



“...where we live, learn, work and play.”

Let's Move! America's Move to Raise a Healthier Generation of Kids – Healthy North Dakota's Efforts

In February 2010, a nationwide campaign called *Let's Move!* was launched to address the childhood obesity problem. The goal of *Let's Move!* is to solve the challenge of childhood obesity in one generation. This goal will be accomplished by families, communities, organizations, businesses, schools and government working together.

Since the launch of Healthy North Dakota in 2002, the initiative's statewide partnerships have been providing an innovative framework to help North Dakotans make healthy choices day in and day out. Partners in the Healthy North Dakota network working to reduce childhood obesity are pleased that this issue is being highlighted at the national level. However, despite the efforts noted below, the rates of obesity in North Dakota's children, as in the rest of the nation, continue to rise.

- 23.7 percent of North Dakota's high school students are overweight or obese. (More North Dakota students are now impacted by healthy weight issues than by tobacco use.)
- 31.4 percent of children ages 2 through 5 enrolled in the WIC program are overweight or obese.

Healthy North Dakota and its network of partners are working to help North Dakota's children grow to be as healthy and productive as possible through various efforts:

- Healthy North Dakota convenes a group of leaders known as the Statewide Vision and Strategy (SVS) for a Healthier North Dakota. SVS selected childhood obesity as one of its first priorities and formed the *Healthy Kids, Healthy Weight* (HKHW) Workgroup. The HKHW Workgroup is working to educate physicians, nurses and dietitians about childhood obesity treatment and prevention services.
- The *Healthy Kids, Healthy Weight* toolkit helps connect families with community-based physical activity and food/nutrition programs/services. The toolkit was funded by SVS, was developed by Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health and is distributed by local physicians: www.healthynd.org/publications/HKHW_Toolkit.pdf
- Resources to help support and encourage medical providers to address obesity through clinics and the community were developed by HKHW: www.healthynd.org/HealthyWeightCouncilToolkits-HealthProfessionals.html
- The North Dakota WIC Program weaves obesity prevention into all its efforts starting with healthy pregnancy counseling for pregnant mothers, breastfeeding promotion and support, infant feeding advice, and one-on-one nutrition and physical activity education for families with young children through a client-centered counseling process. Specific healthy foods including fresh fruits and vegetables are also provided to meet the nutrient needs of the families WIC serves.

- Toolkits for schools, parents, students and the community to help create environments that can improve the health of all who learn and work in schools were developed by the North Dakota Healthy Weight Council:
www.healthynd.org/HealthyWeightCouncilToolkits.html

- North Dakota school districts have established local wellness policies to improve nutrition and physical activity environments and education. Six schools have been recognized by the USDA as HealthierUS Challenge Schools:

Burlington-Des Lacs Elementary School (Gold), Ward County
 Eastwood Elementary School (Gold), West Fargo School District
 Elgin/New Leipzig Elementary School (Silver), Elgin/New Leipzig District
 Golva Elementary School (Gold), Lone Tree No. 6 School District
 Jefferson and Washington Elementary Schools (Gold), Valley City District

- “On the Move to Better Health” is a five-week curriculum for fifth-grade students that promotes a variety of healthy lifestyle behaviors among children and their families. “On the Move to Better Health” was developed by the NDSU Extension Service and Fargo Cass Public Health:
www.ag.ndsu.edu/ext-emp/evaluation/reports/fcs/rptmove.pdf
- Nutrition, physical activity and healthy lifestyle resources for individuals at different ages and stages of life are offered at the Healthy North Dakota website:
www.healthynd.org/Ages_and_Stages.html
- Local community members who are part of North Dakota's 17 *Moving More, Eating Smarter* community coalitions (MMES) are working to encourage North Dakotans to make smart choices from every food group and move more on most days of the week : www.healthynd.org/MMES.html
- *Walk ND* is an online walking challenge program that provides a structured way for children and adults to move more. *Walk ND* was developed by the Williston-area MMES coalition, and expanded by the NDSU Extension Service: www.walknd.com
- The *Going Local* initiative of the North Dakota Department of Agriculture strives to "create a food system in North Dakota that is abundant in locally produced foods to foster the betterment of our health, economic well-being and the self-reliance of our citizens": www.agdepartment.com/Programs/LocalFoods.htm
- A statewide plan with a goal to increase access to healthy foods has been developed by the Healthy North Dakota Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Partnership:
www.ndhealth.gov/NutrPhyAct/

Healthy North Dakota provides this list of examples as a starting point from which to build upon, so that North Dakota’s kids have the best chance to grow into healthy, successful adults. Healthy North Dakota believes that it’s imperative for North Dakota to protect its future economic viability by investing in its children.