



**TASK FORCE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION
COMMUNITY TOPIC—FAITH COMMUNITY
Friday, May 18, 2012
North Carolina Institute of Medicine, Morrisville
10:00am – 3:00pm
Meeting Summary**

Attendees

Members: Kathy Higgins (co-chair), Olson Huff (co-chair), Abena Asante, Nell Barnes, Tamara Barnes, Kevin Cain, Diana Dolinsky, David Gardner, Greg Griggs, Julie Hunkins, Terry Kinney, Jonathan Kotch, Sarah Langer, Alice Lenihan, Mary Etta Moorachian, Robin Moore, Jim Morrison, Andrea Phillips, Rich Rairigh, Steve Shore, Willona Stallings, Dianne Ward

Steering Committee and NCIOM Staff: Kimberly Alexander-Bratcher, Libby Betts, Pat Hansen, Jennifer MacDougall, Pam Silberman, Anne Williams

Other Interested people: Linda Costa, Annie Hardison-Moody, Emily McClure

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Kathy Higgins

President

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation

Olson Huff, MD

Chairman, Board of Directors

North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc.

Dr. Huff and Ms. Higgins welcomed the task force and asked everyone to introduce themselves and share a joke.

UPDATE

Tamara Barnes

Chief, Regulatory Services Section

North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education

Ms. Barnes gave the task force a brief update on child care nutrition rules recently approved by the North Carolina Child Care Commission. The next step is for the new standards to be passed through the rules commission. The report to the general assembly is available here: [NC Enhanced Nutrition Standards for Child Care](#).

EAT SMART MOVE MORE MOVEMENT IN NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITIES

David Gardner, DA

Executive Director

North Carolina Center for Health and Wellness

University of North Carolina at Asheville

Dr. Gardner gave the task force an overview of the Eat Smart Move More (ESMM) movement as a statewide resource and help set the stage for the task force's discussion of obesity prevention in faith communities. ESMM focuses on obesity prevention for all ages using evidence-based and promising practices. A variety of tools and resources are available to faith communities on the ESMM website such as health-related bulletin inserts. In addition, Dr. Gardner summarized the goals of North Carolina's Obesity Prevention Plan for 2013-2020 which will be released January 2013. Public feedback is being sought this summer for the goals, which are being written to align with the Healthy North Carolina 2020 goals. Dr. Gardner also gave the task force an overview of the ESMM NC policy strategy platform and the coalition policy survey project ESMM is launching to see what local coalitions are doing around policy.

A copy of Mr. Gardner's presentation is available here: [Eat Smart Move More Movement in NC Communities](#).

Selected questions and comments:

- C: The leadership committee doesn't appear to include any chamber of commerce/rotary-type organizations, which might help leverage the movement with the business community—good health is good business. R: This is happening gradually. Employers are using worksite specific tools from Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less.
- Q: What's the different between the blue and grey stars on the map on slide 20? Should we take it to mean there's not a focus on young children in the eastern part of the state? A: No. This only maps what the North Carolina Center for Health and Wellness is doing.
- Q: Will the survey reveal what the coalitions are doing around young children obesity prevention? A: The surveys are focused on only policy efforts, and will not reveal what programmatic strategies are being used.
- Q: How does the built environment come in? A: The website includes a number of strategies specific to the built environment. There is a shift happening from a programmatic and individual behavior focus to a focus on policy and environment.
- Q: Are the community transformation grants being included in the alignment of the new plan? A: The writing team is aware of the CTG strategies.

FAITH COMMUNITY: FAITHFUL FAMILIES

Annie Hardison-Moody, PhD

Project Manager, Voices into Action: The Families, Food, and Health Project

Faithful Families Coordinator

North Carolina State University

Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family & Consumer Sciences

Dr. Hardison-Moody gave an overview of the Faithful Families work she coordinates in faith communities. Faith leaders are often trusted and primary sources of information and social support in rural communities making faith communities a target for expanding public health programming. Faithful Families was created in 2007 as a partnership between the NC Division of Public Health and NC Cooperative Extension. Faithful families approaches churches as partners rather than as intervention sites and employs a lay leader model with training by the health department or county cooperative extension agents. The emphasis is placed on healthy but also affordable foods and recipes using SNAP or WIC approved foods. Readymade tools have made a big difference in implementing policy and environmental changes in addition to programming strategies (e.g. model policies, joint use agreement language for community gyms or facilities).

A copy of Dr. Hardison-Moody's presentation is available here: [Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More](#).

Selected questions and comments:

- C: It seems that there is an important role to play in impacting faith community run child care centers.
- Q: Are you trying to engage business leaders? A: We have not worked with the business community, yet.
- Q: How have you connected with parish nurses? A: We have worked with parish nurses, and would like to expand their role to be health partners in delivering the program.

FAITH COMMUNITY: PARTNERS IN HEALTH & WHOLENESS

Willona Stallings, MPH

Partners in Health and Wholeness Program Coordinator

North Carolina Council of Churches

Ms. Stallings gave the task force an overview of the work of Partners in Health and Wholeness (PHW), an initiative of the North Carolina Council of Churches to promote healthy lifestyles. The intergenerational, faith-based Sunday school curriculum focuses on food and the effect on farmers, health, and the environment. PHW also offers tools such as congregational cookbook for healthier large quantity meals, and lectionary series for ministers. There are 3 levels of certification for congregations that have varying levels of commitments including a program contact person, healthier church meals, tobacco free

buildings, and policy and environmental changes. Ms. Stallings emphasized some of the assets of partnering with faith communities including social support, moral suasion, and existing infrastructure/resources (e.g., parish nurses, land for community gardens, community facilities, connection to hard to reach population). She argued that now is a great opportunity to add early childhood to the program focus.

A copy of Ms. Stallings' presentation is available here: [Partners in Health and Wholeness](#).

Selected questions and comments:

- C: There is an opportunity around the certification program to address the childcare community included within the faith community.
- Q: Is there a childcare committee in PHW? A: No.
- Q: What are the program strategies for reaching churches in Eastern and Northeastern North Carolina? A: We are slowly moving into a new catchment area.
- C: Project Muse research paper that was handed out includes congregational health assessment.

FAITH COMMUNITY BARRIERS & STRATEGY DISCUSSION

Selected Discussion:

- How can we build greater emphasis on early childhood obesity prevention in existing inclusive faith-based efforts?
- Don't lose sight of NC Kids Eat Smart Move More (NC KESMM).
- Besides childcare, where are the focuses on early childhood? –Sunday school, youth groups, vacation bible schools.
- How can we reach the non-Christian/non-protestant faith communities? Come to the table, interfaith work on domestic and sexual violence, and interfaith food shuttles, or food banks may be opportunities to access interdenominational leadership.
- Q: Can a church day care center call in a childcare health consultant? A: Depends on the licensure of the day care center.

DISCUSSION OF COMMUNITY WORKPLAN

The task force reviewed and discussed the community workplan. The task force reviewed the strategies drafted by the planning committee after the last meeting's discussion on the following issues:

- Breastfeeding

- Coordination between childcare facilities and parks and recreation, improved physical
- Cross training (e.g. adding early childhood programs to park pre-service education)
- Be Active Kids toolkits
- Community resource guide
- Data collection & dissemination

NEXT STEPS

The next meeting will be Friday, June 15th and will focus on media and mass communication, social marketing, and home visiting programs. In addition, the task force will set priorities at the next meeting.