

Reversing the Obesity Epidemic

The Importance of Partnerships and
the Role of Policy

“Many people believe that dealing with overweight and obesity is a personal responsibility. To some degree they are right, but it is also a **community responsibility**. When there are no safe, accessible places for children to play or adults to walk, jog or ride a bike, that is a **community responsibility**. When school lunchrooms or office cafeterias do not provide healthy and appealing food choices, that is a **community responsibility**. When new or expectant mothers are not educated about the benefits of breastfeeding, that is a **community responsibility**. When we do not require daily physical education in our schools, that is a **community responsibility**. There is much that we can and should do together.”

David Satcher, MD, PhD

Former US Surgeon General, 2001

Partners in Policy

The 2005 Institute of Medicine report *Preventing Childhood Obesity: Health in the Balance*

- Healthcare
- Government
- Industry
- Education
- Community Organizations
- Parents/Families
- Media
- Worksites
- Other

AOO 2007 – What’s New?

- MDH highlighted the “Minnesota Task Force on Childhood Obesity Recommendations”
- Since then have developed a Minnesota Plan to Reduce Obesity and Obesity-Related Diseases
- Blueprint for working across multiple sectors; enhancing partnerships; working together
- Conducted an environmental scan of obesity efforts; included a review of past and present obesity-related legislation

Sample Areas for Policy Change

- Advocate for and initiate legislation and policies that contribute to healthy lifestyles and reduce overweight and obesity
- Implement a coordinated school health approach to obesity prevention
- Implement age-appropriate marketing messages and practices that promote healthy food and activity patterns for children and youth
- Improve availability of healthy food choices in cafeterias and restaurants
- Promote physical activity and healthy eating throughout the media
- Advocate for and incorporate prevention and treatment of obesity in the health care system
- Establish body mass index as a vital sign
- Enhance statewide surveillance efforts

The Next Two Days

- Focus areas:
 - Individual
 - At-risk populations
 - AOO Clearinghouse
 - Policy
- Importance of partnerships
- Barriers and strategies
- You are part of the solution

Contact Information

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