

Colorado

Title: Integrated, multi-sector approach to prevent obesity in early childhood in Colorado.

People involved: MCH, WIC, CACFP, Women's Health, Home Visitation Programs, Early Childhood Initiatives, CDC funded Healthy Living and Chronic Disease Initiatives, Breastfeeding Initiatives and multiple external stakeholders.

Background/Introduction: The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Prevention Services Division created and filled a position funded by MCH, WIC, and CDC, dedicated to early childhood obesity prevention (ECOP) in Colorado. This position is charged with leading efforts integrating the work of multiple programs to improve population-based measures related to ECOP, which has been identified as one of nine Colorado MCH priorities.

Project Goals: The goals of the ECOP work include implementing cross-sector, state and local level targeted strategies. Specific objectives include enhancing obesity prevention-related operations, protocols, and projects in Colorado WIC, supporting childcare providers in achieving higher meal standards in Colorado CACFP, identifying and promoting consistent messaging, expanding breastfeeding support and implementing physical activity programs in child care settings, providing professional development for health care sector partner organizations and public health programs, and exploring promising health care systems practices for ECOP. Local efforts include promoting breastfeeding support in workplaces, and increasing access to healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity and nutrition education.

Methods: Strategies were informed by a literature review of the risk and protective factors related to early childhood obesity risk, and evidence-based obesity prevention strategies in multiple sectors, and the input of multiple stakeholders.

Results: Implementation teams are forming to carry forward state-level strategies. Local level strategies and action plans have been disseminated for use by local public health MCH programs.

Summary/Discussion: We believe the current work plans based on this integrated, multi-sector, and cooperative approach, funded by multiple programs, and based on the highest level of evidence and the Life Course model will have a high likelihood for success.

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