

Highlights of NCCOR Accomplishments & Activities

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 March 2026 through June 2026.

Published the 2025 NCCOR Annual Report

In March, NCCOR published its 2025 Annual Report titled “New Horizons in Childhood Obesity Research.” The report highlights NCCOR’s Clinical Research Gaps in Pediatric Obesity Pharmacotherapy workshop; new tools and resources, such as the “Implementation Scorecard: A decision-making companion for practitioners”; conference presentations and active workgroups from 2025; and upcoming activities for 2026.

Held three meetings for the Obesity-Related Policy, Systems, and Environmental Research in the U.S. (OPUS) Grantee Learning Network

The OPUS Grantee Learning Network has been meeting monthly to share best practices, discuss challenges, and engage in peer discussion on key methodological and implementation strategies in obesity-related prevention research. In March, three grantees presented on managing scope while working with communities. In April, three grantees presented on methods to measure community engagement. In May, two grantees presented on implementing human-centered design into obesity prevention research.

Completed a rapid environmental scan for the youth sports workgroup

In preparation for a national workshop, NCCOR’s What Works to Ensure High-Quality Sports Opportunities for All Young People workgroup completed their rapid environmental scan to identify high-quality school- and community-based sports programs that successfully ensure quality and access for all youth. The workgroup completed a review of relevant literature and completed formative interviews with experts representing a variety of perspectives, including parks and recreation, youth with disabilities, schools, injury prevention, and research. The workgroup also developed a conceptual framework to define “quality” youth sport programs, which will be continually refined based on the interviewee feedback and the workshop discussions.

Started new workgroup focused on rapid infant growth

NCCOR members initiated a new workgroup, Rapid Infant Growth: Using Growth Charts for Longitudinal Assessment Among Children Under Age 2. The goals of this workgroup are to convene a virtual workshop gathering multidisciplinary experts in growth standards, biology, statistics, and clinical practice to: 1) assess what existing measures of infant growth can and cannot tell us, 2) evaluate which metrics are most appropriate for identifying and tracking rapid infant growth, and 3) define the critical unanswered questions needed to move toward consistent, evidence-based approaches. Outputs from this effort will include a recording for future dissemination and a meeting summary outlining key research questions that, if answered, could inform future prevention-focused guidance on early-life growth assessment and help establish a clearer path forward for research related to rapid infant growth and long-term obesity risk.

Hosted a Connect & Explore webinar on supporting recess in schools

On March 10, 2026, NCCOR hosted a Connect & Explore webinar titled “Supporting Recess in Schools: Evidence, Health Impact, and Action.” The webinar featured experts from the Bloomberg American Health Initiative and the University of California, who discussed the development and practical applications of the Recess in Schools Toolkit and explored how researchers and practitioners can use this resource to inform policy and practice.

Held discussions with the NCCOR NESP

The Coordinating Center met with members of the NCCOR External Scientific Panel (NESP) to gather insights on potential future directions for NCCOR. Key takeaways included the need to better understand 1) how pharmacotherapy can/should be integrated with other treatments, prevention programs, and community programs; 2) how the Food is Medicine (FIM) movement is impacting the food system and challenges in assessing FIM program impact; and 3) how to leverage AI as a tool for researchers and clinicians while combatting artificial intelligence (AI)-generated misinformation. NESP members also shared thoughts on potential funders for NCCOR. More details will be shared with NCCOR members at the June Member Meeting.

Hosted a Research Roundtable at the Healthy Eating Research (HER) Annual Meeting

In April, members of the OPUS Grantee Learning Network hosted a Research Roundtable at the Healthy Eating Research (HER) Annual Meeting. The roundtable explored how researchers are operationalizing whole-of-system approaches to address obesity through policy, systems, and environmental strategies, with a focus on emerging lessons from the network. Session attendees discussed future directions for whole-of-system research, including possible funding opportunities and models for collaboration that support resource sharing and cross-sectoral research related to obesity prevention for cancer control.

Presented a poster at the 2026 Society for Prevention Research Annual Meeting

NCCOR’s PARO workgroup presented a poster at the Society for Prevention Research annual meeting in May. The poster, titled “The PARO Framework as a Tool to Advance Physical Activity Research,” highlights the expert-informed process used to develop the framework and shared sample dissemination and implementation research opportunities. It also outlines several key takeaways, including how the framework can enhance communication of research opportunities and support more strategic research efforts. Lastly, it offers a replicable model for synthesizing and prioritizing research opportunities across other public health fields and provides the research community, funding agencies, and policymakers with a tool to identify priority focus areas for PA research and build cross-sector collaborations.