

Highlights of NCCOR Accomplishments & Activities

The National Collaborative on Childhood Obesity Research (NCCOR) is advancing the field through complementary and joint initiatives by its partners: 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).

The following are **select accomplishments** and activities from May through September 2023.

Published a new paper in the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*.

NCCOR published a new research commentary underscoring the importance of measuring dietary intake during the critical early stages of life. The paper, "[Count Every Bite to Make 'Every Bite Count': Measurement Gaps and Future Directions for Assessing Diet from Birth to 24 Months](#)," was part of a special series in the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (JAND)* focused on the recently updated Healthy Eating Index (HEI) and dietary assessment for young children. The new commentary outlined the work of NCCOR's Dietary Assessment workgroup, which identified measurement gaps specific to the first two years of life, including measurement error, proxy reporting, biased reporting, estimations of usual intake, understanding human milk composition, lack of biomarkers, device limitations, data processing developments, and the complexity of multidimensional and dynamic dietary patterns. The paper concludes with strategies to address these gaps, such as prioritizing diverse populations in research relevant to the dietary guidelines for infants and toddlers; developing a national research agenda to prioritize and rank research questions and topics concerning this age group; creating a comprehensive library of dietary assessment resources specifically designed for infants and toddlers; forging diverse and interdisciplinary research collaborations to address the complexities associated with dietary assessment in this population; and acknowledging that multiple stakeholders across academia, government, and industry have a role in advancing dietary assessment for the birth to 24-month age group. The commentary's authors include Meghan Zimmer, MPH, *NIH*; Julie Obbagy, PhD, RD, *USDA*; Kelley S. Scanlon, PhD, RD, *USDA*; Kimberlea Gibbs, MPH, RD, *NIH*; Jennifer L. Lerman, MPH, RD, *NIH*; Heather C. Hamner, PhD, MS, MPH, *CDC*; TusaRebecca Pannucci, PhD, MPH, RD, *USDA*; Amanda Sharfman, MS, MPH, *FHI 360*; Jill Reedy, PhD, MPH, RD, *NIH*; Kirsten A. Herrick, PhD, MSc., *NIH*.

Formed a new workgroup, Policy Lessons Learned for Healthy Childhood Development.

This new workgroup will begin planning a workshop series to 1) build multi-sector collaboration for addressing risk factors for childhood obesity and 2) leverage insights from successful local, national, and global public health interventions to advance progress in childhood obesity prevention. The first workgroup meeting occurred in July, and a sub-committee has been formed to begin planning the first workshop, slated to occur virtually in spring 2024. If you are interested in joining this workgroup, please Jill Reedy (reedyj@mail.nih.gov).

Published a new factsheet for the updated Healthy Eating Index (HEI).

NCCOR created a [new factsheet](#) about changes to the HEI. NIH and USDA recently released the updated version, and for the first time, included two scoring systems: [HEI-2020](#) for children and adults aged 2 years and older and the [HEI-Toddlers-2020](#) for children aged 12 to 23 months. The NCCOR factsheet

offers a user-friendly summary of the most recent changes, explains the rationale behind the new toddler version, details the system's scoring metrics, and suggests resources for learning more about the HEI. The factsheet is available on the [NCCOR HEI project page](#).

Presented three poster sessions at major conferences.

Three NCCOR workgroups presented posters during conferences in June and July 2023.

- The Active Travel to School workgroup shared [Finding Measurement Needs for Youth Active Travel to School in the United States](#) at the International Conference on Diet and Activity Methods. The authors were Stephanie George, PhD, MPH, MA, *NIH*; David Berrigan, PhD, MPH, *NIH*; Andrew Bremer, MD, PhD, *NIH*; Van Do, MPH, *FHI 360*.
- The Measurement workgroup presented [The National Collaborative on Childhood Obesity Research \(NCCOR\) Catalogue of Surveillance Systems and Measures Registry: Celebrating 10 years of progress and looking toward the future](#) at the International Conference on Diet and Activity Methods. The authors were Marissa Shams-White, PhD, MSTOM, MS, MPH, *NIH*; David Berrigan, PhD, MPH, *NIH*; Amanda Sharfman, MS, MPH, *FHI 360*; Laura Kettel Khan, PhD, MIM, *CDC*; Ellen W. Stowe, PhD, MPH, *CDC*; Stephanie George, PhD, MPH, MA, *NIH*; Jill Reedy, PhD, MPH, RD, *NIH*.
- The Dietary Assessment workgroup presented “Count Every Bite to Make ‘Every Bite Count’: Measurement Gaps and Future Directions for Assessing Diet from Birth to 24 Months” at Nutrition 2023. The authors were Meghan Zimmer, MPH; Julie Obbagy, PhD, RD, *USDA*; Kelley S. Scanlon, PhD, RD, *USDA*; Kimberlea Gibbs, MPH, RD, *NIH*; Jennifer L. Lerman, MPH, RD, *NIH*; Heather C. Hamner, PhD, MS, MPH, *CDC*; TusaRebecca Pannucci, PhD, MPH, RD, *USDA*; Amanda Sharfman, MS, MPH, *FHI 360*; Jill Reedy, PhD, MPH, RD, *NIH*; Kirsten A. Herrick, PhD, MSc., *NIH*.

Hosted a successful Connect & Explore webinar highlighting changes to the Healthy Eating Index (HEI).

Over 800 people registered for NCCOR's latest Connect & Explore webinar on September 7, 2023, titled “Measuring Diet Quality Across the Lifespan: Introducing the New Healthy Eating Index-Toddlers-2020 and Healthy Eating Index-2020.” The 90-minute presentation reviewed highlights from the 2020 HEI update, explained why a toddler-focused version was needed, and described how to assess dietary quality for young children. The following NCCOR members presented: Jill Reedy, PhD, MPH, RD, *NIH*; Marissa Shams-White, PhD, MSTOM, MS, MPH, *NIH*; TusaRebecca Pannucci, PhD, MPH, RD, *USDA*; Jennifer Lerman, MPH, RD, *NIH*; and Kirsten Herrick, PhD, MSc, *NIH*. A [recording](#) of the webinar can be found on the NCCOR website.