

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities
Hamilton County Eating Smart and Living Fit

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**Hamilton County One of 41 Sites Selected for
National Program to Fight Childhood Obesity**

Hamilton County Public Health (HCPH) and the Collaborative to Prevent Childhood Obesity
Receives Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Major Grant to
Increase Access to Fresh Produce and Safe Places to be Physically Active.

Hamilton County, Ohio, January 12, 2010 – HCPH and the Collaborative to Prevent Childhood Obesity has been awarded a \$360,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to improve opportunities for physical activity and access to affordable healthy foods for children and families in several City of Cincinnati neighborhoods, Forest Park, Woodlawn, Lockland and Lincoln Heights. Based on a rigorous selection process that drew more than 500 proposals from across the country, Hamilton County is one of 41 sites selected for the RWJF *Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities* initiative.

In Hamilton County, 22% of third-graders are overweight – higher than the state average – with African-American and Hispanic children significantly more likely to be overweight. The vision is to transform the lower-income neighborhoods of Cincinnati and four other communities into places where residents can easily find and afford fresh fruits and vegetables, where children and families have safe spaces to walk, play and be active. For example, in Avondale, Lincoln Heights and Lockland, there are no full-service grocery stores and so many residents shop at corner stores where the window advertising typically promotes cigarettes, beer and ice cream.

“This grant will help us push beyond existing programs and expand the implementation of policies and environmental change necessary to sustain communities in eating smart and living fit,” Stacy Wegley, director of health promotion and education for Hamilton County Public Health said.

“To reverse this epidemic, communities are going to have to rally around their kids and provide the opportunities they need to be healthy,” said Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, M.D., M.B.A., president and CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. “Through this project, Hamilton County Public Health and its partners are doing what it takes to make sure children lead better lives.”

"Community engagement from all facets is extremely important for this project," Wegley said. "Together we can create sustainable changes that have a positive impact in the community for years to come."

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities is a \$33 million national program and RWJF's largest investment to date in community-based solutions to childhood obesity. With nine Leading Sites chosen in late 2008, the program now spans 50 communities from Seattle to Puerto Rico. All are targeting improvements in local policies and their community environment—changes that research indicates could have the greatest impact on healthier eating, more active living and obesity prevention. Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities is a cornerstone of RWJF's \$500 million commitment to reverse the country's childhood obesity epidemic by 2015.

The 40 other cities and regions just announced as Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities sites are:

Benton County, OR	Kingston, NY
Boone and Newton Counties, AR	Knoxville, TN
Buffalo, NY	Lake Worth, Greenacres and Palm Springs, FL
Caguas, PR	Milledgeville, GA
Charleston, WV	Milwaukee, WI
Chattanooga, TN	Moore and Montgomery Counties, NC
Cook County, GA	Multnomah County, OR
Cuba, NM	Nash and Edgecombe Counties, NC
Denver, CO	New Orleans, LA
Desoto, Marshall and Tate Counties, MS	Omaha, NE
Duval County, FL	Philadelphia, PA
El Paso, TX	Phoenix, AZ
Fitchburg, MA	Rancho Cucamonga, CA
Flint, MI	Rochester, NY
Greenville, SC	San Antonio, TX
Houghton County, MI	San Felipe Pueblo, NM
Houston, TX	Silver City, NM
Jackson, MS	Spartanburg, SC
Jefferson County, AL	Watsonville and Parajo Valley, CA
Kane County, IL	
Kansas City, MO	

All were selected because of strong vision, partnership and a commitment to make lasting change in their communities. The new program grants will continue through June 2013.

Visit www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org to learn more about these communities' work and plans.

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About the Collaborative to Prevent Childhood Obesity

The Collaborative to Prevent Childhood Obesity is chaired by Hamilton County Public Health and works to build increased opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating with partner organizations: the Nutrition Council, YMCA of Greater Cincinnati, The Center for Closing the Health Gap, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Lockland City Schools, Cincy After School and Growing Well. The Collaborative strives to enhance policy, systems and environmental change to provide leadership for childhood obesity prevention efforts, increase access to healthy foods, facilitate opportunities for physical activity and establish assessment in the form of a county-wide Body Mass Index Surveillance System. Visit www.hamiltoncountyhealth.org for more information.

About Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), advances community-based solutions that will help reverse the childhood obesity epidemic. It focuses on changing policies and environments to support active living and healthy eating among children and families. The program places special emphasis on reaching children who are at highest risk for obesity on the basis of income, race/ethnicity and geographic location. It will support RWJF's efforts to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic in the United States by 2015.

The Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities national program office is housed at Active Living by Design, part of the North Carolina Institute for Public Health at the Gillings School of Global Public Health at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. Established in 2001 as an RWJF national program, Active Living By Design now serves funders and partnerships across the country that are fostering community-led change to build a culture of active living and healthy eating.

About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. For more than 35 years, the Foundation has brought experience, commitment, and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the Foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org.