A Statewide Plan to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity

Purpose

Georgia’s Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan is a ten-year comprehensive plan to prevent and control obesity and other chronic diseases by increasing breastfeeding, improving healthy eating habits, increasing physical activity and decreasing television viewing/screen time.

The plan serves as a blueprint for communities, faith-based organizations, schools, worksites and healthcare providers to address overweight and obesity. Education, policy and environmental approaches targeting children and youth, families, adults and older adults, are presented to ensure a comprehensive approach.

Background

In July 2003, the Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Public Health was one of 17 states awarded a five-year grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to support state nutrition and physical activity programs that work to prevent obesity and other chronic diseases. This strategic plan fulfills a major deliverable of the grant, to engage statewide stakeholders to develop a statewide nutrition and physical activity plan for Georgia.

Finding solutions through partnership - everyone has a role in restoring Georgia to better health: individuals, families, institutions, organizations, communities, and policy makers. However, state and community leaders are key to creating policies and healthy environments that encourage Georgians to make better lifestyle choices.
Overall Goal

The overall goal of Georgia’s Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan is to prevent and control obesity and other chronic diseases.

Long Term Objectives

This goal will be realized by achieving the following long term objectives, by 2015, targeting Georgia’s children and youth, adults and older adults:

- Improve healthy eating habits
- Increase physical activity
- Increase breastfeeding initiation and duration
- Decrease television viewing/screen time
- Decrease prevalence of overweight and obesity

Intermediate Objectives

During a five-year period that extends through 2010, the plan proposes health-promotion strategies in key settings:

State-level and Infrastructure Objectives

- Increase the number of state policies and legislative actions related to healthy eating, breastfeeding, physical activity, preventive screening, and obesity and chronic disease prevention and control.
- Establish the collaborative infrastructure and secure the resources required to implement the plan.

Community Objectives

- Implement and evaluate a state-wide community campaign to promote healthy eating, physical activity, decreased sedentary activity, and breastfeeding.
- Increase the number of ongoing programs for healthy eating, breastfeeding, and physical activity that are implemented and evaluated.
- Encourage all public health districts to develop and implement a coordinated healthy eating, breastfeeding, and physical activity plan in collaboration with local partners.
- Increase changes in the built environment (healthy community design) to foster smart growth communities (mixed land use, trails, connectivity, safety and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant transportation systems).
- Increase the number of community locations that provide access to healthy food choices.
- Increase the number of nutrition and physical activity programs at state and community parks and recreation centers.
- Increase the knowledge and skills of individuals related to breastfeeding, healthy eating, and physical activity.

Worksite Objectives

- Increase the proportion of worksites that offer employee risk reduction/health promotion programs that address physical activity, healthy eating, and breastfeeding.
- Increase the proportion of worksites with policies and environmental supports that promote healthy eating, physical activity and breastfeeding.
- Increase the proportion of employees who participate in employer-sponsored breastfeeding, nutrition and physical activity programs.
**School and Early Child Care Objectives**

- Increase the number of early child care centers that promote breastfeeding, healthy eating, and physical activity.
- Increase the proportion of schools K-12 with local wellness policies for healthy eating and physical activity.
- Increase the proportion of schools K-12 that implement one or more components of a Coordinated School Health Program.
- Increase the proportion of public schools that require daily physical education for all students.
- Increase the number of schools and early child care centers that create environments to promote healthy eating and physical activity.
- Increase the proportion of school-aged children who daily eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables and engage in moderate physical activity for at least 30 minutes.

**Faith-Based Objectives**

- Increase the number of programs for healthy eating, breastfeeding, and physical activity offered by faith-based organizations.
- Develop practice guidelines for faith-based organizations to promote healthy eating, breastfeeding, and physical activity.
- Increase the capacity of faith-based organizations to implement and sustain initiatives that promote greater awareness and skills related to healthy eating, breastfeeding, and physical activity.
- Increase the knowledge and skills of the faith-based membership related to breastfeeding, healthy eating, and physical activity.

**Health Care Objectives**

- Increase the number of partnerships and referrals between health care providers and community providers for obesity and its related conditions.
- Adopt a standard education curriculum, including core competencies in obesity prevention and weight management in all medical schools and 75% of residency, allied health and mental health programs in Georgia.
- Increase the number of trainings that licensed health care providers offer for continuing education in obesity prevention and weight management.
- Increase the number of licensed insurance companies in Georgia and state-funded health plans that provide reimbursement/benefits for the prevention and treatment of obesity.
- Increase the number of targeted health care providers and professionals who routinely assess and monitor body mass index and that provide appropriate nutrition and physical activity counseling.
- Increase the number of targeted health care providers and professionals who receive training in the areas of healthy eating, breastfeeding, physical activity, and behavior change.

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**Activating and Sustaining the Plan**

The strategies proposed for the next 10 years in the Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan will be advanced by the *Take Charge of Your Health, Georgia!* Task Force, which will serve as the synchronizing and leadership body that will coordinate, integrate and guide the implementation of statewide nutrition and physical activity initiatives. Drawing upon the same expertise, networks, and diverse funding that created the plan, the Task Force calls for sustained collective action to communicate, implement, monitor and evaluate the plan to achieve meaningful and lasting changes in Georgia's health care, worksite, school, faith-based, and community settings. These lasting changes will create environments to support healthier nutrition and physical activity choices and behaviors among families and individuals.

For a full copy of Georgia’s Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan, visit: [http://health.state.ga.us/programs/nutrition/](http://health.state.ga.us/programs/nutrition/)
The Burden of Overweight and Obesity in Georgia

- Overweight among Georgia’s young children ages 2-5 years, enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program, has increased 60 percent over the past decade.

- The Georgia Student Health Survey (2003) indicates that 33 percent of middle school students and 26 percent of high school students are either overweight or at risk for overweight.

- 61% of adults are either overweight or obese.

- Overweight and obesity leads to increased risk for chronic diseases and death.

- The annual cost of obesity in Georgia—from direct health care costs and lost productivity—is estimated at $2.1 billion.

For a full copy of the Overweight and Obesity in Georgia, 2005 report, visit:

http://health.state.ga.us/pdfs/familyhealth/nutrition/ObesityRep.DPH05.023HW.pdf
In partnership with Governor Perdue’s Live Healthy Georgia campaign

Join the Take Charge of Your Health, Georgia! Task Force

Georgia’s success in preventing obesity and other chronic diseases depends on the collaborative efforts of our partners. If you would like to be part of this effort contact the Project Coordinator, with the Georgia Division of Public Health at 404-657-2884.