



**TASK FORCE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION
COMMUNITY TOPIC – INTRODUCTORY MEETING**

Friday, January 20, 2011

NCIOM

10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Meeting Summary

Attendees:

Members: Kathy Higgins (co-chair), Olson Huff (co-chair), Alice Ammerman, Abena Asante, Nell Barnes, Tamara Barnes, Kevin Cain, Nancy Creamer, Alice Dean, Diana Dolinsky, Carolyn Dunn, Stephanie Fanjul, David Gardner, Gibbie Harris, Brenda Jones, Terry Kinney, Jonathan Kotch, Sarah Langer, Alice Lenihan, Mary Etta Moorachian, Robin Moore, Jim Morrison, Seth Noar, Eliana Perrin, Andrea Phillips, Rich Rairigh, James Rhodes, Susan Riordan, Meka Sales, Florence Simán, Janet Singerman, Willona Stallings, Dianne Ward, Michelle Wells, Henrietta Zalkind

Steering Committee and NCIOM Staff: Kimberly Alexander-Bratcher, Krutika Amin, Thalia Fuller, Pat Hansen, Jennifer MacDougall, Emily McClure, Anne Williams, Berkeley Yorkery

Other Interested Persons: Heather Barnes, Anne Bryan, Eddy Mentzer

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 group to the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

CHARGE FOR COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT WORK GROUP AND REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Kimberly Alexander-Bratcher, MPH

Project Director

North Carolina Institute of Medicine

Ms. Alexander-Bratcher summarized the problem of early childhood obesity in North Carolina and outlined the charge for the task force: (1) examine evidence-based and promising practices from prior North Carolina related task forces, as well as from the White House and national Institute of Medicine Committee on Childhood Obesity Prevention; and (2) develop a strategic plan to prevent or reduce early childhood obesity



in North Carolina that can serve as a blue print for foundations, government, health professional associations, and other community groups interested in improving the health of young children, ages 0-5.

The Task Force is organized around the socio-ecological model and is comprised of a core group and three topic groups: clinical, community and environment, and public policies. The core and community and environment groups will examine existing recommendations; discuss barriers to implementing the recommendations in North Carolina; make recommendations to address the barriers; and develop an action plan to address early childhood obesity in North Carolina.

Ms. Alexander-Bratcher's presentation can be found here: [Community & Environment Overview, Charge & Review](#).

RACE TO THE TOP: EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE

Anne Bryan

Senior Policy Advisor on Early Childhood

Office of the Governor

Ms. Bryan summarized the Race to the Top: Early Learning Challenge (ELC) grant program and North Carolina's response. North Carolina was notified on December 16, 2011 that it was selected to receive a \$70 million grant from 2012-2015. The purpose of the ELC grant is to build a coordinated statewide system of early learning and development programs that ensures that all children have the support they need to enter kindergarten ready to succeed. Ms. Bryan outlined North Carolina's implementation plan, which is being coordinated by the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC). She highlighted the potential to build on the elements already in place such as Smart Start, the star rating system for childcare centers, and developmental screening to create a transformative and comprehensive system.

Ms. Bryan's presentation can be found here: [Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge Grant](#).

Selected Questions and Comments:

Q: As work with ELC proceeds, do you foresee an opportunity to push a greater focus on health in the K-12 Race to the Top (RTT) initiative? A: While ECAC recognizes the importance of a comprehensive focus, it is unlikely in the short term. Because ELC is a joint initiative between the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services, the guidelines allowed for a greater emphasis on health than RTT.

Q: How standardized will outcomes assessment and evaluation be? How does it relate to the role of the integrated data system? A: \$1 million of the grant funding is set aside for evaluation, which will be structured over the next two months. Evaluation is one purpose of the integrated data system.



NORTH CAROLINA PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN: OVERVIEW SMART START & SHAPE NC

Stephanie Fanjul

President & CEO, Smart Start

North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc.

Ms. Fanjul presented an overview of Smart Start, summarizing its history as well as outlining the way it works today. The North Carolina Partnership for Children collaborates with state partners to ensure effective and efficient services for young children across the state and provides leadership and support to local partners in the areas of program innovation, outcomes and accountability, data and evaluation, fiscal and grants management, and fundraising. Smart Start's work focuses on educating North Carolinians, establishing programs, building partnerships, increasing investments in early childhood education, and collecting data.

Ms. Fanjul's presentation can be found here: [NCPC Smart Start](#).

Pat Hansen, RN, MPH

Shape NC Project Manager

Smart Start

North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc.

Ms. Hansen presented an overview of Shape NC in the context of the Smart Start network. Shape NC brings together three strategies: Nutrition and Physical Activity Self Assessment in Child Care (NAPSACC); Preventing Obesity by Design (POD), a project focused on improving outdoor learning environments in childcare centers; and Be Active Kids, a project focused on supporting physical activity. Ms. Hansen outlined the model through which the expertise of NAPSACC, POD, and Be Active Kids is put into play in model early learning centers (MELC) through their technical assistance staff. The MELCs demonstrate the best practices in nutrition, physical activity and outdoor learning for other centers in their communities.

Ms. Hansen's presentation can be found here: [Overview of Shape NC](#).

SHAPE NC: COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND PROGRAMS

Dianne Ward, MS, EdD

Professor, Department of Nutrition

Gillings School of Global Public Health

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

In the context of Shape NC evaluation of childcare centers, Dr. Ward provided an overview of both the challenges of and best practice standards for healthy weight development in childcare settings. Childcare centers face nutrition challenges including the foods and beverages served at childcare, development of eating habits, encouraging new foods, helping gauge satiety, and creating a proper food environment. Physical

activity challenges include getting regular activity during the day, development of motor skills, and decreasing the amount of time young children are sedentary. Important factors in overcoming both the nutrition and physical activity challenges to healthy weight development include provider behaviors and childcare center policies.

Dr. Ward's presentation can be found here: [Healthy Weight Development](#).

Richard Rairigh

Director of Programs and Early Childhood Development

Be Active NC

Mr. Rairigh highlighted the importance of and best practices for physical activity and play in childcare settings. Children who are physically active are less likely to be overweight, enjoy many positive health benefits, and are more effective learners. The best practices include recommendations regarding time for active play, environments, sedentary and screen time, provider behaviors, provider and parent education, and childcare center policies. Mr. Rairigh summarized the challenges and barriers childcare centers face in implementing best practices and the current findings of the Be Active Kids project.

Mr. Rairigh's presentation can be found here: [Physical Activity and Play](#).

Selected Questions and Comments:

Q: Do you have any focus on working in homes? A: No, Be Active Kids is currently just working with childcare centers.

Q: What is the state of training for childcare providers? A: There is a lot of great activity taking place across the state, which is moving towards a standardized system of provider certifications in physical activity.

Robin Moore

Director, The Natural Learning Initiative

College of Design

North Carolina State University

Mr. Moore described outdoor learning environments (OLE) and their importance in the in the context of Shape NC. An Outdoor Learning Environment is a regulated childcare center outdoor space where children engage in supervised spontaneous play, educators organize programs, and parents can meet other parents. Mr. Moore summarized evidence supporting OLEs as a strategy for increasing physical activity. The ten best practice indicators of OLEs are: (1) diversity of trees, shrubs; (2) shade; (3) ten different settings or more; (4) five to six feet of wide looped or double looped pathway; (5) grassy area, big enough for a group of children; (6) vegetables, fruit trees, fruiting vines, and nuts within play areas; (7) designated vegetable garden; (8) natural materials; (9) outdoor toys; and (10) settings for a variety of gross motor activities.



Mr. Moore's presentation can be found here: [Outdoor Learning Environment](#).

The next meeting of the Task Force on Early Childhood Obesity Prevention will be Friday, February 17th at the NCIOM offices.