



America's Health  
Insurance Plans

# Reducing and Preventing Childhood Obesity

Health Insurance Plans Partnering in Communities



Summer 2011



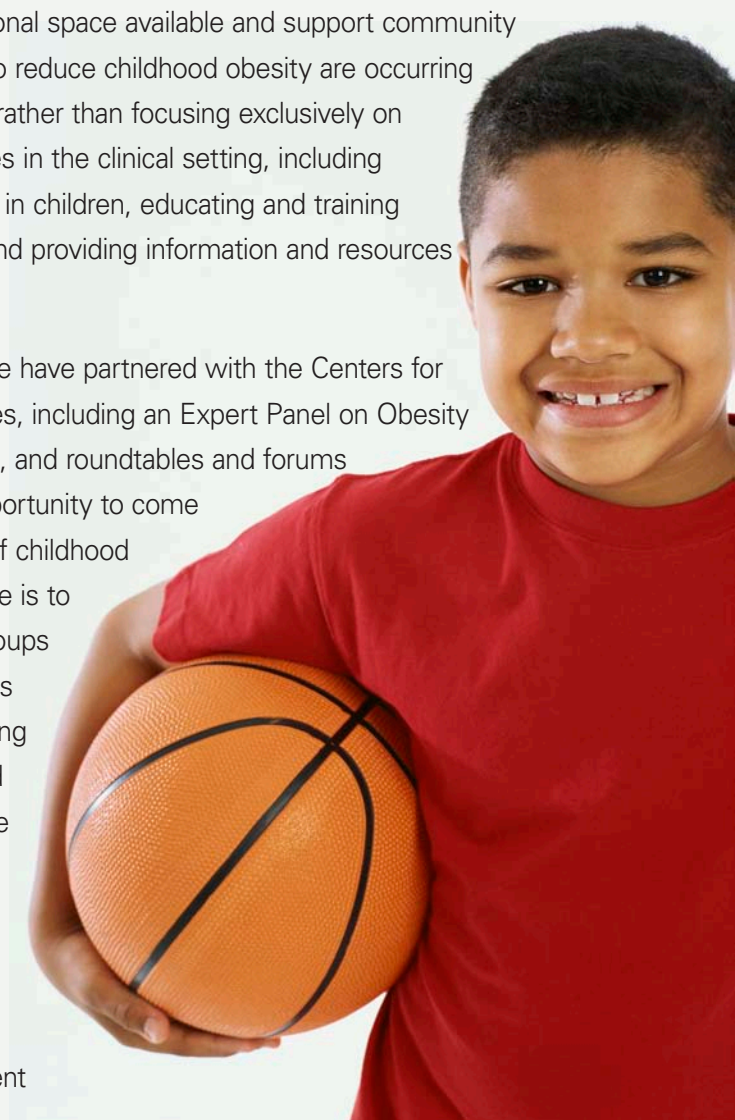
The rapid rise in both childhood and adult obesity during the past three decades is one of the most significant health care challenges facing the United States. Curbing, and ultimately reversing, this trend will require understanding, commitment, creativity, and collaboration across all parts of society.

America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and our member health plans are actively engaged in developing innovative strategies to improve the health of children and reduce the risks associated with obesity. Recognizing that childhood obesity is a critical public health challenge that crosses all income levels and races and ethnicities, our members are addressing it on many fronts.

Because there are so many factors contributing to obesity, such as a child's daily routine, the kind of food served at home and at school, and the amount of physical activity the child is able to get every day, many of the programs that target childhood obesity are community-based. Many communities around the country are addressing the issue through health fairs, farmer's markets, school-based interventions, and through working with local governments to make more recreational space available and support community design that increases walkability. Health plans' efforts to reduce childhood obesity are occurring in all of these areas, and are largely community-based, rather than focusing exclusively on their enrolled members. Health plans also have initiatives in the clinical setting, including reimbursing clinicians to screen and counsel for obesity in children, educating and training providers on how to address obesity in their patients, and providing information and resources to parents and families.

The AHIP Obesity Initiative was started in 2004, and we have partnered with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on many activities, including an Expert Panel on Obesity and Related Screening Measures, educational webinars, and roundtables and forums that have given member health insurance plans the opportunity to come together with other stakeholders to address the issue of childhood and adult obesity. The goal of the AHIP Obesity Initiative is to bring health insurance plans and diverse stakeholder groups together to share promising practices and discuss issues such as the state of the science around obesity screening and treatment, communication barriers, and cultural and linguistic competency, and to build partnerships to move this issue forward.

This report features a selection of innovative programs that health insurance plans have developed and implemented in their communities, in collaboration with schools, community groups, and policymakers, to prevent and ultimately reverse childhood obesity.

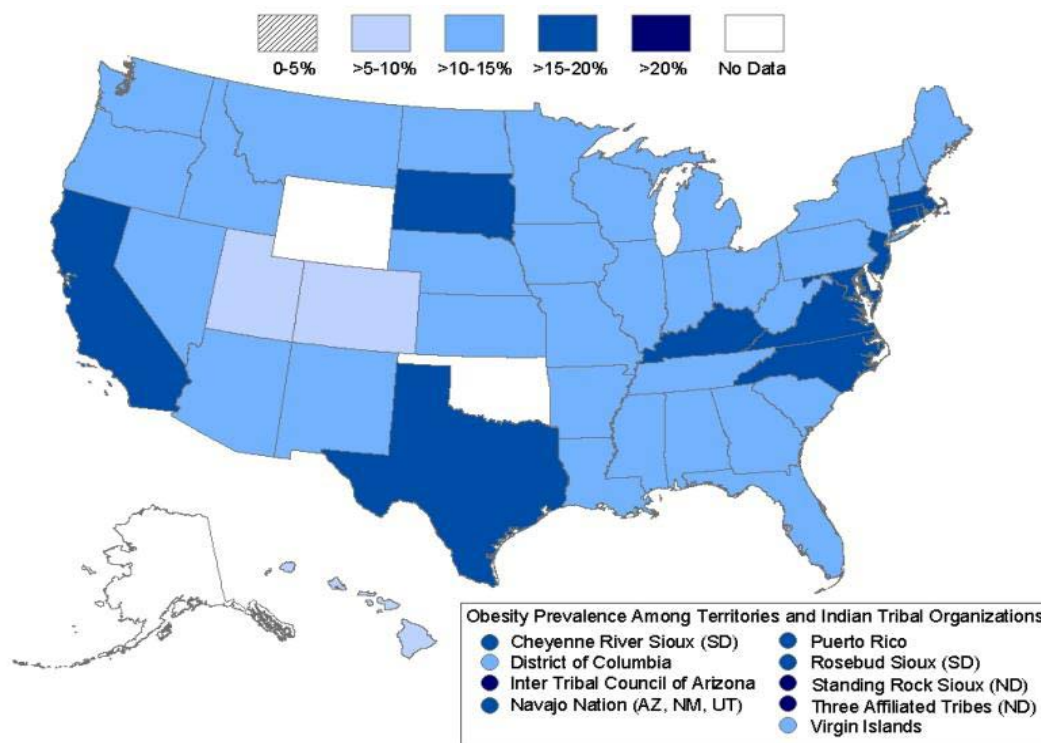


## Health Plans' Participation in the Alliance for a Healthier Generation Initiative

In addition to the many different kinds of community-based initiatives profiled in this brief, several health insurance plans including Aetna, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina, Capital District Physicians' Health Plan, Highmark, Humana, and WellPoint are participating in the Alliance for Healthier Generation's Healthcare Initiative.

The Alliance, a collaborative of the William J. Clinton Foundation and the American Heart Association, convened national medical associations, health insurers, and employers to offer comprehensive health benefits to children and families for the prevention and treatment of childhood obesity. Healthcare professionals are working with children and their families on how to establish and maintain healthy lifestyles, through guidance from pediatricians and registered dietitians. Data on health outcomes will be collected and shared, and best practices and strategies will be disseminated.

## 2009 State Obesity Prevalence Among Low-Income Children Aged 2 to 4 Years



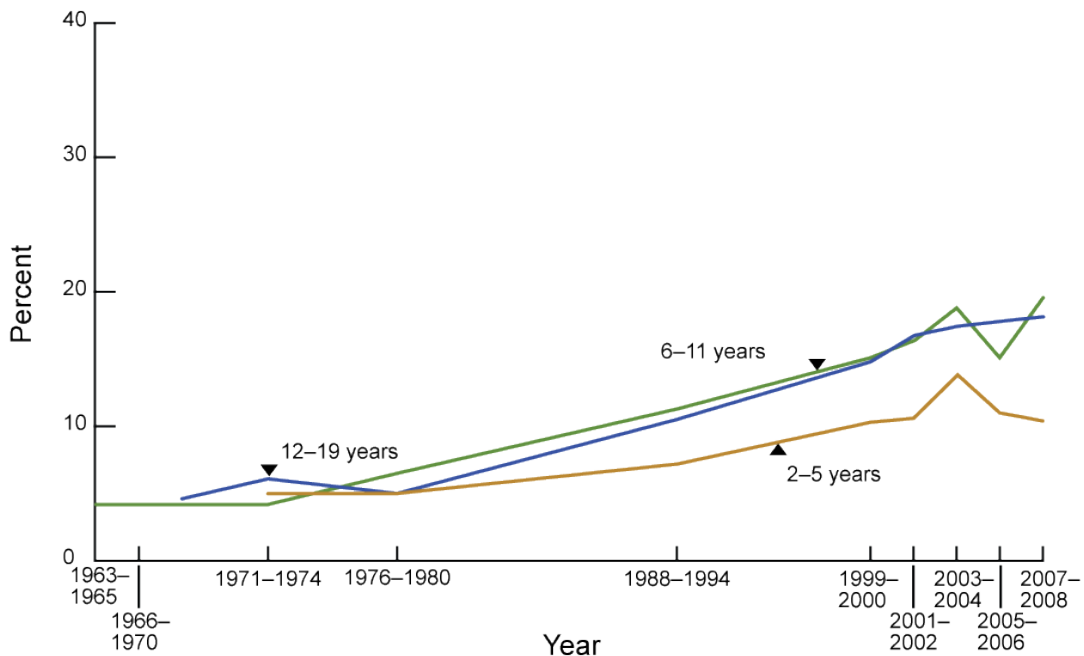
This map is accessible at [www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/lowincome.html](http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/lowincome.html)

This graph shows obesity rates among low-income preschool children (data from the Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance System):

- ▶ 1 of 7 low-income, preschool-aged children is obese.
- ▶ County obesity rates are variable within states. Even states with the lowest prevalence of obesity have counties where many low-income children are obese and at risk for chronic disease.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/data.html>

**Figure 1. Trends in obesity among children and adolescents: United States, 1963–2008**



NOTE: Obesity is defined as body mass index (BMI) greater than or equal to sex- and age-specific 95th percentile from the 2000 CDC Growth Charts.  
 SOURCES: CDC/NCHS, National Health Examination Surveys II (ages 6–11), III (ages 12–17), and National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (NHANES) I–III, and NHANES 1999–2000, 2001–2002, 2003–2004, 2005–2006, and 2007–2008.

This graph shows trends in obesity among children and adolescents since the 1960s by age group. The percentage of obese children age 6-11 went from 4.2% in the early 1960s to 19.6% by 2007-2008. The percentage of obese children age 12-19 went from 4.6% in the early 1960s to 18.1% by 2007-2008.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). National Center for Health Statistics. Available at: [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hestat/obesity\\_child\\_07\\_08/obesity\\_child\\_07\\_08.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hestat/obesity_child_07_08/obesity_child_07_08.htm)

## FEATURED AHIP MEMBER PLANS

### Aetna

Aetna is one of the leading diversified health care benefits companies in the United States, serving approximately 37.2 million people with information and resources to help them make better informed decisions about their health care. Aetna offers a broad range of traditional and consumer directed health insurance products and related services, including medical, pharmacy, dental, behavioral health, group life and disability plans, and medical management capabilities and health care management services for Medicaid plans. Its customers include employer groups, individuals, college students, part-time and hourly workers, health plans, governmental units, and government-sponsored plans in the United States and internationally.

### Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan provides and administers health benefits to nearly 4.7 million members residing in Michigan, in addition to members of Michigan-headquartered groups who reside outside the state. The company offers a broad variety of plans including: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Traditional; Blue Preferred<sup>SM</sup>, Community Blue<sup>SM</sup> and Healthy Blue Incentives<sup>SM</sup> PPOs; Blue Care Network HMO; BCN Healthy Blue Living<sup>SM</sup>; Flexible Blue<sup>SM</sup> plans compatible with health savings accounts; Medicare Advantage; Part D prescription drug plan; and MyBlue<sup>SM</sup> products in the underage-65 individual market. BCBSM also offers dental, vision and hearing plans.

### Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota

As the state's oldest and largest nonprofit health plan, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota welcomes the opportunity and responsibility to improve the health of Minnesotans and their communities.

Blue Cross was chartered in 1933 as Minnesota's first and only nonprofit health plan. And the health plan continues to carry out its purpose to make a healthy difference in people's lives.

Together with the Blue Cross Foundation and Prevention Minnesota, the health plan develops initiatives that raise awareness about Minnesota's leading health concerns, and creates solutions to help address these issues.

### Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC) delivers value through quality products, information and services to help its customers improve their health and well-being.

For 77 years, the company has served its customers by offering health insurance at a competitive price and has served the people of North Carolina through support of community organizations, programs and events that promote good health.

### CareOregon

CareOregon is a non-profit health plan serving the health care needs of low-income Oregonians, including about one quarter of Oregon Health Plan members. Its goal is to help assure that the people of Oregon, regardless of income or social circumstance, have access to high-quality health care from a stable network of providers.

### Centene Corporation

Founded as a single health plan in 1984, Centene Corporation (Centene) has established itself as a national leader in the healthcare services field. Today, through a comprehensive portfolio of innovative solutions, Centene remains deeply committed to delivering results for its stakeholders: state governments, members, providers, uninsured individuals and families, and other healthcare and commercial organizations.

### CIGNA

CIGNA, a global health service company, is dedicated to helping people improve their health, well-being, and security. CIGNA Corporation's operating subsidiaries provide an integrated suite of medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy, and vision care benefits, as well as group life, accident, and disability insurance, to approximately 47 million people throughout the United States and around the world.

### Health Net

Health Net, Inc. is a publicly traded managed care organization that delivers managed health care services through health plans and government-sponsored managed care plans. Its mission is to help people be healthy, secure and comfortable. The company provides health benefits to approximately 6.0 million individuals across the country through group, individual, Medicare (including the Medicare prescription drug benefit commonly referred to as "Part D"), Medicaid, Department of Defense, including TRICARE, and Veterans Affairs programs.

### Highmark, Inc.

One of the leading health insurers in Pennsylvania, Highmark Inc. has a mission to provide access to affordable, quality health care enabling individuals to live longer, healthier lives. Based in Pittsburgh, Highmark serves 4.8 million people through the company's health care benefits business. Highmark contributes millions of dollars to help keep quality health care programs affordable and to support community-based programs that work to improve people's health. Highmark Inc. is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, an association of independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans.

## Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey

Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey (Horizon BCBSNJ), a not-for-profit organization headquartered in Newark, is the state's largest health insurer. Horizon BCBSNJ's goal is the same as it has been since 1932 - to provide individuals and employers in New Jersey with convenient access to quality health care, wherever they live or work.

## Humana

Humana Inc., headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky, is a leading health care company that offers a wide range of insurance products and health and wellness services that incorporate an integrated approach to lifelong well-being. By leveraging the strengths of its core businesses, Humana believes it can better explore opportunities for existing and emerging adjacencies in health care that can further enhance wellness opportunities for the millions of people across the nation with whom the company has relationships.

## Kaiser Permanente

Kaiser Permanente, America's largest not-for-profit health plan, is headquartered in Oakland, California. Kaiser Permanente serves the health care needs of nearly 8.7 million members in nine states and the District of Columbia. It encompasses the not-for-profit Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Kaiser Foundation Hospitals and their subsidiaries, and the private Permanente Medical Groups.

## Keystone Mercy Health Plan

Keystone Mercy Health Plan (a member of the AmeriHealth Mercy Family of Companies) is the nation's leader in health care solutions for the underserved. The company is among the largest organizations of Medicaid managed care plans and related businesses in the United States, touching the lives of more than 7 million individuals covered by Medicaid, Medicare, SCHIP and other insurance.

Headquartered in Philadelphia, AmeriHealth Mercy is a mission-driven company with more than 25 years of experience serving low-income, chronically ill populations. AmeriHealth Mercy's core products include full-risk HMOs, management contracts, administrative services, pharmacy benefit management, care management services, and behavioral health care management services.

## UCare

UCare is an independent, nonprofit health plan providing health coverage and services to 200,000 members in Minnesota and western Wisconsin. Working in partnership with health care providers and community organizations, UCare serves: Medicare-eligible individuals; families and individuals enrolled in Minnesota

Health Care Programs, such as MinnesotaCare and Medical Assistance; and adults with disabilities.

## UnitedHealthcare

UnitedHealthcare provides a full spectrum of consumer-oriented health benefit plans and services to individuals, public sector employers, and businesses of all sizes, including more than half of the Fortune 100 companies. The company organizes access to quality, affordable health care services on behalf of more than 26 million individual consumers, contracting directly with more than 570,000 physicians and care professionals and nearly 4,900 hospitals to offer them broad, convenient access to services nationwide. UnitedHealthcare is one of the businesses of UnitedHealth Group (NYSE: UNH), a diversified Fortune 500 health and well-being company.

## UPMC Health Plan

UPMC Health Plan is owned by the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC), one of the nation's top-ranked health systems. As part of an integrated health care delivery system, UPMC Health Plan partners with UPMC and community network providers to improve clinical outcomes as well as the health of the greater community.

## WellCare Health Plans, Inc.

WellCare Health Plans, Inc. provides managed care services exclusively for government-sponsored health care programs, focusing on Medicaid and Medicare. Headquartered in Tampa, Florida, WellCare offers a variety of health plans for families, children, and the aged, blind and disabled, as well as prescription drug plans. The Company served approximately 2.4 million members as of March 31, 2011.

## WellPoint

WellPoint is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, WellPoint serves members as the Blue Cross licensee for California; the Blue Cross and Blue Shield licensee for Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Missouri (excluding 30 counties in the Kansas City area), Nevada, New Hampshire, New York (as the Blue Cross Blue Shield licensee in 10 New York City metropolitan and surrounding counties and as the Blue Cross or Blue Cross Blue Shield licensee in selected upstate counties only), Ohio, Virginia (excluding the Northern Virginia suburbs of Washington, D.C.), and Wisconsin. In a majority of these service areas, WellPoint does business as Anthem Blue Cross, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield or Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield (in the New York service areas) with more than 33.5 million members in its affiliated health plans, and a total of more than 69 million individuals served through all subsidiaries.

3-Point Play <sup>SM</sup> Health Competition & Dancing For Health Initiatives	
<b>Key Elements</b>	Aetna and the Aetna Foundation are collaborating with partners in communities around the country to offer a school-based program (3-Point Play) featuring fun competitions and curricula, and a dancing-based initiative aimed at families in underserved areas.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	Results from the 3-Point Play program in five Houston schools in 2009 showed improvements in strength, flexibility, endurance and body mass index in the cohort of 800 students who participated. More than 1,000 kids and families around the country are building self-esteem and learning healthy habits through dance programs.

**3 Point Play<sup>SM</sup>**

Aetna and the Aetna Foundation, in collaboration with the Harris County Hospital District, launched a 15-week nutrition and exercise competition between fifth- and sixth-graders at Youngblood Intermediate School in the Alief Independent School District (AISD) in Houston. The 3-Point Play<sup>SM</sup> competition was introduced in Houston in 2009 by Aetna to help combat childhood obesity.

The program encourages kids to move more, eat healthier and engage with their families to make lasting healthy lifestyle changes. The success of the program is based on three measures: pre- and post-*Fitnessgrams* administered to each student; active program participation; and meeting state guidelines for physical activity minutes. *Fitnessgrams* include a body mass index (BMI) measurement, a cardio-respiratory test, and strength and flexibility testing.

Results from the 3-Point Play program in five Houston schools in 2009 showed improvements in strength, flexibility, endurance and body mass index in the cohort of 800 students who participated. Students could run 2.4 more laps, and on average accomplish 7.5 more curl-ups and 1.5 more push-ups. Additionally, the students as a whole exhibited a .2 point decrease in BMI, a significant finding since no change in BMI is considered successful among growing children.

Students from Youngblood accumulate points by using a pedometer to help monitor steps taken and calories burned, completing family homework

assignments and participating in health awareness activities online. Teachers, physical education instructors and technologists at the school administer the curriculum and track the points.

Fighting obesity is a major focus of Aetna and the Aetna Foundation’s philanthropy. In 2010, Aetna and the Aetna Foundation contributed more than \$2.3 million in support of research on the causes of obesity and nearly 75 community-based fitness and nutrition programs around the country.

**Dancing for Health**

As part of its efforts to reduce obesity rates, particularly among minority populations that face the highest risk, Aetna and the Aetna Foundation provided grants to four organizations that offer dance-oriented health and fitness programs for children and families living in underserved areas.

In New York, the Dance Theatre of Harlem launched the Aetna Foundation *Healthy Dancers, Healthy Families* Initiative, a multi-year effort funded with a \$25,000 grant from the Aetna Foundation to provide 500 local children and their families with a year-round series of workshops on obesity, healthy eating, and dance exercise at its school.

The Aetna Foundation’s \$10,000 grant to The Joffrey Ballet helps fund the renowned dance company’s Middle School Dance Clubs program in Chicago Public Schools. Serving about 400 primarily African-American and Hispanic students in grades 5 – 8, the Joffrey’s in-school program offers fitness through dance, allowing students to have fun

while engaging in high-level physical activities twice a week and learning healthy eating habits. Underscoring the role that dance can play in motivating and educating young people, the program fosters self-expression, artistic creativity, discipline, and a sense of accomplishment as the students come together for a final performance at the end of the school year during a week-long dance finale.

In San Francisco, the *Dance Out Diabetes First Steps* program addresses the need for a safe, diabetes-friendly environment for those with—or at risk for—diabetes and least likely to have access to quality health care. The program, supported by a \$13,000 grant from Aetna, offers a wide variety of dance instruction and free-style dance for all ages as a fun, positive way to introduce or increase physical activity while providing diabetes and nutrition education from certified diabetes educators and registered dietitians. The program measures participants’ blood pressure, weight, glucose and A1C values and offers support onsite, telephonically and through its website.

With a \$15,000 grant, Aetna is supporting the Hartford’s Charter Oak Cultural Center’s program *Stretching for Life*, a free after-school, weekend, and summer dance class for more than 400 city children from minority populations, ages 4 through 18. Students not only learn the basics of dance, but also learn about the importance of regular physical activity, are exposed to the music and movement of different cultures and participate in the creation of original choreography.

## Building Healthy Communities: Engaging Elementary Schools and Community Partners

<b>Key Elements</b>	A grant program that helps Michigan children become more physically active and educated about healthy eating and healthy lifestyles.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	In 2009 and 2010, 39 schools across the state received grants directly benefiting more than 14,000 children. In 2010, Building Healthy Communities grants were awarded to 22 schools across the state. More grants are being awarded in 2011.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM) is uniquely positioned to help support community-based initiatives, and the health plan is leading Michigan to a healthier future—one community at a time. Many of the health plan’s efforts focus on children because lifestyle habits are formed at an early age. The health plan is dedicated to curbing childhood obesity in Michigan by educating children about healthy lifestyle choices.

BCBSM’s Building Healthy Communities: Engaging Elementary Schools and Community Partners grant program plays a key role in this mission. The grants help Michigan children become more physically active and educated about healthy eating and healthy lifestyles. In Michigan, 30.6 percent of youth ages 10 to 17 are overweight, according to a report by Trust for America’s Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. They have a higher likelihood of suffering adult health problems such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

The centerpiece of the grant program is a “toolbox” of proven health and physical education resources and activities. Grantee elementary schools

implement toolbox programs to help elementary students achieve better nutrition and increased activity. Grantees also are encouraged to collaborate with a community partner and build relationships with local organizations to create and support healthier lifestyles for all community members.

### *2009 and 2010 Grant Program*

In 2009 and 2010, 39 schools across the state received grants directly benefiting more than 14,000 children. In 2010, Building Healthy Communities grants were awarded to 22 schools across the state. They supported activities and events that included:

- ▶ An assessment tool to measure the overall health of the school’s built environment and policies
- ▶ Physical activity and nutrition education using specific programs designated by Blue Cross
- ▶ Walking clubs for students and faculty
- ▶ Celebratory 5K runs and walk events

In 2011, BCBSM announced it is accepting grant proposals from public and nonprofit private elementary schools

in Michigan for programs that increase physical activity and improve nutrition among their student population. Funding amounts are anticipated to range from \$20,000 to \$50,000 per school, depending on the number of programs selected, the size of the school and the number of children enrolled.

Proposed programs require four elements to build healthier schools: assessment tools to build healthier schools, physical activity and nutrition education, a walking club, and a 5K run or walk. These elements, combined with optional parent and community components, are most successful in helping elementary students, staff and parents achieve healthier lifestyles, according to environmental assessments by the Blues’ Social Mission department.

Proposals that include parent and community engagement and schools proposing community partnerships are preferred and have a better chance of funding. The company encourages and supports collaborative approaches to obesity prevention and aims to build partnerships that help sustain programs past the grant period.

## Prevention Minnesota & Safe Routes To School

<b>Key Elements</b>	Prevention Minnesota is Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota’s state-wide initiative to tackle Minnesota’s leading killers by targeting tobacco use, heart disease, and preventable cancer. Increasing physical activity and healthy eating in kids and adults is a major component of the initiative. Safe Routes to School is one program out of Prevention Minnesota that aims to increase physical activity in children and their families.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	In Minnesota, the program has reached 500 families as of 2009, and this year is aiming to reach 700 more.

### Background on Prevention Minnesota

Blue Cross created The Center for Tobacco Reduction and Health Improvement (The Center) in 1998 after settlement of the landmark lawsuit brought by Blue Cross and the State of Minnesota against the tobacco industry. In 2005 the Center was renamed the Center for Prevention. The Center oversees Prevention Minnesota. Prevention Minnesota has a single focus: To tackle Minnesota’s leading killers by targeting tobacco use, heart disease and preventable cancer. Physical inactivity and unhealthy eating combined contribute to obesity, cancer, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes. Together, they are the second leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United States. Prevention Minnesota’s individual and community health interventions address such challenges on behalf of all Minnesotans.

To increase healthy eating, Prevention Minnesota is using a comprehensive approach that includes a range of strategies. Not only does the program work at the individual level to improve eating habits, it is also working to create broader, sustainable changes in schools, neighborhoods and worksites to increase access to healthy foods for all Minnesotans (e.g., provide incentive for low-income Minnesotans to shop at three Minneapolis farmers markets and eat healthy foods).

Naturally, people have an easier time

choosing (and eating) fruits, vegetables and other healthy foods if they are readily available and affordable in the places where they spend time. Prevention Minnesota’s blend of strategies to tackle obesity and improve healthy eating includes community initiatives, a mass media campaign, and working with employers.

### Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a national and international movement to create safe, convenient and fun opportunities for children to bicycle and walk to and from schools, and it can also play a critical role in providing more physical activity and enhancing traffic safety.

The City of Minneapolis, Minnesota was chosen through a competitive application process as the location for the 3rd Safe Routes to School National Conference in 2011. The conference will take place August 16-18, 2011 and is being hosted by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Transportation. The 2nd Safe Routes to School National Conference, held in Portland, Oregon in August 2009, had more than 500 participants in attendance and is considered to have been a resounding success.

The Safe Routes to School National Conference provides an opportunity for individuals and organizations interested in and involved with SRTS to network, engage in educational opportunities and

form partnerships to enhance their work with SRTS.

The Safe Routes to School national conference planning committee recently announced the official launch of *Way to Go*, an art contest designed to engage Minnesota youths in its mission. The contest is an opportunity for students to reflect on their own walking and/or biking experiences, assert their vision for future walking/biking infrastructure and support, and remind students and adults about the importance of pedestrian and cyclist safety.

The theme for this year’s contest—*Way to Go*—stems from a larger national conference theme of Building Connections: Streets, Schools Communities. Students are encouraged to artistically interpret their personal experiences, reservations, benefits and other thoughts about walking and biking to school via artistic media and submit their entry for the chance to win.

Prizes include a bike rack for the winner’s school or favorite nonprofit organization, as well as numerous individual prizes. Submissions may be used as part of the conference materials and visual presentation, so this is a great opportunity for students to send their message to stakeholders and decision-makers around the nation.

For details and complete rules, please visit the contest website at [www.saferoutesconference.org/way-to-go-art-contest](http://www.saferoutesconference.org/way-to-go-art-contest).

## Shape North Carolina: Healthy Starts for Young Children

<b>Key Elements</b>	A three year state-wide partnership focusing on young children in the state of North Carolina that targets child care facilities, families, and child care professionals.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	Thirty communities will create partnerships and action plans for obesity prevention in young children. The program will reach 100 early childhood professionals, as many as 60,000 children, 3,000 families and 2,500 child care teachers/directors.

With North Carolina facing the fifth highest rate of childhood obesity in the country, the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC) Foundation launched a three-year, \$3 million partnership with The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc. (NCPC), the organization that oversees Smart Start. Through the partnership, the BCBSNC Foundation and NCPC will launch *Shape NC: Healthy Starts for Young Children*, a groundbreaking initiative that will tackle childhood obesity by focusing on young children from birth through age 5.

More than 31 percent of North Carolina’s children ages 2 to 4 are overweight or considered at risk for becoming overweight. *Shape NC* will build upon existing NCPC networks across the state to target children in child care facilities, their families and child care professionals to increase knowledge and awareness of nutrition and the importance of physical activity.

*Shape NC* is built upon the foundation of three proven, existing programs, which the BCBSNC Foundation and NCPC have supported. These programs include:

- ▶ *Nutrition and Physical Activity Self Assessment for Child Care* (NAP-SACC) developed by The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

- ▶ *Preventing Obesity by Design* (POD) developed by North Carolina State University’s Natural Learning Initiative
- ▶ *Be Active Kids*<sup>®</sup>, a signature program of the BCBSNC Foundation focused on early childhood physical activity

### Vision:

Shape NC will change child care communities so that young children’s earliest experiences with food and physical activity promote a lifetime of healthy behaviors.

### Proposed Approach:

Through the established statewide Smart Start network, this project brings together the policy, practice and nutrition strength of the NAP-SACC initiative, and combines it with the built environment changes from POD, and the programming and training skills of Be Active Kids. This creates a new network of trained local experts to provide ongoing technical assistance for child care centers. Additionally, Shape NC will convene a leadership task force to address the broad health issues facing young children and produce a plan of recommended strategies and policy priorities for the state. Shape NC is the first statewide initiative to combine multiple successful strategies and implement both a top-down and bottom-up approach to

improve the health of children in child care, their families and their communities.

### Shape NC Anticipated Results:

- ▶ A statewide policy blueprint for improving the health of North Carolina’s children.
- ▶ 30 communities will create partnerships and action plans for obesity prevention in young children.
- ▶ 100 early childhood professionals will broaden impact on healthy weight for young children by incorporating *Shape NC* strategies into their work with children, families and teachers, and as many as 60,000 children, 3,000 families and 2,500 child care teachers/directors will be reached.
- ▶ 1,500 early childhood and other related professionals will implement new knowledge about outdoor learning environments and physical activities for children in child care.
- ▶ 750 children attending model *Shape NC* early learning programs will maintain a healthy weight.
- ▶ 35 early childhood staff in five pilot centers will model healthy behaviors as a result of participating in a health and wellness program focusing on weight management/maintenance, healthy eating, fitness and smoking cessation.

Healthy Living Initiative	
<b>Key Elements</b>	A multi-dimensional effort to educate the community on practical, culturally appropriate ways to live healthy lives. The program involves television and radio campaigns, health fairs, and school events.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	<i>Smart Choices, Healthy Lives</i> has provided information and advice to an area with a population of 470,000 people, including 15,000 CareOregon members. A recent study of this population indicated that 38 percent of the market is aware of the <i>Smart Choices, Healthy Lives</i> campaign.

CareOregon’s *Healthy Living* initiative is a multi-dimensional effort to educate the health plan’s communities on practical, culturally appropriate ways to live healthy lives and avoid excess weight.

Oregon’s obesity problem exceeds that of the nation as a whole. Obesity risk is highest among populations served by CareOregon: the young, those from low-income families and individuals in southern Oregon. State and local governments and other groups are addressing this problem through a variety of institutional efforts, including new standards for food and drinks in school vending machines and cafeterias, requirements for nutritional information on restaurant menus and policies to promote walking and bicycling to school.

CareOregon’s *Healthy Living* initiative focuses on individuals and families through media and community outreach:

- ▶ CareOregon, Oregon Health & Science University and SAIF Corporation are among the sponsors of the *Smart Choices, Healthy Lives* initiative in southern Oregon. With the help of these partners, KOBI-TV produces weekly news stories and public service announcements designed to help families improve their eating habits and exercise patterns. The program informs, educates, encourages and supports making positive behavioral changes in an individual’s lifestyle through a message focused on making smart choices as they relate to nutrition and physical activity, leading to healthy lives. Now in the second year of the three-year campaign, the *Smart Choices, Healthy Lives* spots include interviews with CareOregon staff and CareOregon providers, as well as other sponsor

groups, such as Oregon Health & Science University. More than 22,000 spots have aired in a 55,000-square-mile area of southern Oregon.

In addition to the TV spots, the initiative included school visits and attendance at community events where information was shared about increasing activity to enhance health. The CareOregon Education Coordinator and the TV anchorperson for KOBI have visited six schools to teach “instant recess,” distribute pedometers and offer a school-vs-school competition designed to increase activity.

- ▶ Community outreach includes attendance at a number of health fairs to focus on getting kids and parents to be more active. In 2009-10, these health fairs included:
  - Pear Blossom Festival—focus on southern Oregon general community
  - Familia, Salud y Vida—focus on Latino community
  - Compassion Rockwood—focus on Latino and non-Latino community
  - Virginia Garcia Health Fair—focus on Latino and non-Latino community
  - OHSU/Community Healthy Kids Day—focus on African American and Latino children
- ▶ The health plan has made a special effort to reach the Spanish-speaking community. This population is affected by obesity and diabetes more than the population as a whole. To reach the Spanish-speaking community, the program has employed radio communication, which is more effective among Spanish-speakers than either print or English-language television. The health plan also partnered with

Bustos Media, an independently owned, Spanish-language group that includes four radio stations in the Portland area reaching nearly half of local Latino adults.

Beginning in 2009, the health plan began doing health tips for better nutrition and increased activity on these stations that are vetted by a health educator, behavioral health specialists and physician staff, and translated and checked for cultural appropriateness and correct Spanish grammar by the health plan’s bilingual staff. Bustos Media DJs then invited listeners to call in with their own thoughts, suggestions and challenges to achieving their goals of healthy change.

- ▶ CareOregon also has reached out to the community with stories on nutrition distributed through Oregon News Service’s English and Spanish language radio wire services.

Conducting this kind of initiative requires partners who will commit time and effort. All partners must be willing to do the hard work of gathering and providing information that is customized to the community, rather than just using off-the-shelf generic messages.

If the effort targets a specific population, it is especially important to find people who have expertise in the culture and language as well as in health to review and advise on medical and cultural competence.

The *Healthy Lives* initiative is ongoing. Although the *Smart Choices, Healthy Lives* program with KOBI-TV ends next year, the program will continue beyond 2011 with outreach to the community through radio messaging and participation in community events.

<b>Adventures in Good Food Choices and Exercise Initiatives</b>	
<b>Key Elements</b>	Centene partnered with a renowned children’s author to create two books addressing pediatric childhood obesity prevention. Children are taught about healthy eating and exercise—and engaged through school events, Girl Scouts, health plan case managers, and in the community.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	The program has impacted over 14,000 children in 7 states in 2010, with plans to expand to 22,000 children in 10 states in 2011. Test outcomes from reading events show significant learning by the children about healthy food, drinks, and the importance of physical activity.

**Adventures in Good Food Choices and Exercise Initiatives**

Centene Corporation has partnered with a nationally known children’s author to create two books that address pediatric obesity prevention. The books target both boys and girls, ages from 5-9. The first book provides practical information on nutrition and an active lifestyle. The second book provides recipes submitted by children, for healthy, easy and nutritious snacks and meals. The books, *Adventures through Fitropolis with Thumbs up Johnnie*, and *Super Centeam5 Cookbook*, aim to increase the Fund of Knowledge of the children participating in this program in the areas of nutrition, exercise, and maintaining a healthy weight.

The *Adventures through Fitropolis* book features “Thumbs up Johnnie,” a children’s character, as an ambassador, created by author Michelle Bain, to educate and inform children about healthy eating and exercise.

The *Super Centeam5 Cookbook* is the end result of a recipe contest requesting children in multiple states to enter their favorite healthy after-school snack or easy to prepare nutritious meal.

**Engagement through Partnerships**

Centene’s leadership in developing partnerships was critical to its engagement strategy to reach children with this healthy message. The partnerships have allowed the health plan to present this material in a variety of ways, detailed below. Centene offers an audio version to health plan members and others in the community via its website.

**School Events**

In order to have the greatest impact, Centene’s Medicaid health plans have identified elementary schools in areas

of concentrated membership to host an interactive school-wide assembly. The children’s book author, Michelle Bain, reads the book to the children and takes questions regarding healthy habits. To insure that the assembly’s content is memorable, the audience is taught a “Fitropolis Pledge”, which reiterates the book’s high points, but adds a touch of humor. Additionally, the children learn about careers in writing and illustration.

**Girl Scout Badge**

Centene approached the Eastern Missouri Council of Girl Scouts in November 2010 to discuss the development of a Brownie “try-it” badge based on *Adventures through Fitropolis*. Centene proposed the criteria to earn the badge for approval by the Girl Scout Council and then assembled for each troop, a “Badge in a Box”, which contained all the materials needed to complete the badge. This badge is now being offered in one additional state.

**Health Plan Case Managers**

*Adventures through Fitropolis* and *The Super Centeam5 Cookbook* are available and sent out to health plan members ages 5-9 identified through predictive modeling software as obese. These books and parent’s guide serve as important educational materials and support for case managers.

**Community Organizations**

A final method of distribution is through the Centene Charitable Foundation and community organizations. Centene worked with the St. Louis Children’s Museum and The Magic House to create Fitness Fridays, which feature the books, and distributed Spanish versions of the books to Casa de Salud, a health center in Missouri, dedicated to meeting the needs of Hispanic immigrants.

**Test Results Indicate Learning Occurring**

By commissioning a children’s author to create a unique book aimed at the Medicaid population, Centene has been able to address several issues that resonate with health plan members. Themes of the *Fitropolis* book include aiding children in making smart choices when selecting breakfast, lunch and snack foods at school independently, incorporating inexpensive fast food into one’s diet with moderation, focusing on the importance of daily water intake and getting daily exercise versus playing video games or watching TV. Furthermore, the cookbook for kids, written by kids, increases the appeal of peer to peer information.

Outcomes from reading events show improvement between the pre-test and post-test. The average improvement in class performance shows that learning is occurring as a result of the book and school reading.

In order to collect this data from the pre- and post-testing at school events, Centene has designed a dedicated website for teachers to upload their classes’ test scores. The Girl Scout Council collects and reports the pre- and post-testing from participating troops.

The average class improvements in correct answers are as follows for the 1698 children completing an exam in conjunction with a school event:

- ▶ Healthy Meals – 22% improvement
- ▶ Health Snacks – 5% improvement
- ▶ Healthy Drinks – 11% improvement
- ▶ Fast Food – 17% improvement
- ▶ Exercise – 6% improvement

These improvements in Fund of Knowledge were statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. Similar improvements were found for Brownie Troop children completing an exam in conjunction with the Girl Scout Badge.

Healthy Kids Challenge Partnership & Mobile Learning Lab	
<b>Key Elements</b>	The latest initiative from CIGNA’s partnership with the Healthy Kids Challenge is an interactive toolkit that offers easy online coaching and tips, and programs, materials, and activities that can be customized for business, individuals, and families. CIGNA’s Mobile Learning Lab is an 18-wheeler interactive health exhibit that travels the country, challenging individuals and their communities to look at health in new ways.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	CIGNA and Healthy Kids Challenge works with elementary schools around the country to identify and implement strategies to help kids develop healthy eating and physical activity habits. In over 10 years the program has been successfully implemented in more than 800 school programs. The CIGNA Mobile Learning Lab has reached more than 9,000 people in communities across the country.

CIGNA and Healthy Kids Challenge, working together since 2004 to fight obesity, recently launched their latest initiative – an online CIGNA Mix Six for Healthy Balance Toolkit offering real-life ways for individuals, families and employers to incorporate better health into their daily routines.

Despite all of the dialogue about obesity, some 86 percent of Americans are expected to be overweight or obese by 2030. Businesses, individuals and families pay the price not only in higher health care costs but in human terms as well: loss of productivity, a shorter life expectancy due to conditions caused by obesity and poor health in general. The CIGNA and Healthy Kids Challenge collaboration is designed to help reverse the obesity trend through online coaching and interactive programs.

Drawing on CIGNA’s experience with wellness in the workplace and Healthy Kids Challenge’s expertise on children’s health, the new collaborative toolkit offers simple, actionable solutions at a variety of levels. The goal is to enable everyone to eat healthier and exercise more both at home and at work. The educational and interactive materials can be adapted in any chronological order, therefore, Mix Six for Healthy Balance:

▶ **Colorful Plates:** Diets rich in fruits and vegetables not only keep weight in check but can lower the risk for stroke,

cardiovascular disease, diabetes and even some cancers. Colorful Plates helps users add fruits and vegetables to their diets simply by adding color to their plates.

- ▶ **Minutes in Motion:** Regular physical activity lowers risk for stroke, heart attack, diabetes, and bone fractures and can help people stay mentally sharp as they age. Minutes in Motion offers fun activities to help people of all ages get moving.
- ▶ **Power Breakfast:** Parents are right: breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Power Breakfast offers easy tips and meal ideas to begin any day the right way.
- ▶ **Snack Attack:** Snack Attack helps people learn how to make healthy snack choices by planning ahead and understanding which snacks are both nutritionally worthy and tasty.
- ▶ **Smart Servings:** Super-sized meals are not a value when you consider your waistline. Smart Servings helps users recognize eating distractions so that they can better watch what they eat and also shows how to better estimate serving sizes.
- ▶ **Drink Think:** Drinks are often an overlooked culprit when it comes to weight control. Drink Think challenges users to assess calories in a particular drink to help them downsize or choose an alternate beverage.

### CIGNA Mobile Learning Lab

The CIGNA Mobile Learning Lab, CIGNA’s 18-wheeler interactive health exhibit, is back on the road challenging individuals and their communities to look at health in new ways. CIGNA’s Mobile Learning Lab offers real-life answers to basic health questions and allows visitors to experience what carrying an extra 20 pounds really feels like or understand how having colorful foods on their plates mean more vitamins and fewer calories.

The CIGNA Mobile Learning Lab helps visitors examine all of the ways their health is affected by their communities, relationships and environments – the social, economic and cultural influences in the places where they live, work and play. It then challenges them to take action to create a sustainable change to improve their own health and the health of their communities.

Last year, some 9,000 CIGNA customers, employees and people in communities across the country toured the Mobile Learning Lab and have taken the first step to understanding their health and that of their communities—through education and awareness. The CIGNA Mobile Learning Lab travels year-round throughout the country.

<b>Series of Community Based Initiatives for Families</b>	
<b>Key Elements</b>	These programs reach families in California in a variety of ways including a free series of classes focusing on healthy lifestyles available to anyone in the community; fitness education in schools; a documentary that follows five at-risk families as they participate in programs available to them in the community to improve their health; community health promotores; and free health fairs.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	More than 40 classroom series and 16 workshops as part of the Fit Families for Life Community Class Series were conducted throughout California, reaching over 850 families in underserved communities. The Club Fitness program reached over 500 families.

**Fit Families for Life – Community Class Series:** The multifaceted Health Net Fit Families for Life – *Be in Charge!*<sup>SM</sup> weight control program offers various tools to help families improve their health through a comprehensive program available to both Health Net enrollees and anyone in the community. It is a five-week, home-based family intervention program that promotes healthier lifestyles. Through goal-setting strategies, participants receive guidance for making better food choices and increasing physical activity. A program workbook covers topics such as how to read a nutrition facts label, tips for adding fruits and vegetables to everyday meals, family involvement in the kitchen, tips for eating out, and aerobic exercise options. A healthy recipes cookbook and DVD accompany the workbook – each offering visual references to healthier meals and nutrition concepts. The DVD also provides three 10-minute, easy-to-follow exercise segments.

The program workbook, cookbook and DVD are available in English and Spanish. Families in the community can take advantage of a free three-week community classroom-based program, in which trained classroom facilitators educate members about how to incorporate healthy eating and active living strategies into their family lifestyles.

**Club Fitness:** The Club Fitness Program completed its third year, providing fitness and nutrition education to elementary and middle school students within the

Sacramento City Unified School District, Twin Rivers Unified School District, Sacramento County Community Centers, various faith-based organizations and the Sacramento Boys and Girls Club. Club Fitness goals are to engage children in hands-on nutrition and sports activities, and assist parents on how to model healthy behaviors within the household. Seven weeks in duration, exciting activities included three visits by players from the Sacramento Kings basketball organization, Zumba, kickboxing, and various food demos. More than 500 students and their families have taken part in the offering.

**Happy Planet Documentary (in process):** Health Net is pleased to partner with the Los Angeles Police Department – Police Activities League (PALS) in the upcoming Happy Planet documentary. The educational and inspirational documentary film will follow five families with overweight or obese children and highlight Health Net’s *Fit Families for Life* and other obesity prevention programs and services that are available in the community. Children from PALS will explore the many causes of overweight and obesity, including the food environment, vending machines and the influence of policy. In addition, three families currently struggling with obesity will be interviewed and followed throughout the documentary, as PALS kids work to find them available resources within the communities. A free 12-week nutrition and physical activity series will be made available to families within

the Hollenbeck area, located within Los Angeles City Council District 14 where more than 26% of children have a Body Mass Index above the 95th percentile.

**Promotores Health Network:** Through the collaboration of two community-based organization partners, the Promotores Health Network program was developed in Fresno County California to support and train community promotores on understanding state health programs, how to access preventive health care and how to take part in Health Net’s health education programs and services. The network promotores are community members interested in helping their communities access resources and provide cultural mediation for families. Of particular interest is the desire to connect families with programs and services specific to diabetes, weight control and chronic disease management, as these are very common conditions within their communities.

**Mexican Consulate Bi-national Health Activities:** Every year, Health Net offers body fat testing, diabetes screenings, nutrition education, and outdoor physical activities during Binational Health Week in October. Throughout California, a partnership with the Mexican Consulate and various community organizations also allows for the distribution of important resources to hundreds of community residents each day through the Ventanilla de Salud (Health Station) program at the Mexican Consulate.

<b>Highmark Healthy High 5 School Challenge</b>	
<b>Key Elements</b>	A long-term initiative that focuses on nutrition and physical activity targeting elementary school children.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	Physical fitness measures improved in participating students.

A 2009 study by the Trust for America’s Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation reports that 29.7 percent of children ages 10-17 are overweight or obese in Pennsylvania. To address the issue of childhood obesity, among other children’s health topics, the Highmark Foundation launched *Highmark Healthy High 5* as a component of its focus on family health in 2006 to provide children and adolescents ages 6-18 with the tools and resources needed to make informed decisions about living healthier lives.

*Highmark Healthy High 5* is a children’s health promotion initiative designed to focus on five critical issues:

- ▶ nutrition
- ▶ physical activity
- ▶ self-esteem
- ▶ bullying prevention
- ▶ grieving

This initiative works with educators, parents and non-profit leaders to reach children at school, at home and within their communities.

*Highmark Healthy High 5* recognized that schools provide an ideal environment to implement nutrition and physical activity programs because of their structured environment and the amount of time children spend there. So, the *Highmark Healthy High 5* School Challenge grant program was introduced to help schools develop programs that teach young people life-long behaviors concerning healthy eating and living an active lifestyle.

Through the challenge, *Highmark Healthy High 5* invites schools to submit innovative grant proposals for programs that improve nutrition education, enhance nutrition choices and provide opportunities for physical activity. All elementary, middle and high school buildings within the Highmark Foundation’s 49-county service area in Pennsylvania are eligible to apply. Schools that receive grants are permitted to apply for another grant in the next year. Since 2007, more than \$5.5 million has been awarded to 750 schools in 49 Pennsylvania counties to implement nutrition and physical activity programming.

Gateway Middle School is just one example of a school that has utilized funds from the *Highmark Healthy High 5* School Challenge to create a change in the health of its students. The music and physical education teachers partnered to purchase iPods that would be used to not only help students gain a greater appreciation for music, but also make physical education classes more enjoyable.

During music class, students are assigned a specific iPod to download their approved personal music selections. Then, after learning about caloric values of foods in their cafeteria and how long it takes to burn them off in health class, students are able to use their iPods as motivation during their strength and cardiovascular trainings in their physical education classes.

Assessments of the program have demonstrated that the students’ strength has improved by 10 to 35 percent and that the time the students spend exercising within their target heart rates has increased by 10 to 18 percent since incorporating the iPods into their workouts.

Many schools have utilized *Highmark Healthy High 5* funds to provide alternatives to traditional physical education for their students, such as incorporating rowing machines into cardiovascular workouts, offering Dance Dance Revolution or the Wii system as an activity in physical education classes and even purchasing mountain bikes or snowshoes for inclusion in fitness curricula.

Moving forward, the *Highmark Healthy High 5* School Challenge grant program plans to work with schools that have had success through their physical activity or nutrition programming to help other schools learn how they can incorporate strategies that will help students to become more active.

## Healthy U Initiative

<b>Key Elements</b>	This after-school program institutes behavior changes using a multi-pronged approach that includes nutrition, physical activity, and a focus on family.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	The Healthy U program reaches more than 20,000 children in 410 YMCA sites. To date, the results show improvement in key health measurements including increased physical activity and healthier eating.

The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey *Healthy U* Initiative is designed to combat childhood obesity by instituting behavioral changes in children using a multi-pronged approach that includes nutrition education, increased physical activity and a focus on family.

The *Healthy U* program is New Jersey's largest and most comprehensive, statewide initiative to address childhood obesity in the after-school setting. The *Healthy U* program uses CATCH (Coordinated Approach To Child Health) program curricula, created in 1993 by the University of Texas Science Center Houston School of Public Health.

The program is the result of a collaborative partnership between The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey and the New Jersey YMCA State Alliance, which is comprised of all 41 YMCA member Associations throughout New Jersey. The Healthy U program reaches more than 20,000 children in 410 YMCA sites.

The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey awarded an initial \$1 million grant for the program over a four-year time frame: January 2008 through December 2011. The Foundation awarded a \$143,000 additional grant to expand the program

over two-and-a-half years: February 2010 through July 2012. An additional 1,800 children in Camden, New Brunswick, Newark, Trenton and Vineland will participate.

Healthy U is the nation's largest, evidence-based after-school program designed to prevent and reduce childhood obesity. The intent of Healthy U is to combat childhood obesity in children ages five through 12 by improving physical activity levels and fostering healthy eating through structured after-school experiences.

The YMCA is collecting baseline data and survey information annually to measure the impact of this project. The University of Texas Science Center Houston School of Public Health is conducting the evaluation.

Effectiveness is being measured by:

- ▶ An evaluation of instructor training procedures
- ▶ An evaluation of implementation via online instructor surveys
- ▶ An impact evaluation via direct observation of physical activity
- ▶ An outcome evaluation using Body Mass Index for selected sites

- ▶ Evaluation of student engagement in physical activity and healthy diet
- ▶ Nutrition and physical activity knowledge
- ▶ Attitudes and self-efficacy using CATCH questionnaires

To date, in year two, the results show improvement in key health measurements including increased physical activity and healthier eating. On multiple indicators, the 2010 outcomes data for both nutrition and physical activity self-reported behaviors, and for observed levels of physical activity and lesson contexts, show strong positive gains compared to baseline, 6 and 12 month follow-up measures. Only in one incidence are changes moving in a direction counter to that desired (Ex: 30 minutes of physical activity a day). Overall, these outcomes suggest the program is on track, and having the desired impact.

Healthy U was created to successfully prevent and reduce childhood obesity in New Jersey with a tested curriculum that could be reproduced across the state. The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey and the YMCAs are committed to improving the quality of life and health of New Jersey's children and their families.

## HealthE Schools & Horsepower Challenge

<b>Key Elements</b>	The <i>HealthE Schools</i> is a school-based program that helps schools track student health and encourages students to make healthy choices. <i>The Horsepower Challenge</i> is an online game that motivates physical activity in school-aged children and also includes physical activity challenges.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	For the <i>HealthE Schools</i> initiative, approximately 180 students and 80 teachers are taking part. This program is being piloted and is currently being evaluated. More than 4,000 players have participated and increases in physical activity have been demonstrated.

Humana’s *HealthE Schools* (Healthy Environments & Active Lifestyles Through Education) is a Humana Foundation program that helps schools monitor student health and encourage students to make healthy choices. The program is being piloted this school year (2010-2011) to a total of six 4th grade classes at three Health & Fitness Magnet Schools in the Jefferson County Public School system in Louisville, Ky., and Jefferson Parish School District in New Orleans, La. Components of the program include:

- ▶ A web site, [www.healtheschools.org](http://www.healtheschools.org), which serves as a measurement and motivational tool that includes:
  - The *HealthE Diary Page*—where students, teachers and parents/guardians record nutrition choices and physical activities
  - *HealthE Report Card*—shows students’ choices over time, offers health tips, offers students the chance to participate in a pedometer step challenge
- ▶ *Humana HealthE Schools Pledge*—The pledge represents the school’s commitment to create a healthy environment, through actions like:
  - Providing 150-200 minutes of physical activity per week during school
  - Providing recess for all elementary students

- Meeting USDA dietary standards for school-provided meals
- Providing nutrition and physical activity education, with at least 50 percent of PE class devoted to rigorous physical activity
- Employing certified PE teachers
- Prohibiting smoking, vending machines and food company marketing on school property

- ▶ Humana *HealthE Schools* grants—From the Humana Foundation for school health programs
- ▶ Humana *HealthE Schools* Mentor Program—This program is in development, and involves volunteers from Humana visiting schools to mentor children about health

Humana *HealthE Schools* encourages every participant to do the following each day:

- Eat breakfast
- Consume five servings of non-starchy fruits & vegetables
- Avoid sugary sodas, drinks and food
- Be moderately to vigorously active for an hour
- Spend less than two hours sedentary in front of a screen
- Take 10,000 steps per day

### *Horsepower Challenge*

*The Horsepower Challenge* is an online game that motivates physical activity in school-aged children. Named in the spirit of the Kentucky Derby, it is pedometer based and is designed to make exercise fun and engaging for kids through the use of technology and games.

Students compete in teams representing classes or schools. They create cartoon horse avatars that ride together on a virtual school bus, racing other buses from other schools/classes. The more steps the students take, the faster the virtual bus travels. Each student wears a “smart” pedometer that automatically uploads information to a computer as they pass a central location in the school; the information collected determines the bus speed by the number of real steps the students take in the real world.

### Results to Date:

- ▶ Six challenges (competitions) to date in two countries, 15 states and the District of Columbia
- ▶ More than 4,000 players
- ▶ 485 million steps
  - Equates to 229,640 miles—more than nine times Earth’s circumference
- ▶ Reduced CO<sub>2</sub> footprint by 42.17 tons
- ▶ 35% average increase in physical activity as a result of Horsepower Challenge

## The Incredible Adventures of the Amazing Food Detective

<b>Key Elements</b>	A free online game developed by experts helps children learn to eat healthier foods, be more active, and manage how much time they spend in front of the television and computer.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	The game has been distributed to more than 5,000 schools along with educational materials schools can use to teach children about healthy behaviors related to eating and physical activity.

*The Incredible Adventures of the Amazing Food Detective* is a free, online game developed by Kaiser Permanente pediatric weight management experts to help address childhood obesity by teaching kids to eat healthier foods, be more active, and manage how much time they spend in front of the computer and television. While playing the game, children join the Amazing Food Detective to investigate how and why the kids in the game are living unhealthy lives. Players become Junior Food Detectives and discover that the unhealthy kids’ health problems are linked to bad choices that they can control.

One child who appears in the game is eating healthy foods, but her portions are too large. Players zap her meals so that each plate contains smaller portions. Another child needs help eating more protein so she has more energy to play. Other children in the game skip breakfast, spend too much time in front of the computer or playing video games, eat too much junk food, do not get enough calcium, or need more physical activity. When players solve one of the game’s eight mysteries, they have access to three of the game’s 24 arcade mini-games, which also revolve around eating or activity. After the game has been played for 20 minutes, the Amazing Food

Detective interrupts the game to explain it is time for an activity break, and the players are instructed to get active for 60 minutes as the game automatically shuts off.

The game began as a production from Kaiser Permanente’s Educational Theater Program, which uses live theater, music, comedy, and drama to inspire and teach children, adolescents, and adults to make healthier choices. The development team identified other games that teach children about healthy eating and exercise, but *the Incredible Adventures of the Amazing Food Detective* is unique because of its availability for free on the web in both English and Spanish, and its automatic shutdown feature, which supports the American Academy of Pediatrics’ recommendation that children have no more than one to two hours of screen time per day.

The game is targeted for 9-10 year olds, and players also have access to printable materials, such as scavenger hunts that teach them how to read food labels, kid-friendly nutritious recipes, experiments that demonstrate the amount of sugar in soda, and physical activity cards.

In addition to being free and available online at [www.AmazingFoodDetective.com](http://www.AmazingFoodDetective.com), the game has been distributed to 5,000 schools with the help of Scholastic,

the global children’s publishing and education company. Participating schools also receive supplementary educational materials for teachers and take-home materials for parents and students.

*The Incredible Adventures of the Amazing Food Detective* builds on the approach Kaiser Permanente has taken with its Community Health Initiative to increase Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) in local communities. HEAL focuses on innovative ways to help give children and families the chance to make healthy choices in every part of their daily lives, including at home, school, work, and in their neighborhoods and communities.

**Keystone Mercy’s Safe Playground and Related Programs**

<b>Key Elements</b>	The health plan builds safe playgrounds in underserved areas to provide children with a place to play on sturdy, updated equipment.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	To date nine playgrounds have been built by Keystone Mercy’s Safe Playground program.

Keystone Mercy Health Plan, part of the Amerihealth Mercy family of companies, and the largest Medical Assistance managed care organization in Pennsylvania, recently built a new playground for 80-year-old Saint Rose of Lima Catholic School in West Philadelphia, as part of the company’s Safe Playground program. More than 50 Keystone Mercy employees participated in the day-long construction of the 7,500 square-foot-playground and volleyball court, for the more than 240 kindergarten through eighth-grade students that attend the school.

Keystone Mercy Health Plan’s Safe Playground program was created in 2007 to help reduce childhood obesity for Philadelphia-area children and curb the number of preventable injuries suffered as a result of dangerous or outdated equipment. According to Community Health Data Base, Philadelphia County

has the highest percentage of children in fair-to-poor health in the five-county region. Philadelphia also has the largest percentage (44.7 percent) of children that are at-risk for being overweight, or who are overweight, with the regional average being 36.7 percent. The same study reports that Caucasian children are more than twice as likely as children of color to participate in sports. Nearly one half (46.6 percent) of all children in Philadelphia do not participate in sports, ranking Philadelphia County last in the five county region.

This is the ninth playground built by Keystone Mercy’s Safe Playground program, and the fifth built in Philadelphia. Other construction has been in Chester, Pa. and Norristown, Pa. The playgrounds have improved the quality of play areas for each of the schools’ children, who previously played in vacant lots, dirt fields, or on outdated, unsafe equipment.

Recognizing that childhood obesity is becoming more prevalent in the community and that the lack of physical activity is a contributing factor, the health plan believes the Safe Playground program supports its mission of building a healthier community by contributing to a child’s development of healthy behavior patterns through play.

In a 2005 survey of nationally recognized pediatricians, conducted by Harris Interactive, 96 percent of the respondents said they believed that activity on playgrounds benefits the mental and social development of children; 89 percent said that play keeps children from becoming overweight and 82 percent agreed that play develops a child’s problem-solving skills, which may lead to increases in academic performance.

Loppet Skis Program	
<b>Key Elements</b>	Introduces low-income inner-city youth who have recently immigrated from warmer climates to skiing and winter sports.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	The health plan has partnered with a foundation to conduct an evaluation of the program, and measure children’s knowledge on nutrition and physiology.

The *Loppet Skis Program* is a unique health education program that introduces cross-country skiing and healthy eating to inner-city youth at two elementary Minneapolis Public Schools. The cross-country (or Nordic) ski program is coordinated by The City of Lakes Nordic Ski Foundation in partnership with UCare, the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, Minneapolis Public Schools, and other community sponsors. The program runs from November through February each year.

Since 2007, UCare has developed a special nutritional curriculum to accompany the ski instruction, and also provided annual grant funding, a healthy banquet, and a UCare scarf and water bottle to approximately 150 participants in two school programs in Minneapolis—The Bryn Mawr Skis Program and The Pillsbury Skis Program.

The families of many of the students at these schools recently immigrated to the area from countries such as Somalia, Thailand and Cambodia (Hmong), and Mexico. The student body in these inner-city schools is also primarily low-income. The students may be experiencing their first true snowy winter, and they have probably never had access to winter sports. In addition, many of the immigrant families are adapting their diets to western (American) menus. Cross-country skiing is a great way to encourage physical activity during the long and snowy winter months in Minnesota, and the nutrition curriculum is a great way to teach the students—and their families—about healthy, yet affordable, eating year-round.

The *Loppet Skis Program* affords UCare a valued opportunity to engage young students in the community in a discussion about nutrition and healthy eating, and tie it to the fun experience of skiing. The

students are also encouraged to share the healthy ski recipes with their parents and families by bringing home the cards and making the recipes together.

Health promotion and communications staff at UCare collaborated to create and disseminate five skiers’ recipe cards: Skiers’ Breakfast (breakfast trail mix); Skiers’ Snack (fruit salad), Skier’s Salad Supper (super salad); Skiers’ Treat (yogurt and fruit parfaits); and Skiers’ Stir Fry (vegetables and beef stir fry). The recipes are nutritious, simple to prepare, and each recipe card explains how its ingredients improve physical well-being for the young skiers.

In 2009, UCare worked with a registered dietician to develop a more formal Skiers’ nutrition curriculum for replication in other schools. A pre- and post-test has been incorporated into the program to assess how much the youngsters have learned about nutrition and physiology.

The program instructs how nutritional foods enhance athletic performance. Students learn how healthy foods can make them better skiers. For example, the Skiers’ Snack fruit salad recipe gives the message that flavorful fruits fuel muscles. The Skiers’ Breakfast trail mix recipe explains that whole-grain cereal powers the brain.

Recognizing that changes in eating habits are difficult without the involvement of parents, the programs have built-in opportunities for parental involvement. Students are urged to share the recipes with their parents, and parents are invited to partake in the program-closing healthy banquet.

UCare’s support of the *Loppet Skis Program* demonstrates decisive leadership in helping to combat childhood obesity in the community, especially

among newly arrived immigrant families. By rounding out this physical activity program with a nutrition component, UCare is planting early seeds of healthy behaviors in the program participants. While other community organizations offer financial support to the Loppet Skis Program, UCare is the only organization to contribute an educational curriculum and printed resources that directly impact the health of the participants.

The program has great promise for expansion to other city schools, as well as for an expanded curriculum that could be replicated across the state. UCare is committed to the future success and growth of the *Loppet Skis Programs* in metropolitan area schools.

To date, the nutritional education program has been well received by the school staff, students, and student families. Staff reported that the kids respond positively to the healthy recipes because, with this program, instead of telling students to eat whole grains or fruit and vegetables (a general proposition without a specific example) in order to improve their health (an intangible benefit), students were provided with specific recipes that would provide a recognizable benefit—they could become better skiers.

In an effort to generate more measurable results, UCare is working with the Loppet Foundation to analyze pre- and post-tests to assess how much the students have learned about nutrition and physiology.

The *Loppet Skis Program* is a unique way of engaging inner-city public school students in outdoor physical activity during the cold, snowy winter months in Minneapolis. Pairing healthy eating with this physical education experience is UCare’s way of helping the program’s benefits go beyond the skiing season.

Childhood Obesity Initiative	
<b>Key Elements</b>	The Childhood Obesity Initiative is a school-based program that offers students and families resources and support to enhance their healthy living efforts. JOIN is an evidence-based weight management program for kids and teens.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	The Childhood Obesity Initiative will reach six school districts in three states. Evaluation on outcomes and process measures is ongoing. Efficacy is being studied in 150 families involved in the JOIN program.

UnitedHealthcare and the United Health Foundation have partnered with six school districts in three states where childhood obesity is prevalent across the population—Florida, Georgia and Texas—to make schools a healthier place to learn and work and to offer students and families additional resources and support to enhance their healthy living efforts. The Childhood Obesity Initiative has four parts:

- ▶ The United Health Foundation will provide a grant to the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) to provide school nurses with School Nurse Childhood Obesity Prevention Education (SCOPE) training. This will equip them with the knowledge, tools and resources they need to effectively reverse the trend of childhood obesity in their schools. School nurses will refer at-risk children and their families to a medical home and a coordinated set of healthy lifestyle and weight management resources.
- ▶ Grant funding will be made available to turn innovative ideas into action.
- ▶ UnitedHealthcare will provide a dedicated community care coordinator at each school district at no cost to the schools. This dedicated coordinator will work closely with school district leaders to promote a culture of health in schools.

▶ UnitedHealthcare will study the effectiveness of these strategies and use that information to enhance future programs. The health plan will evaluate outcomes and process measures through its partnership with the American School Health Association to ensure we are continuously improving the initiative.

The initiative draws upon UnitedHealthcare’s extensive experience coordinating and managing health care for high-risk individuals, as well as the health plan’s expertise in stimulating community-based prevention activities. The health plan will bring this experience and additional resources to this project. There will be no cost to the school, the families, or the taxpayers. The goal of the program is simply to help students live healthier lives.

The hope is that this initiative will result in healthier student populations and learning environments, as well as healthier communities.

**UnitedHealth Group’s JOIN Initiative**

UnitedHealth Group created an evidence-based weight management program for kids and teens. Along with Gary Foster, PhD, Temple University, the YMCA of the USA and the YMCA of Greater Providence, UnitedHealth Group is studying its efficacy among 150 families. The program is aimed at helping kids

and teens achieve healthier weights. The study, called JOIN, focuses on children between the ages of 6 and 17 who are above the 85th percentile for body mass index (BMI). Led by trained facilitators, children and parents practice skills to reduce excess weight.

The JOIN study may fill a void for families struggling with the causes and consequences of excess weight. Today, there are few comprehensive treatment programs outside of hospital-based settings. The JOIN study will evaluate the effectiveness of a comprehensive community-based program founded on evidence-based guidelines.

Eligible children and a parent are participating in the six-month study by attending group sessions at one of eight YMCA locations in Rhode Island. In addition to group sessions, each family is also supported with materials for self-study home sessions. The study is being offered at no cost, and participants do not need to be a YMCA member or UnitedHealthcare insurance plan customer to enroll.

HEALTHY Armstrong	
<b>Key Elements</b>	A coalition formed to provide an array of programs for children and parents to learn about and adopt healthy eating, physical activity, and healthy lifestyles.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	The program has reached more than 6,000 school-age children. As a result of the program, the school district has made healthy changes in the cafeterias and reported fewer sales of unhealthy foods.

UPMC Health Plan joined a coalition from Pennsylvania’s Armstrong County, including the Armstrong School District, the Armstrong County Memorial Hospital, and Children’s Community Pediatrics, to battle the problem of overweight and obesity in the community by forming *HEALTHY (Healthy Eating and Active Lifestyles Together Helping Youth) Armstrong*. The goal of the coalition is to provide an array of programs for children and their parents to learn about and adopt healthy eating, physical activity, and healthy lifestyles.

In 2004, Pennsylvania began mandating that school districts collect body mass index (BMI) measurements of students and record the BMI on the school health record. School nurses are required to inform parents about their child’s results and recommend that they share the information with their healthcare providers. Findings that more than one-third of students age 5-17 years in the school district were overweight prompted a local pediatrician to approach the hospital to discuss interventions. Then, with the school district they created the coalition.

The coalition launched a pilot program in one of the seven elementary schools in the Armstrong School District.

Since 2005, the HEALTHY Armstrong program has expanded to include all the elementary schools in the Armstrong District, which includes approximately 6,200 students. UPMC Health Plan awarded a grant to support the program,

which incorporates the National Institutes of Health’s (NIH) *We Can!* Program (Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity and Nutrition), a science-based educational program to address the growing childhood obesity epidemic. Community partners such as the Armstrong County coalition implement the program in their cities by offering parents and families tips and fun activities to encourage healthy eating, increase physical activity, and reduce sedentary or screen time.

There are four basic measures used to evaluate the program: BMI data; awareness and knowledge of basic nutrition information; physical activity time during the school day; and impact the program has had on cafeteria sales of unhealthy foods. The BMI data is already collected through the schools. UPMC Health Plan developed a short assessment tool for all children in grades kindergarten through sixth grade to fill out at the beginning of the school year and again at the end of the school year. Physical activity is assessed in “kid minutes,” or the number of minutes the children participate in calisthenics during homeroom time, as well as time spent in physical education classes. The foods sold in the cafeteria are coded as “whoa,” “slow,” or “go” foods, based on nutritional content, and cash receipts will be analyzed to see if there has been a change in food sales. The school district Wellness Committee and school nutritionist have been instrumental in making changes in the school cafeteria,

including reducing the portion sizes and frequency of serving snacks like French fries, and removing soda machines. The school district is now serving less pizza and French fries than before, among many other dietary improvements.

Although school administrators are very enthusiastic about the wellness initiative, it has been somewhat challenging for the coalition to get all of the activities coordinated because each of the elementary schools functions independently. Another challenge has been the initial reception from some of the parents: although everyone is behind the goal of improving the children’s health, certain changes in the cafeteria menu and in how often parents can bring in cupcakes and other sweets for special events, were met with some resistance. However, school leaders have been integral in addressing parent’s concerns and now the changes are seen as positive. Finally, the schools have had to adjust to the fact that soda machines and daily French fry sales generated needed revenue.

Because of the success of the program to date, NIH awarded Armstrong County the nation’s first designation as a ***We Can! County***. The coalition will continue to work together to develop programs focused on healthy eating and active lifestyles for children in Western Pennsylvania.

Youth Becoming Healthy (YBH) Project (WellCare of Georgia, Inc.)	
<b>Key Elements</b>	The Youth Becoming Healthy Project serves children up to 15 years of age, through an annual summer camp, school-based wellness programs, and a school gardening program.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	The WellCare YBH grants will serve 500 children.

The Youth Becoming Healthy (YBH) Project is a non-profit organization in Georgia that serves Dougherty County (primarily the city of Albany). Its mission is to reduce the epidemic of childhood obesity through nutrition, education and physical activity. The group serves children ages 0–15, (African American – 95%; Caucasian – 3%; Latino/Hispanic – 1%; Other – 1%), through the following initiatives:

- ▶ An annual summer wellness camp with funding to cover the most at-risk youth who are referred by their pediatricians for intervention

- ▶ Wellness programs at six middle schools, three elementary schools and two recreation centers in Albany, GA
- ▶ Funding for wellness incentives, staff, promotions, fitness equipment purchases/replacements and contracted instructors
- ▶ An elementary school gardening pilot program to teach students and parents about nutrition

In the Dougherty County Health District, of the 4,996 middle school students, 33% (1,649) were at risk for obesity (19%) or obese (14%). Black/African American

students in this segment are more likely to be at risk for obesity than white/ Caucasian students. Of the individuals living in Dougherty County, 24% live below the poverty level (28% of these individuals are children under the age of 18).

WellCare provided a grant that will serve 500 children through the YBH Project.

New York State Strategic Plan for Overweight and Obesity Prevention (WellCare of New York, Inc.)	
<b>Key Elements</b>	WellCare’s response to the New York Strategic Plan educates and provides resources to health care providers, parents, and families.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	The health plan’s involvement with the New York Strategic Plan for Overweight and Obesity Prevention reaches all network providers and at risk members, as well as a community intervention that reaches additional underserved children, adolescents, and their families.

The state of New York launched its New York Strategic Plan for Overweight and Obesity Prevention to increase the proportion of New Yorkers who are physically active, increase access to healthy food, increase the perception of obesity as a public health risk and use body mass index (BMI) to improve early recognition. The state’s initiative resulted from statistics from the National Initiative for Children’s Health Care Quality (NICHQ), which reported that 30.9 % of children between the ages of 10 and 17 in the state of New York are considered obese or overweight (36.4% of New York

children with public health insurance), and the cost of obesity-related disease exceeds \$6 billion in New York (50% of this cost is financed by the Medicare and Medicaid programs.)

WellCare’s response is a project to disseminate information about the health risks associated with obesity and being overweight as well as to promote routine monitoring of BMI by primary care providers, counseling for maintaining a healthy weight and counseling regarding physical activity. In addition to targeted outreach to parents of WellCare members who are at risk, WellCare has launched

a campaign to educate and counsel network physicians as well as households with adolescent members who have had a diagnosis of obesity in the past two years. WellCare also provides a focused community intervention program in a borough of New York City, which identifies free or low-cost exercise and diet management programs to at risk families.

Childhood Obesity Initiative	
<b>Key Elements</b>	WellPoint’s Childhood Obesity Initiative is a multi-faceted program committed to addressing childhood obesity by partnering with and assisting physicians to screen members for obesity, implementing preventive efforts, instituting appropriate management, and partnering with communities and schools.
<b>Results/Reach</b>	Short-term goals of the initiative are to increase body mass index (BMI) screening, improve nutritional choices, and increase physical activity levels. Long-term goals are to decrease the rate of obesity and achieve long-term reductions in health care costs incurred due to obesity. One activity, the Live Like a Champion Tour, has resulted in 607,463 children attending the tour, 192,814 tween “activations,” and 71,671,964 local media impressions.

The WellPoint Childhood Obesity Initiative reaches out to schools and communities and empowers them to lead healthier lifestyles through distribution of health promotional materials, active participation in community-sponsored health fairs, and collaboration with local coalitions. The Initiative has also implemented the following key public-private partnerships to modify children’s environments to increase opportunities to engage in physical activity and improve access to high quality foods:

**Boys & Girls Clubs:** The Initiative is currently collaborating with the Boys & Girls Club of Camarillo to help kids increase their fitness levels through “exergaming” – playing interactive video games that incorporate exercise in a way that promotes inclusion and appeals to all levels of skill and body types through the popular gaming system Kinect® for Xbox 360® from Microsoft®. In January 2011, WellPoint Foundation committed \$5 million over three years to the National Boys and Girls Club to promote healthier lifestyles through their TriplePlay program.

**School Fruit & Vegetable Bars:** Anthem Blue Cross partnered with UCLA and the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to implement a quasi-experimental study with eight Title 1 elementary schools (4 control, 4 intervention) with predominantly ethnic minority (Latino) children. The multi-component intervention of fruit and vegetable bars with classroom nutrition

curriculum was found to be effective in improving diets among low-income children and in December 2009, the study findings resulted in congressional briefings to support Child Nutrition and Salad Bar legislation (facilitated by DC based United Fresh). In 2010/2011, Anthem Blue Cross partnered with UCLA and LAUSD again to implement the intervention in additional LAUSD schools.

**Live Like a Champion Tour I-V (2006-2010):** In 2010, WellPoint partnered with the California Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports and Marketing Werks for the fifth consecutive Live Like a Champion community outreach mobile tour targeted at children 8-12 years of age. The tour goes to school and after-school settings and leverages on-site activities tied to celebrity athletes to raise awareness about healthy eating and physical activity. From 2006-2010, the tour resulted in 607,463 children attending the tour, 192,814 tween “activations,” and 71,671,964 local media impressions.

**Radio Disney Anthem Active Get Fit:** WellPoint has partnered with Radio Disney to promote physical activity in schools. Students track days in which they get 15 “additional minutes” of physical activity (“additional” as in addition to PE class). Schools compete to get the most students involved and track their additional physical activity. The winning schools get a Radio Disney party.

WellPoint continues to be a major sponsor of local health fairs in diverse

communities. It also supports major conferences including the upcoming 6th Biennial California Childhood Obesity conference in San Diego in July 2011 which is expected to convene approximately 2000 key stakeholders in the field of pediatric obesity.

*Program Measures*

WellPoint continues to make a significant impact on the obesity epidemic and contribute to the sparse evidence-base on the use and effectiveness of obesity-related interventions.

*Influencing Public Health*

Initiative leads at WellPoint, along with the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) and Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), recently released a study, titled “Effective Strategies to Increase Children’s Fruit and Vegetable Consumption: Benefits of Fruit and Vegetable Bars.” The findings of this study supported School Fruit and Vegetable legislation introduced by California Congressman Sam Farr, which amends the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and includes several strategies to improve the health and well-being of children.

WellPoint also participated as one of three health plans in NCQA’s pilot test to assess the feasibility of a performance measure for obesity. The pilot resulted in the new 2009 HEDIS measures for adult and childhood obesity.







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