

NC HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRUST FUND

STUDY COMMITTEE ON CHILDHOOD OVERWEIGHT/OBESITY

The Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission is charged by N.C. Gen. Stat. § 147-86.33(a)(7) with administering the provisions of Article 6C of the General Statutes, which includes addressing the health needs of vulnerable and underserved populations and developing a comprehensive, community-based plan with goals and objectives to improve the health and wellness of the people of North Carolina. Recognizing that North Carolina is experiencing an epidemic of obesity, the Commission has allocated grant funds to implement pilot programs addressing childhood obesity in communities across the state.

The design of the Commission's Obesity Initiative follows guidance contained in the *North Carolina Healthy Weight Initiative*, which includes as a core goal, policy changes relating to nutrition and physical activity at the state and local levels. Towards this end, the North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission has established a Study Committee on Childhood Obesity. The purpose of the Study Committee is to evaluate the status of obesity among the State's children, and recommend policy initiatives to the Commission, which may include suggested recommendations for the NC Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Public Instruction and other interested bodies. The Study Committee will also develop legislative proposals that could be presented to the General Assembly.

In undertaking its purpose, the Study Committee will investigate the following:

- (1) Causes of obesity in North Carolina's children.
- (2) Socioeconomic issues associated with childhood obesity.
- (3) Methods the State should use in dealing with childhood obesity.
- (4) Steps that should be taken to prevent obesity.
- (5) Encouraging parental involvement and educating parents in developing healthy eating and strong physical activity habits for their children.
- (6) Any other matter the Study Committee considers necessary to carry out its duties.

In recommending initiatives to the Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission and others and in recommending possible legislation, the Study Committee may address:

- (1) Nutritional guidelines for food served in public schools outside of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.
- (2) Physical education and activities in public schools.

Study Committee on Childhood Overweight/Obesity (continued)

- (3) Healthy and nutritional behavior by children and, when possible, their families.
- (4) Any other relevant matters at the discretion of the Study Committee.

The Study Committee will explore different settings for its recommendations including homes, schools, childcare centers, communities, faith-based organizations, health care facilities, media, communication and social marketing, and surveillance and research.

The Study Committee has appointed Dr. Olson Huff, Representative Verla Insko and Senator William Purcell as co-chairs. The co-chairs are authorized to recruit a slate of nominees for membership, to be confirmed by the Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission. Its membership will consist of not more than 20 individuals who shall, at a minimum, represent the following backgrounds and interests:

- (1) Public health
- (2) Medicine
- (3) Education
- (4) Youth and child advocacy organizations
- (5) Business
- (6) Local and county government
- (7) Faith-based organizations

The Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission has allocated \$300,000 from its funds to support the operations of the Study Committee on Childhood Obesity and Commission staff has arranged for and directed administrative staff necessary to support the work of the Study Committee.

The Study Committee will submit an annual written report of its findings and recommendations to the Commission by October 1st of each year it is in existence. The Study Committee on Childhood Obesity will commence during the first quarter of calendar year 2004 and will continue until the Commission disbands it.