



NEWS

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Centers for Disease Control Taps San Diego County to Share Its Work National Report Shows More Americans Report Being Obese

(San Diego, CA)**** The San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative (SDCCOI) was selected to participate in a meeting of representatives from 25 community programs held July 10-11, 2008 at the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta, GA. Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., San Diego County Public Health Officer and co-chair of the SDCCOI and Cheryl Moder, director, SDCCOI shared San Diego's model for environmental and policy change to combat childhood obesity. Examples included increasing access to healthier foods through farmer's markets, community gardens and local groceries, altering roads and sidewalks to make them safer and more accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists; and creating or enhancing access to physical activity through parks and trails.

The CDC yesterday released its *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (MMWR) that the proportion of U.S. adults who self report they are obese increased nearly 2 percent between 2005 and 2007. An estimated 25.6 percent of U.S. adults reported being obese in 2007 compared to 23.9 percent in 2005, an increase of 1.7 percent. The report also finds that none of the 50 states or the District of Columbia has achieved the Healthy People 2010 goal to reduce obesity prevalence to 15 percent or less. Obesity is defined as a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or above. BMI is calculated using height and weight. For example, a 5-foot, 9-inch adult who weighs 203 pounds would have a BMI of 30, thus putting this person into the obese category.

The study found that the percentage of obese adults was 22.1 percent in the West. The data was derived from CDC's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, a state based telephone survey that collects information from adults aged 18 years or older. For this survey more than 350,000 adults are interviewed each year, making the BRFSS the largest telephone health survey in the world. BMI was calculated based on this self reported information.

"We anticipate that the efforts of the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative will help to reverse the trend of children adopting unhealthy habits that follow them into adulthood," said Dr. Wooten. "Public-private partnerships like SDCCOI reflect the concerns of the community about obesity and related health effects."

The CDC notes in the report that expansion of multidisciplinary, cross-sector collaborations and partnerships like the SDCCOI will be an important strategy to reduce obesity prevalence in the United States and that priority should be given to interventions that move beyond increasing individual awareness and provide environmental and policy changes that support behavior change, particularly among those with the greatest need. To learn more about the SDCCOI's efforts in the fight against childhood obesity, visit www.ourcommunityourkids.org.

In 2005, County Supervisors Ron Roberts & Pam Slater-Price led the effort with a host of health and nutrition experts, as well as educators and other community leaders, to create the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Action Plan. The plan calls for environmental, behavioral and policy changes to help families make healthy choices in their daily lives. It seeks the development of walk-able communities and safe routes to schools, training healthcare providers in effective obesity prevention and treatment, increasing parks and natural open spaces, and improving access to nutritious food.