

NCCOR

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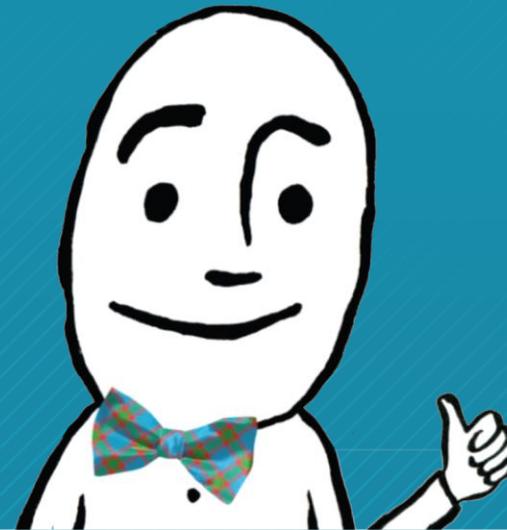
## Spotlight – 2021 Project Highlights

- Advancing Measurement for Childhood Obesity Research
- A Toolkit for Evaluating Healthy Weight Programs
- Economic Impact of Built Environment Improvement for Physical Activity
- Youth Active Travel to School (ATS) Surveillance Initiative

## Q & A

## NCCOR Announcements

# TODAY'S PROGRAM



# Today's Conversation



**Karen Hilyard, PhD**  
Moderator



**David Berrigan, PhD, MPH**  
National Institutes of Health



**Brook Belay, MD MPH**  
Centers for Disease Control  
and Prevention



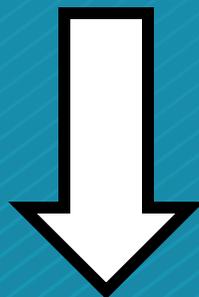
**Hatidza Zaganjor, MPH**  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



**Stephanie George, PhD, MPH**  
National Institutes of Health

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NCCOR launched in 2009  
with a clear vision in mind:

# to address the problem of childhood obesity in America



NCCOR set  
as its mission:

**to accelerate progress**

in reducing childhood obesity

**through collaboration  
and joint action**

to improve the efficiency  
and effectiveness  
of research



The nation's public health agency



The nation's health research engine



The nation's largest philanthropy devoted to health



The nation's leader on farming and food

**THE FOUR LARGEST FUNDERS OF CHILDHOOD OBESITY RESEARCH JOINED FORCES TO FORM**



# NCCOR Goals



**Identify, Design, and Evaluate Interventions**



**Increase and Improve Surveillance**



**Improve Capacity to Conduct Research and Program Evaluation**



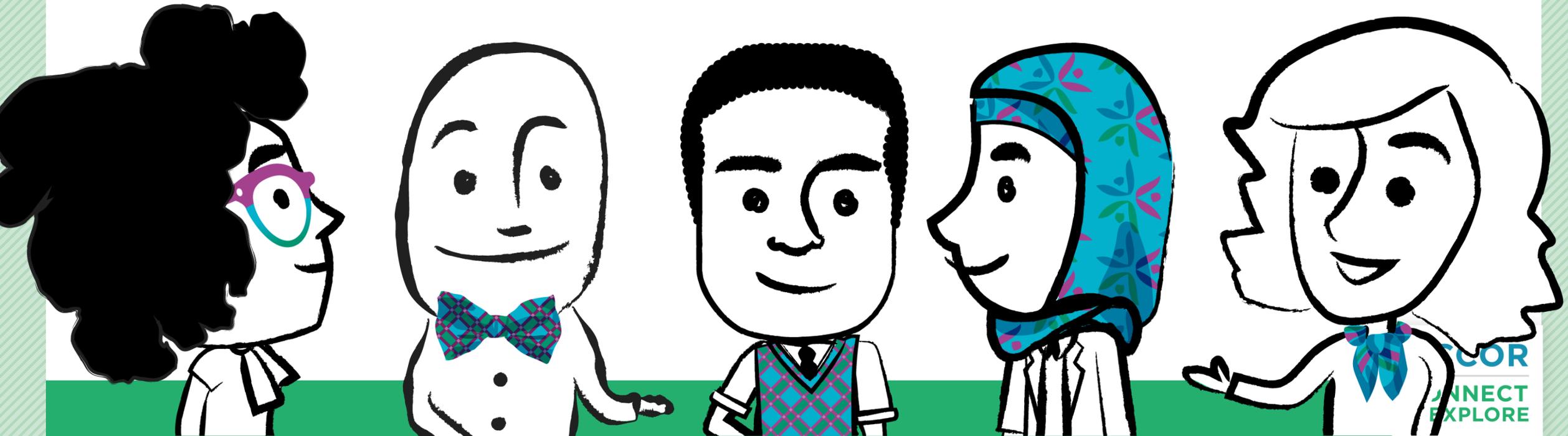
**Provide National Leadership to Accelerate Implementation Through Communication and Outreach**



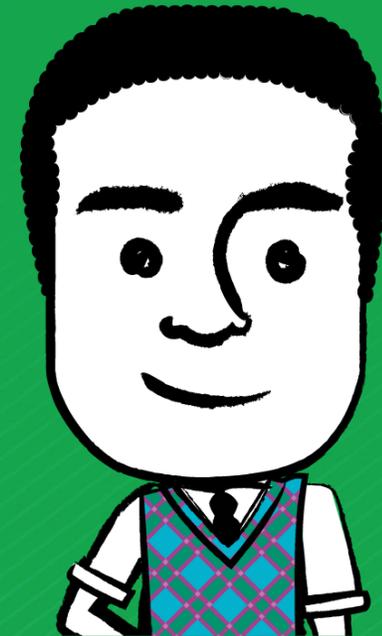
**Work With Non-traditional Health Partners to Integrate Childhood Obesity Priorities**

# 2021 Projects

- **Advancing Measurement for Childhood Obesity Research**
- **A Toolkit for Evaluating Healthy Weight Programs**
- **Economic Impact of Built Environment Improvement for Physical Activity**
- **Youth Active Travel to School (ATS) Surveillance Initiative**



# INTERACTIVE POLL

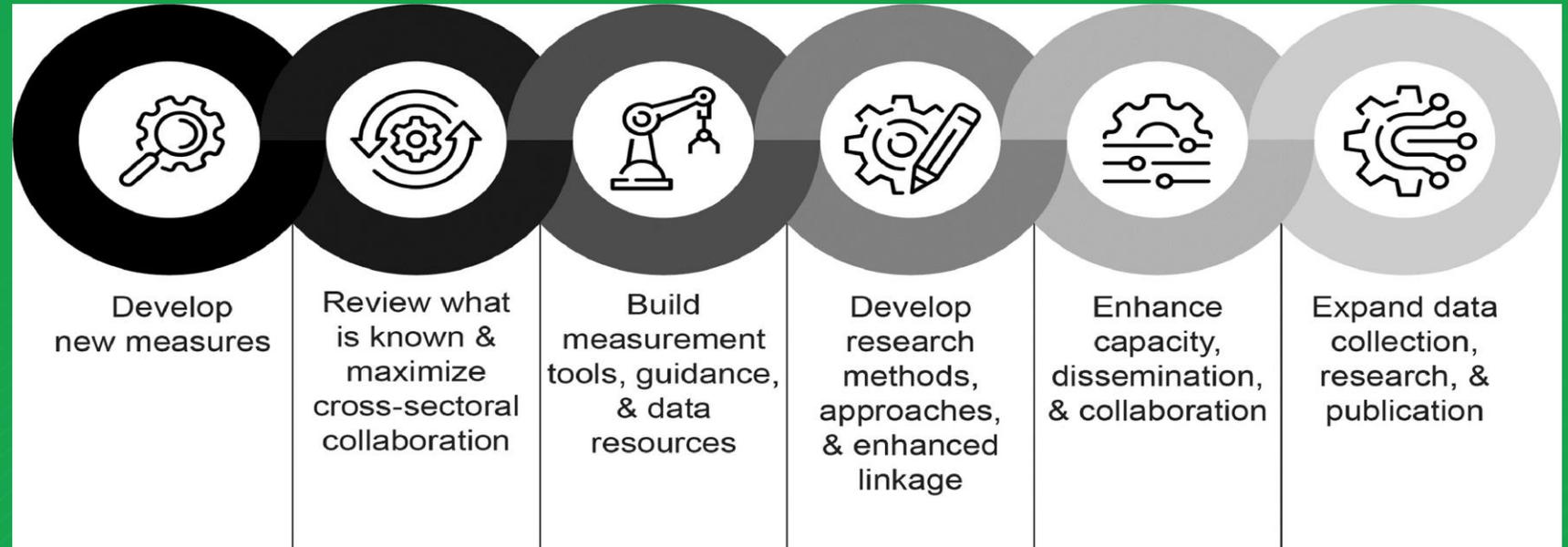


# SPOTLIGHT



# Advancing Measurement for Childhood Obesity Research

A key priority for NCCOR has been to promote better understanding of measurement issues and the use of high-quality and most appropriate measures.



# Three workshops funded by the JPB Foundation in 2019–2020

- **Workshop 1:** Advancing Measurement of Individual Behaviors Related to Childhood Obesity (May 2019)
- **Workshop 2:** Advancing Measurement for High-Risk Populations and Communities Related to Childhood Obesity (September 2019)
- **Workshop 3:** Advancing Measurement of Environmental and Policy Influences on Childhood Obesity (February 2020)

Full workshop reports: <https://www.nccor.org/projects/measurement-workshop-series>

# Summary Paper: AJPM 2021

## American Journal of Preventive Medicine

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CURRENT ISSUES

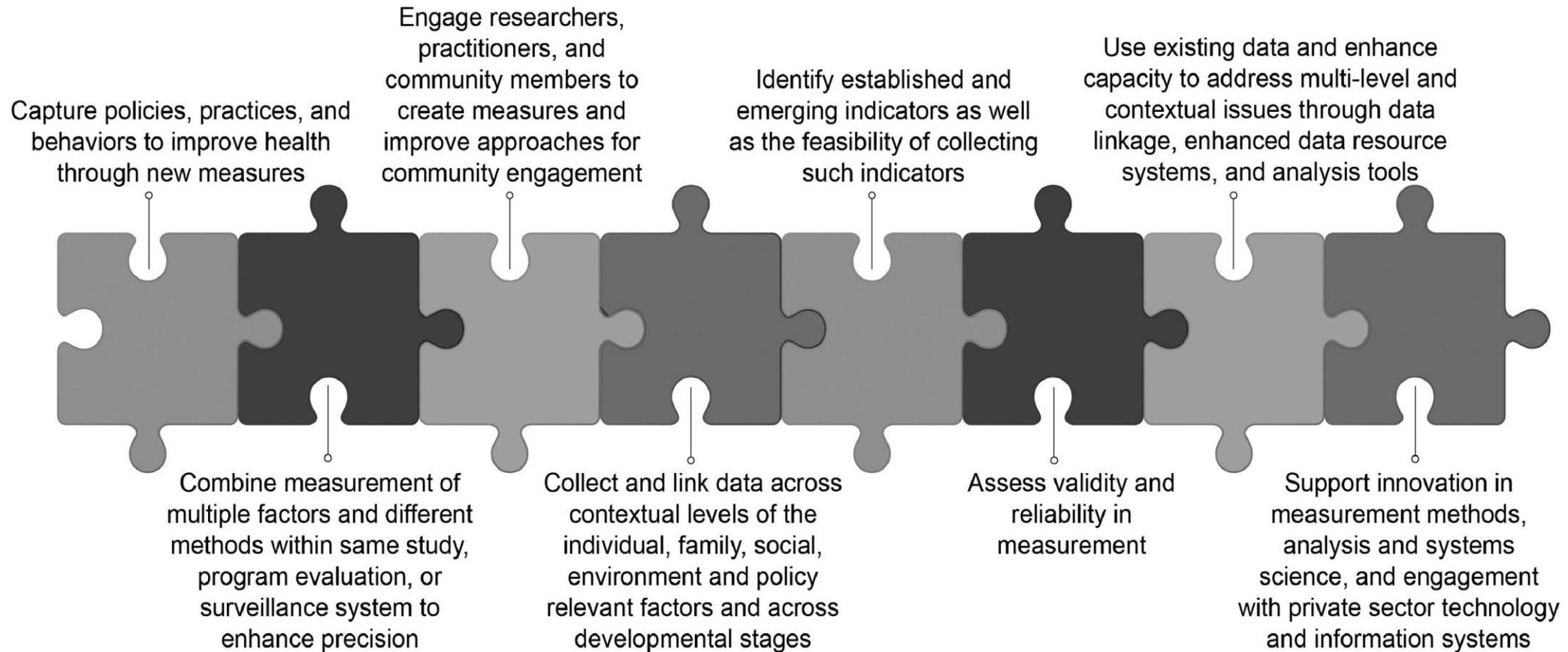
### Advancing Measurement to Address Childhood Obesity: Results of 3 Workshops



Rachel Ballard, MD, MPH,<sup>1</sup> S. Sonia Arteaga, PhD,<sup>2</sup> David Berrigan, PhD, MPH,<sup>3</sup>  
Heather M. Devlin, MA,<sup>4</sup> Deborah A. Galuska, PhD,<sup>4</sup> Heather C. Hamner, PhD, MS, MPH,<sup>4</sup>  
Laura Kettel Khan, PhD,<sup>4</sup> Latetia V. Moore, PhD, MPH,<sup>4</sup> TusaRebecca E. Pannucci, PhD, MPH, RD,<sup>5</sup>  
Jill Reedy, PhD, MPH, RD,<sup>3</sup> Amanda S. Sharfman, MS, MPH<sup>6</sup>

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# Common challenges for advancing measurement in childhood obesity



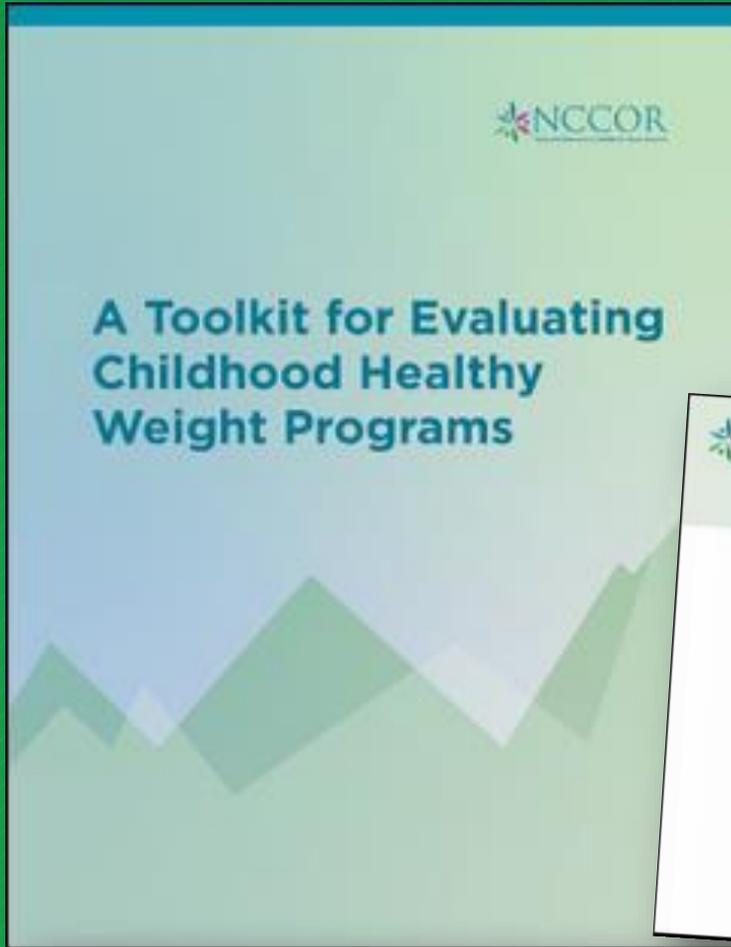
# Selected Workshop Highlights

- Individual measurement needs
  - Focuses on children under 6 and especially 0-24 months
  - Addresses sleep
  - Advance triangulation with multiple measures
- At-risk communities
  - Measures adaptation
  - Enhance cultural competence and cultural humility
- Environment and policy
  - Develop measures and surveillance systems for underdeveloped areas, e.g., social supports, the complete food environment
  - Better synthesize and share existing data
  - Evaluate natural experiments with the best possible measures

# Looking Ahead

- In 2022 we are celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NCCOR's landmark tools: the Measures Registry and Catalogue of Surveillance Systems.
- Sleep was emphasized in all three workshops, and NCCOR is working to add a sleep variable to the Catalogue of Surveillance Systems.
- Social and environmental factors continue to be a key focus of NCCOR. Workgroups are addressing trail use, walkability, early childhood education in light of COVID, walk to school programs, economic aspects of the built environment, and other topics.

# A Toolkit for Evaluating Healthy Weight Programs



# Responding to a Need

- NCCOR sought to gather findings from childhood obesity prevention research that can be translated and used in clinical and community settings.
- The NCCOR Engaging Health Care Providers and Systems project helped identify partnerships and foster engagement between clinical settings and communities. It supports interventions addressing primary and secondary prevention, including enhancing active living and healthy eating.
- As a result of workshops and webinars, NCCOR developed **A Toolkit for Evaluating Childhood Healthy Weight Programs.**

# Taking Action

## A Toolkit for Evaluating Childhood Healthy Weight Programs

- **208,347 page views** since launching in September 2021
- Provides guidance and resources for **program evaluation**
- Features a **resource library** with links to guides, databases, research articles to support researchers' evaluation plans
- Contains **guidance for remote evaluation**
- [nccor.org/tools-evaluating-childhood-healthy-weight-programs](https://nccor.org/tools-evaluating-childhood-healthy-weight-programs)

# Looking Ahead

- NCCOR will continue to monitor the use of the toolkit and update the resource library.
- Have you used A Toolkit for Evaluating Childhood Healthy Weights Program? Let us know how at [NCCOR@fhi360.org](mailto:NCCOR@fhi360.org).

# Economic Impact of Built Environment Improvement for Physical Activity

## Making the Business Case for Activity-Friendly Places

HOW LOCAL LEADERS CAN CREATE VIBRANT PLACES THAT WORK FOR EVERYONE

### Measurable benefits of activity-friendly settings:

Which lead to economic benefits like:		Which contribute to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater walkability</li> <li>Better air quality</li> <li>Fewer vehicle miles traveled</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More small business development</li> <li>Lower vacancy rates</li> <li>Increased property values and tax revenues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher retail sales</li> <li>High employment rates</li> <li>The possibility of more affordable housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Longer and healthier lives</li> </ul>

NCCOR convened a panel of experts who identified potential economic factors that may change with efforts to support more activity-friendly communities. Among them, the following 10 rose to the top!

### Activity-friendly Places help meet many local community needs

#### HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

- Fewer vehicle miles traveled
- Less traffic congestion
- Better infrastructure design

**Lead to:**

- Cleaner air
- Less noise
- Better ability to handle extreme weather<sup>2</sup>

#### HEALTHY ECONOMIES

- Safe, accessible places
- Mix of everyday destinations
- Access to transit & trails
- Affordable housing

**Lead to:**

- More robust retail activity
- More jobs
- Increased tax revenue<sup>4</sup>

#### HEALTHY PEOPLE

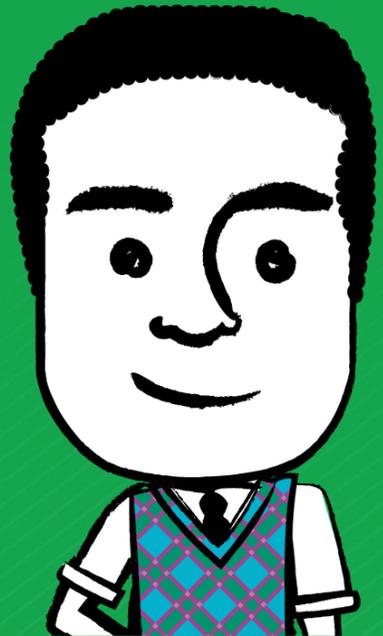
- Safe, convenient, appealing choices

**Lead to:**

- Healthier people today, tomorrow, and years from now
- Lower healthcare costs in the long run<sup>5</sup>

### Popular approaches communities use to create activity-friendly places

TRANSPORTATION	HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support policies such as Complete Streets to ensure every road is safe.</li> <li>Use rail, utility, and waterfront corridors to create transportation trail networks.</li> <li>Implement Safe Routes &amp; Vision Zero initiatives that slow neighborhood traffic and improve safety for all.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create plentiful affordable, diverse, and accessible housing near jobs, essential services, and transit routes.</li> <li>Utilize thoughtful planning and zoning to create more compact, mixed, and accessible places for people of all abilities.</li> <li>Provide planning expertise &amp; funding, particularly for communities without planning staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require broad input to develop a community vision and comprehensive plan to guide healthier designs and community safety.</li> <li>Use pro-active, in-community approaches such as walk audits &amp; listening sessions to gather inclusive input.</li> <li>Engage businesses &amp; developers on healthy design policies and creative funding opportunities.</li> </ul>



Journal of Physical Activity and Health, 2021, 18, 1088-1096  
<https://doi.org/10.1123/jpah.2021-0181>  
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Human Kinetics  
 ORIGINAL RESEARCH

## Priorities and Indicators for Economic Evaluation of Built Environment Interventions to Promote Physical Activity

Angie L. Cradock, David Buchner, Hatidza Zaganjor, John V. Thomas, James F. Sallis, Kenneth Rose, Leslie Meehan, Megan Lawson, René Lavingshouze, Mark Fenton, Heather M. Devlin, Susan A. Carlson, Torsha Bhattacharya, and Janet E. Fulton

**Background:** Built environment approaches to promoting physical activity can provide economic value to communities. How best to assess this value is uncertain. This study engaged experts to identify a set of key economic indicators useful for evaluation, research, and public health practice. **Methods:** Using a modified Delphi process, a multidisciplinary group of experts participated in (1) one of 5 discussion groups (n = 21 experts), (2) a 2-day facilitated workshop (n = 19 experts), and/or (3) online surveys (n = 16 experts). **Results:** Experts identified 73 economic indicators, then used a 5-point scale to rate them on 3 properties: measurement quality, feasibility of use by a community, and influence on community decision making. Twenty-four indicators were highly rated (≥3.9 on all properties). The 10 highest-rated “key” indicators were walkability score, residential vacancy rate, housing affordability, property tax revenue, retail sales per square foot, number of small businesses, vehicle miles traveled per capita, employment, air quality, and life expectancy. **Conclusion:** This study identified key economic indicators that could characterize the economic value of built environment approaches to promoting physical activity. Additional work could demonstrate the validity, feasibility, and usefulness of these key indicators, in particular to inform decisions about community design.

**Keywords:** policy, exercise, transportation, city planning

Being physically active is one of the most important steps people can take for their health and well-being.<sup>1</sup> An evidence-based strategy for increasing physical activity is creating physical activity-friendly communities—places where people have infrastructure, such as sidewalks, protected bike lanes, and public transportation on routes that connect homes, schools, parks, and workplaces.<sup>2</sup> The strategy is often referred to as using built environment approaches to promote physical activity.<sup>2</sup> By creating and/or modifying environmental characteristics of a community, this approach increases access to opportunities for physical activity and makes physical activity easier.

The importance of built environment approaches to promote physical activity was endorsed by *STEP IT UP! The Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Promote Walking and Walkable*

*Communities*.<sup>3</sup> This *Call to Action* contains goals and strategies that promote walking and calls for, in particular, designing communities that are safe and easy to walk for people of all ages and abilities.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s “Active People, Healthy Nation Initiative”<sup>4</sup> supports activity-friendly routes to everyday destinations. Built environment approaches are also important for achieving health equity. Accordingly, the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion includes the built environment in its framework<sup>5</sup> for achieving health equity by addressing the social determinants of health.

Community leaders and researchers alike have been interested in whether environmental changes to make a community activity-friendly also provide substantial benefits to local economies.<sup>6</sup> For example, emerging evidence of such “non-health” benefits has documented associations between creating physical activity-friendly and walkable communities and impacts on safety, local economic development, housing, employment, and real estate. These features of a walkable community—safer and pedestrian-friendly streets, mixed land use, and access to transit—can also be tied to economic benefits to the community that are separate from physical activity’s direct health benefits.<sup>7-11</sup> Therefore, it is likely the outcomes considered as economic benefits of built environment interventions may include both health-related and nonhealth-related outcomes that may be more difficult to quantify in strictly economic terms.<sup>3</sup>

Prior research has identified nonhealth outcomes of physical activity promotion relevant to members of the public. Examples of nonhealth outcomes, including social participation, increased participation in the workforce, and productivity, were prioritized as relevant to the social environment or to society as a whole.<sup>12</sup> Notably, municipal stakeholders also identify economic development and revitalization as important priorities in their job responsibilities.<sup>13,14</sup>

Cradock is with the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston, MA, USA. Buchner is with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL, USA. Zaganjor is with the Social Marketing and Communications Department, FHI 360, Atlanta, GA, USA. Thomas is with the Community Assistance and Research Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, DC, USA. Sallis is with the Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science, University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, CA, USA; and Mary Mackillop Institute for Health Research, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia. Rose, Lavingshouze, Devlin, Carlson, and Fulton are with the Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA, USA. Meehan is with the Office of Primary Prevention, Tennessee Department of Health, Commissioner’s Office, Nashville, TN, USA. Lawson is with the Headwaters Economics, Bozeman, MT, USA. Fenton is with the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University, Boston, MA, USA. Carlson is also with the Division of Population Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA, USA. Bhattacharya is with the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, Washington, DC, USA. Cradock (acradock@hsph.harvard.edu) is corresponding author.

# Responding to a Need

- NCCOR sought to determine indicators that can be used to justify investments in built environment improvements (BEIs) to better support physical activity for people of all ages and abilities.
- The health evidence for BEIs is overwhelming; however economic evidence to support and inform decision makers' choices for BEIs is limited.
- Decision makers often lack the tools to make the case for BEIs.

# Taking Action

- Published a manuscript titled “Priorities and Indicators for Economic Evaluation of Built Environment Interventions to Promote Physical Activity” in *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*
- Organized a follow-up expert consultation to identify how to continue to move this work forward
- Developed two-pager to promote economic indicators

# Looking Ahead

- In 2022, NCCOR will release the two pager to promote economic indicators that can be used to support built environment improvements.
- Develop several web materials to educate decision makers and practitioners on how to use economic indicators equitably to promote built environment improvements.

# Youth Active Travel to School (ATS) Surveillance Initiative

Journal of Healthy Eating and Active Living  
2021, Vol. 1, No. 3, pages 127-141

## Peer Reviewed Research

### Systematic Review of Active Travel to School Surveillance in the United States and Canada

Mary K. Wolfe<sup>a</sup>, Noreen C. McDonald<sup>b</sup>, Emily N. Ussery<sup>c</sup>, Stephanie M. George<sup>d</sup>, Kathleen B. Watson<sup>d</sup>

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<sup>b</sup> Department of City & Regional Planning, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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National Institutes of Health

## Abstract

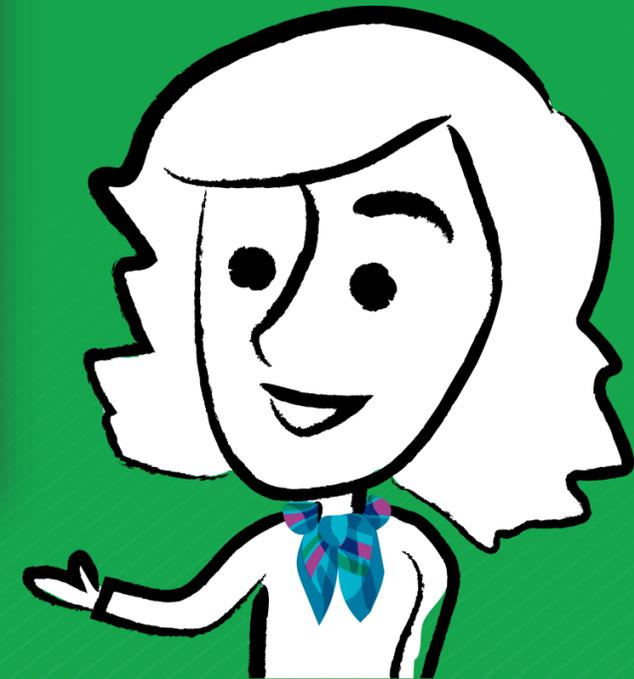
Active travel to school is one way youths can incorporate physical activity into their daily schedule. It is unclear the extent to which active travel to school is systematically monitored at local, state, or national levels. To determine the scope of active travel to school surveillance in the US and Canada and catalog the types of measures captured, we conducted a systematic review of peer-reviewed literature documenting active travel to school surveillance published from 2004 to February 2018. A study was included if it addressed children's school travel mode across two or more time periods in the US or Canada. Criteria were applied to determine whether a data source was considered an active travel to school surveillance system. We identified 15 unique data sources; 4 of these met our surveillance system criteria. One system is conducted in the US, is nationally representative, and occurs every 2-5 years. Three are conducted in Canada, are limited geographically to regions and provinces, and are administered with greater frequency (e.g., 2-year cycles). School travel mode was the primary measure assessed, most commonly through parent report. None of the systems collected data on school policies or program supports related to active travel to school. We concluded that incorporating questions related to active travel to school behaviors into existing surveillance systems, as well as maintaining them over time, would enable more consistent monitoring. Concurrently capturing behavioral information along with related environmental, policy, and program supports may inform efforts to promote active travel to school.

**Keywords:** active travel to school; active transportation; surveillance system; school commutes; physical activity



## Improving Surveillance of Youth Active Travel to School

WHITE PAPER



# Responding to a Need

- In 2017, the National Collaborative on Childhood Obesity Research (NCCOR) formed a Physical Activity workgroup to foster cross-NCCOR planning and engagement among all partners related to physical activity.
- The Active Travel to School Surveillance Initiative builds upon Step It Up! The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities.

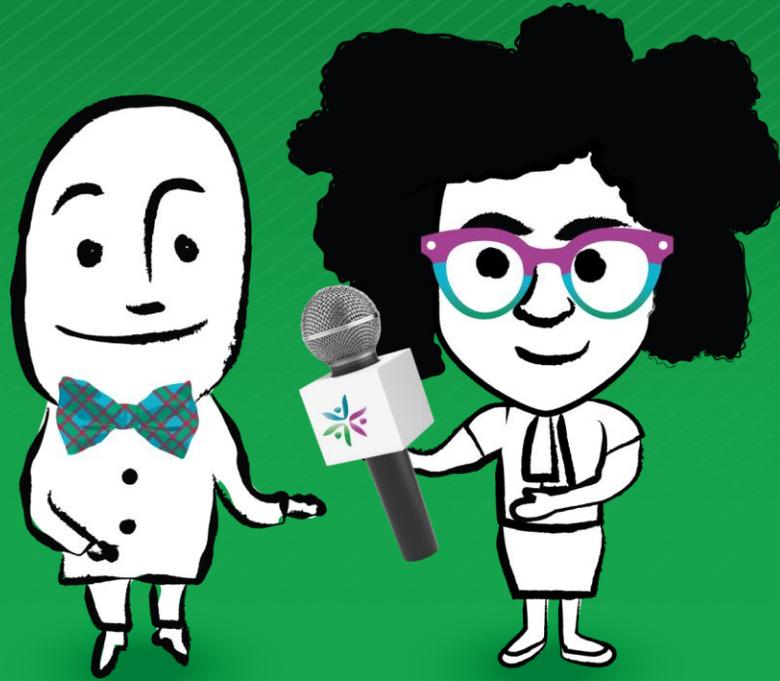
# Taking Action

- The workgroup held a virtual workshop engaging a variety of experts in active travel to school, which resulted in the release of a [white paper](#) summarizing gaps and key recommendations for active travel to school surveillance.
- In September 2021, the workgroup published a [literature review](#) of national active travel to school surveillance systems in North America in the *Journal of Healthy Eating and Active Living*.

BEHAVIORS:	
	Mode of travel to/from school
ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORTS:	
	Traffic/route safety
	Distance from home to school
	Micro-scale built environment supports
	Macro-scale built environment supports
	Time spent traveling to/from school
PROGRAM AND POLICY SUPPORTS:	
	Adoption of Safe Routes to School and other programs
	Zoning/land use policies establishing pedestrian-oriented communities and requiring sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes
	Adult presence
	Speed zones around schools
	State funding for AT/ATS programs

# Looking Ahead

- To draw more attention to the topic, the workgroup is developing a commentary focused on research gaps and opportunities for active travel to school surveillance.



# Q & A

# ANNOUNCEMENTS





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Student Hub!**

→ [nccor.org/e-newsletter](https://nccor.org/e-newsletter)

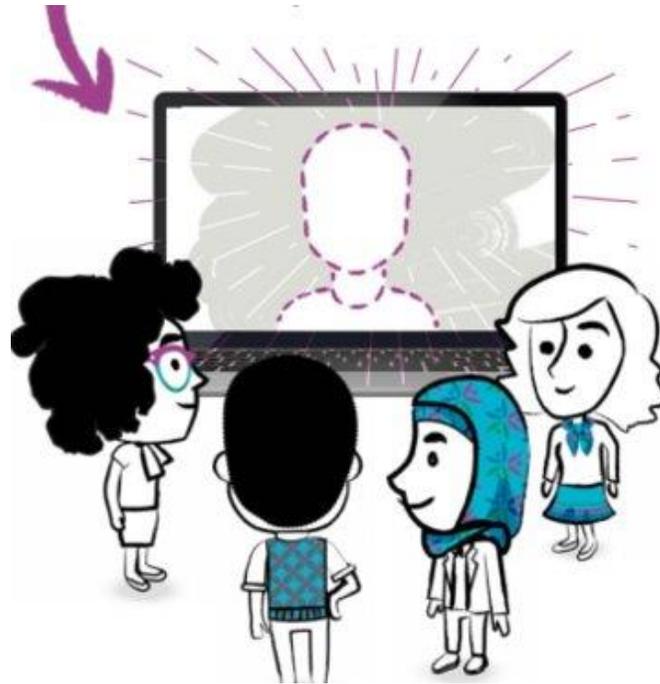
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# Check out the student hub webpage!



# Have you used any of NCCOR's tools?

Let us know at [nccor@fhi360.org](mailto:nccor@fhi360.org)  
and we may feature you in our next webinar!



# FURTHER QUESTIONS?

Other questions about NCCOR or upcoming activities?

Email the NCCOR Coordinating Center  
[nccor@fhi360.org](mailto:nccor@fhi360.org)