Working Together to Create Healthier Early Childhood Environments

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Prevalence of Overweight among WIC Participants Aged 2 to <5 years by County, Ohio 2014

Prevalence of Obesity among WIC Participants Aged 2 to <5 years by County, Ohio 2014

Source: Ohio Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance System, 2014
Note: The prevalence ranges in the four categories for these two maps are different, thus the maps should not be directly compared.

The 2014 PedNSS data suggests there is no consistent geographic trend in Ohio for the prevalence of overweight and obesity among WIC participants ages 2-5 years.
# Overweight and Obesity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cuyahoga County Overall (n=37,930)</th>
<th>City of Cleveland (n=17,646)</th>
<th>Outside of Cleveland (n=20,284)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32%</td>
<td><strong>35%</strong></td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
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*Unhealthy weight: Body mass index above the 85th percentile for age and sex.*

Source: *Children’s Health Initiative, a program of Better Health Partnership*
# Unhealthy Blood Pressure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cuyahoga County Overall (n=37,930)</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent Unhealthy</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Unhealthy Blood Pressure: systolic and diastolic blood pressure above the 90\(^{th}\) percentile for age and sex.*

Source: *Children’s Health Initiative, a program of Better Health Partnership*
How We Began
Early Childhood Obesity Prevention Summits

• 2012 – Dr. David Katz and Dr. Leona Cuttler
  – Early childhood interventions and best practices

• 2013 – Dr. William Dietz, Starting Point, American Heart Association
  – Implementation of early childhood wellness policies
Cuyahoga County Early Childhood Wellness Taskforce

Cuyahoga County Board of Health
Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation
Invest in Children
Starting Point
Other Partners
Early Childhood Wellness Matters
Cuyahoga County recognizes healthy habits need to start early.

Children’s early learning environments give them the opportunity to develop healthy habits right from the start.

In 2012, 38,000 children ages 0-5 spent time in early learning environments in Cuyahoga County.

On average, young children spend 32 hours a week in an early learning environment.

Five year olds who have a healthy weight are 4 times less likely to become obese teens than five year olds who are overweight.

Children who are healthy are more likely to be ready for school and ready to learn!
Wellness Plan Goals

Our Goal
The goal of the Cuyahoga County Early Childhood Wellness Plan is to:

- Increase the duration of breastfeeding along with the introduction of complementary foods for infants through the first year of life
- Increase the availability of healthy foods and beverages
- Increase opportunities for daily activity while minimizing screen time
- Increase family engagement around wellness behaviors

Infant Feeding
Healthy Foods
Daily Physical Activity
Family Wellness
Our Work Today
Early Childhood Wellness In Action

Cuyahoga County uses two strategies that encourage and support healthy habits for all young children.

**Strategy One**

Improve environments where children live.

**Early Ages Healthy Stages**

A community-led coalition of organizations, providers, and individuals who share a passion for creating healthier environments for young children.

**Strategy Two**

Improve environments where children learn.

**Ohio Healthy Programs Project**

An Ohio-Approved, healthy program that offers training and technical assistance for early care and education providers on best practices in building healthy habits, menus, and policies.
Who we are...

Early Ages Healthy Stages is a partnership between early care and education providers, community organizations, health care, social service agencies, businesses and families that works collaboratively to make the healthy choice the easy choice for young children and their families.
Our mission:
To work together to create healthy environments for young children in Cuyahoga County.

Our vision:
Cuyahoga County is a community that provides all children ages 0-8 with the opportunity to establish healthy lifestyles in the environments where they live, learn, sleep, and play.
Our Values

- *Equitable opportunities* for all young children
- A *community-first* approach to early childhood health and wellness
- *Elevating* the success of ECE providers and partners
- *Collaboration* over replication
Building a coalition means more than getting together once a month to talk about our programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICIES</th>
<th>Working with childcare centers, family care homes and other agencies to implement policies that improve health of young children and their families.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SYSTEMS</td>
<td>Creating networks between gatekeepers and other key resources in the community. Changing the mentality of “how we do things around here.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVIRONMENTS</td>
<td>Making sure that the healthy choice is the easy choice through advocacy and legislation. Altering physical environments to make health accessible to all.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Strategic Prevention Framework

**Evaluation, Assessment:**
- Oct 2016 - July 2017 (Short term projects, Possible Capstone)
- July 2017 - Ongoing

**Assessment, Capacity:**
- Spring 2016 Preliminary
- Ongoing

**Implementation:**
- March 2017 - Mar 2018 (Short term projects)
- March 2018 - Mar 2020 (Long term projects)

**Sustainability/Cultural Competence:**
- Spring 2016 - Ongoing
  - Community forums/focus groups starting summer 2017

**Planning:**
- Sept - February 2017
EAHS Strategic Plan can be found at:

www.earlyageshealthystages.org
At Early Ages Healthy Stages, we recognize that it is our job to help build healthy early childhood environments for all children, regardless of how they look or where they live.

Together, we will work to shape these priorities to ensure that all young children in Cuyahoga County are given every opportunity to reach their fullest, healthiest potential.

In Cuyahoga County, we believe that early childhood environments are healthy if...

- **Healthy foods are available.**
  Young children need access to healthy food in order to make healthy food choices.

- **Social emotional needs are met.**
  Young children thrive in classrooms and communities where they feel safe, connected, and supported.

- **There are opportunities for active play.**
  Active play helps children grow healthy muscles, bones, and brains.

- **Families are engaged.**
  Parents and other family members are a child’s first teacher and best role model.

- **Health care is accessible.**
  Access to an affordable, medical home helps children stay healthy and meet milestones.
Innovative Partnership - Healthcare

= Medical home for HeadStart children
Innovative Partnership – Healthy Foods

Greater Cleveland Food Bank School Mobile Market

Education with Imagination

= First ECE Mobile Market
Innovative Partnership – Family Engagement

= Thousands of families reached with consistent early childhood health and wellness messaging
## Create Your Healthy Plate!

- **Make Each Plate A Healthy Plate**: Make it your plate fruits and veggies, include proteins, whole grains and dairy, remember variety each day.

- **Take Time for Meals**: Be a positive role model by eating the same foods and eating as children eat. Encourage children to try new foods in a fun way, make eating together a family and a fun time, don’t let eating rush, turn off screens during meal time.

- **Growing Great Tasters**: Learn to like new foods. Try foods that are different or from another culture. Choose smaller portions. Start with one new food and try to eat it often. Be a good role model. Be a good role model.

## Healthy Daily Reminders

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week of:</th>
<th>S M T W T F S</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Build children up with words</strong>: Use noticing or describing words to praise children. Is there any time you and a friend today and that made them happy?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Good rest is best**: Sleep is important for health! Here is how much sleep time to aim for:
  - Infants up to 12 months: 11 to 16 hours
  - Children ages 2-3: 11 to 15 hours
  - Children ages 4-5: 10 to 13 hours
  - Children ages 6-8: 9 to 12 hours |
| **Growing great tasters**: Join the two-limb child. Encourage each other to take at least 2 bites of each food on your plate. |
| **Make breakfast count**: Don’t skip breakfast. Make sure to eat breakfast before you leave home for the day or at your early care and education programs to get the fuel you need to learn and play all day. |
| **Reduce screen time**: Spend no more than 2 hours a day on a TV, computer, video game, iPad or other electronic device. |
| **Make snacks count**: Snacks are mini meals if you are hungry. Up to 3 snacks a day fit into a healthy lifestyle. Fruits and vegetables are best between meals. |
| **Make each plate a healthy plate**: A healthy plate includes one serving of a fruit, vegetable, lean protein, whole grain, and dairy. |
| **An hour a day to play**: Be active for 60 minutes a day. Take a walk or play catch! |
| **Take time for meals**: It is important to try and eat meals together. Meal time is a great time for sharing food and talking with one another. |
| **Water first when thirsty**: Drink water first before you reach for milk, juice, or any other sugar or sweetened beverage. Try adding a slice of fruit to your water to kick it up a notch! |

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[earlyageshealthystages.com](http://earlyageshealthystages.com)
Social Media Toolkits

[Images of social media toolkits and logo for Screen-Free Week]
Garden Grants
Health Champions
2019 EAHS Activity

• Continued implementation of the EAHS strategic plan
• Speaking engagements
• Continued creation of marketing and communication strategies
• Maintenance of national partnerships
Where We are Going
Current State

• Stakeholder groups largely focus on how to prevent a problem through a policy, program, and practice lens

• Reality – rates of overweight and obesity and other health issues among children have stayed the same or gotten worse
Adapted from Hovmand, P. 2017
Systems Shift

• Stakeholder groups need to understand the drivers of health issues to inform not only what needs to be done but also how to do it effectively.

• Goal – activate and engage a group of stakeholders to begin shifting mental models and create the conditions for systems change
Systems change

Kania, J., Kramer, M., Senge, P. *The Water of Systems Change*. June, 2018
‘Upstream’ approach: EAHS ABC
Partnerships with Tufts University

• Research project in collaboration with Dr. Christina Economos
  – Friedman School at Tufts University
• Systems science approach applied to community-based obesity prevention
  – Group model building
  • Visualize complex systems
  • Identify leverage points
  • Set priorities for action
EAHS Action Building Committee (ABC)

• Complimentary approach to the EAHS Coalition

• Recruitment approach:
  – Multi-sector, diverse representation from the EAHS coalition
  – Must have been active in the EAHS strategic planning process
  – Able and willing to commit to full participate in the process over the course of 9 months
Systems tools

• **Group model building (GMB)**
  – Build shared understanding of complex system
  – Identify and prioritize action steps

• **Social network analysis (SNA)**
  – Understand and enhance diffusion

• **Agent based modeling (ABM)**
  – Model the spread of information through a community
Group model building

What impacts or is impacted by the work of the EAHS Coalition?
Group model building

Coalition funding

Integration of health/education

Overweight/obesity

Early Ages Healthy Stages
Group model building

Related variables...

...and how they connect
Next Steps

• Implement a series of action steps that shift our “system” over the next 2-4 years in a way the prioritizes the health and wellness of young children 0-8 and the intersection of health and early education outcomes

• Understand results from SNA and ABM

• Use the systems map to guide the next version of the EAHS strategic plan
THANK YOU!

HOW TO KEEP UP WITH US

Website: www.earlyageshealthystages.org
Email: info@earlyageshealthystages.org or apatrick@ccbh.net
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/EAHSCuyahoga/
Twitter: @EAHSCuyahoga