER 6**, NCCOR launched a **Facebook page** to engage diverse audiences and promote the latest information on childhood obesity research and prevention.
- On **SEPTEMBER 20**, NCCOR shared a **Thunderclap message**. In this innovative social media platform, participants agree to share a message on their own social media accounts, which allows a single message to be shared broadly. Over 100 organizations and individuals participated, including NIH's National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute and National Cancer Institute, and The Obesity Society. It reached more than 336,000 individuals.

- NCCOR closed out the awareness month by hosting a **Twitter chat** on **SEPTEMBER 27** with NCI's Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences (@NCICancerCtrl); the NIH Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (@NIHOBSSR); and CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity (@CDCObesity). More than 100 individuals and organizations participated in the event, which reached more than 1.2 million people.



NCCOR Papers to Be Published in Leading Scientific Journal

During 2017, an NCCOR writing team developed two articles describing the NCCOR partnership and its diverse accomplishments. The papers will be published in the March 2018 issue of the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, a leading national public health journal. The publication of these papers will showcase NCCOR's mission and activities to a broad national and international audience:

- **Developing a Partnership for Change: The National Collaborative on Childhood Obesity Research.** The NCCOR Writing Group: Rachel M. Ballard, MD, MPH; Anne B. Rodgers, MA; Laura Kettel Khan, PhD; C. Tracy Orleans, PhD; Elaine Arkin, MS; and Todd M. Phillips, MS.
- **A National Collaborative for Building the Field of Childhood Obesity Research.** The NCCOR Writing Group: Rachel M. Ballard, MD, MPH; Anne B. Rodgers, MA; C. Tracy Orleans, PhD; Laura Kettel Khan, PhD; Elaine Arkin, MS; and Todd M. Phillips, MS.

Conferences



Conferences provide important venues for research and practice communities to connect and learn about each other's work. NCCOR took full advantage of these opportunities in 2017 by attending several annual conferences of national organizations engaged in work related to physical activity and childhood obesity. NCCOR used these meetings to engage with the field and showcase its newest tools through presentations and the NCCOR exhibit booth.

→ **American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) 64th Annual Meeting, DENVER, CO.**

Each year, educators, basic and applied physiologists, exercise professionals, physicians and other health care professionals, and students gather together to discuss the latest developments in this field. NCCOR attended ACSM in 2017 to highlight its Youth Compendium of Physical Activities. This was a particularly useful venue at which to promote the Youth Compendium because the majority of ACSM meeting participants can use the resource in their work.

- **Exhibit booth**—*MAY 31–JUNE 2, 2017.*
- **Tutorial Lecture**—Hot off the Presses: A Revised Youth Compendium of Physical Activities, *JUNE 1, 2017.*
 - **David Berrigan, PhD, MPH, NIH**
 - **Stephen D. Herrmann, PhD, Sanford Research**
 - **Karin Pfeiffer, PhD, MS, FACSM, Michigan State University**

→ **Environmental Design Research Association 48th Annual Conference (EDRA48), MADISON, WI.**

Each year, this conference brings together theoreticians, researchers, teachers, and practitioners to build understanding of the relationships among people, their built environments, and natural ecosystems. The 2017 EDRA conference provided the perfect opportunity to showcase NCCOR's behavioral design work as a symposium.

- **NCCOR Sponsored Symposium**—Healthy Places: Using Behavioral Design to Enhance Active Living and Healthy Eating, *JUNE 1, 2017.*
 - **Rachel Ballard, MD, MPH, NIH**
 - **Jeri Brittin, PhD, HDR**
 - **Samuel Dennis, PhD, MLA, University of Wisconsin, Madison**
 - **Joel Kimmons, PhD, CDC**
 - **Kim Rollings, PhD, MS, University of Notre Dame**
 - **Nancy M. Wells, PhD, MS, Cornell University**

→ **National Conference on Health Communication, Marketing, and Media (NCHCMM), ATLANTA, GA.**

This conference convenes communications and media academics, public health researchers, and practitioners. It provided a forum for NCCOR to highlight its communication and dissemination work in the release of the Measures Registry User Guides and to learn cutting-edge techniques from communications peers.

- **Poster Session**—The Measures Registry User Guides: Tailoring Messaging and Outreach to a Diverse Target Audience, *AUGUST 16, 2017.*
 - **LaVerne Canady, MPA, FHI 360**
 - **Todd Phillips, MS, FHI 360**
 - **Amanda Samuels, MS, MPH, FHI 360**

→ **ObesityWeek 2017 — The Obesity Society Annual Scientific Meeting, NATIONAL HARBOR, MD.**

As one of the largest conferences for obesity researchers and professionals, ObesityWeek provided an ideal opportunity to unveil the newest tool, the Youth Compendium of Physical Activities.

- **Scientific Session**—Youth Compendium of Energy Costs of Physical Activities, *OCTOBER 31, 2017.*
- **Pediatric Section Meeting**—*NOVEMBER 1, 2017.* Members of the Youth Compendium project team presented on the Compendium at two critical venues at the conference—a general session and a session of the Pediatric section.
 - **David Berrigan, PhD, MPH, NIH**
 - **Nancy Butte, PhD, MPH, RD, Baylor University**



LOOKING AHEAD, EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

Despite well-established recognition of the scope and impact of the childhood obesity epidemic and significant progress in addressing it, much work remains. In 2018, NCCOR will continue to pursue cross-cutting, innovative, member-led approaches to building the field of childhood obesity research and coordinating the efforts of its diverse and multidisciplinary players. Following are a few of the activities NCCOR will pursue in the coming year.

Physical Activity Workgroup

In 2017, NCCOR formed a new Physical Activity workgroup to foster physical activity-related planning and engagement across all NCCOR partners. The workgroup identified several activities for 2018:

- **Increasing Opportunities for Trail Use to Promote Physical Activity and Health among Underserved Youth.** This project will address existing gaps in our knowledge of effective approaches to promote and increase trail use among youth from underserved groups.
- **Youth Active School Transportation Surveillance Initiative.** This project will address gaps in existing surveillance of active school transportation for youth, specifically the lack of an existing national surveillance system that regularly monitors walking behavior or neighborhood supports for walking in various settings, including schools and communities.
- **Additional Benefits of Walkability.** This project will address the need to develop measures and tools to quantify benefits of walkability beyond physical activity to evaluate and examine the effectiveness of interventions.

Health Equity

From its beginning, NCCOR has been conscious of the disproportionate impact of childhood obesity on some populations in the United States and the need to emphasize health equity in efforts to address it. A greater focus on this topic was set in motion with a presentation by Dr. Shiriki Kumanyika at the July 2017 NCCOR Member Meeting, and it will intensify in 2018. One of NCCOR's first actions includes the publication of a supplement in *Childhood Obesity* on the Childhood Obesity Declines project. This project examined possible drivers and contributors that may be influencing the reported declines in childhood obesity rates and explored an alarming trend of significant disparities in the populations seeing improvements.

JPB Strategic Alliance

During 2018, NCCOR will continue its strategic alliance with The JPB Foundation through the continuation of a 3-year grant. This grant will promote the Measures Registry, support training in measures selection, examine adaptation of measures for distinct populations and communities, and define next steps in measurement science to accelerate progress in reducing childhood obesity.

Weight Management Focus Groups

NCCOR's Engaging Health Care Providers and Systems workgroup will concentrate its 2018 efforts on evaluating healthy weight programs (HWP). In collaboration with the American Academy of Pediatrics, the workgroup convened six focus groups with 15 representatives from three different settings: tertiary care-, primary care- and community-based HWPs. The goal of these focus groups was to determine the utility of a peer-led collaborative learning project on the evaluation of HWPs and identify the needs that such a project could help address.

Focus group participants agreed that developing a collaborative learning project is necessary to generate a framework for childhood HWP evaluation, including common terminology and proposed process and outcome measures. Community-based childhood HWPs are needed to participate in a collaborative learning project to address the evaluation gaps that exists across these programs.



2017 NCCOR MEMBERSHIP

List of NCCOR members and NCCOR Coordinating Center staff during 2017

NCCOR Steering Committee

Rachel Ballard, MD, MPH
Donna Johnson-Bailey, MPH, RD
Tina Kauh, PhD, MS
Laura Kettel Khan, PhD, MIM
Jay Variyam, PhD
Kathleen B. Watson, PhD
Deborah Young-Hyman, PhD

NCCOR Members

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Division of Prevention Science

Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

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Office of Minority Health

Sonsiere Cobb-Souza, MS

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National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

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Allison Nihiser, MPH

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Caitlin L. Merlo, MPH, RD
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Sarah Sliwa, PhD

National Center for Health Statistics

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Craig Hales, MD, MPH, MS

Office of the Director

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Division of Cardiovascular Sciences

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Jasmine Hall Ratliff, MHA

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Maureen K. Spill, PhD

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Amanda Samuels, MS, MPH
Yanelis Valdes
Amy Lazarus Yaroch, PhD
Hatidza Zaganjor, MPH

NCCOR BY THE NUMBERS

TWITTER

1,823
FOLLOWERS



21.5%
INCREASE

TWITTER CHAT

129 ORGANIZATIONS
AND INDIVIDUALS
PARTICIPATED

609 TWEETS & RETWEETS

> 7 MILLION
IMPRESSIONS

LINKEDIN

447 
FOLLOWERS

19.8%
INCREASE

OUTSIDE EXPERTS

44 

WORKGROUP
PARTICIPANTS

14 

MEETING &
CONFERENCE
SPEAKERS

13 

CONNECT
& EXPLORE
PRESENTERS

CONFERENCES

- 1 American College of Sports Medicine 64th Annual Meeting, Denver, CO
- 2 Environmental Design Research Association 48th Annual Conference, Madison, WI
- 3 National Conference on Health Communication, Marketing, and Media, Atlanta, GA
- 4 ObesityWeek 2017, The Obesity Society Annual Scientific Meeting National Harbor, MD
- 5 American Public Health Association 145th Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA

THUNDERCLAP

108 supporters agreed to share the National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month message on their social media accounts

> REACHED AN
ESTIMATED 336,738

FACEBOOK

 226 FACEBOOK LIKES
from September launch
to end of 2017

CONNECT & EXPLORE

1,268
PARTICIPANTS

286 VIEWS OF
YOUTUBE
VIDEOS 