

July, 2008 - Issue #8

Local News

[Wanted: Inner-City Supermarkets](#) (6/27/08)

The *Christian Science Monitor* reports that public health and economic development initiatives have existed in many low-income Philadelphia areas for some time. But residents' food shopping options were limited to "drugstores, expensive corner shops, and fast food." But that's changing, thanks to some fresh ideas aimed at bringing more supermarkets -- and healthier food -- to low-income neighborhoods.

[New York to Issue Licenses for 500 Veggie-Only Food Carts](#) (6/24/08)

New York City is preparing to issue licenses for 500 food carts that will be allowed to sell only fresh fruit and vegetables. The carts, which are expected to start appearing on the streets later this summer, are restricted to low-income areas that have the fewest sources of fresh produce in the city. The Green Carts project is Mayor Michael Bloomberg's latest public-health crusade, reports the *Chicago Tribune*.

[Fuel Costs May Force Some Kids To Walk](#) (6/23/08)

The *Washington Post* reports that due to rising fuel costs, the Montgomery County, MD, school board will consider giving Superintendent Jerry D. Weast emergency powers to make students walk farther to school, if need be, in the coming academic year.

[Arkansans Making More Healthful Choices In Food, Activity, Data Indicates](#) (6/17/08)

Results from the [fourth annual evaluation of an Arkansas law targeting childhood obesity](#) reveal that parents and schools are stepping up efforts to help children eat healthier food and get more physical activity, the Springdale *Morning News* reports.

[Fontana Program Teaches Healthy Cooking](#) (6/17/08)

Fontana, CA, is schooling its residents in healthy cuisine. The city's Healthy Fontana program stages free cooking classes the first and third Saturdays of the month, according to the *Press Enterprise*. "I saw the level of obesity with our kids; it just alarmed me," said Mayor Pro Tem Acquanetta Warren, who started the program in 2004.

[FDA Sides with NYC on Calories](#) (6/16/08)

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) supports a New York City law that requires restaurants with 15 or more outlets nationwide to post calorie counts on menus and menu boards, the *Associated Press* reports.

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[Community's Battle to Get Healthy is Attracting Attention](#) (6/12/08)

"Larry Bonderud is a mayor in the morning, an optometrist in the afternoon, and an advocate and role model for healthy living around the clock" according to the *Golden Triangle News*. Elected as mayor by the citizens of Shelby, Mont., for the past 18 years, he has developed a specialty in increasing healthy nutrition and physical activity opportunities for local residents.

[N.C. Program Bringing Fresh Produce, Agricultural Education to Students](#) (6/11/08)

A farm-to-school program in western North Carolina is educating area children about the benefits of healthy, locally grown produce and boosting their access to fresh fruit and vegetables, the *Hendersonville Times-News* reports.

[Hamilton County: Health heroes to fight obesity](#) (6/3/08)

Hamilton County, Tenn., Mayor Claude Ramsey unveiled two superhero characters Monday who will become part of the county's anti-obesity program. The two cardboard cut-out characters, named "Eat Smart" and "Just Move It," were designed by DC and Marvel comic artist Bob McLeod, who has worked on comics such as "Spider-Man," "Superman," "Iron Man," "The X-Men," "Batman" and "The Fantastic Four." The new characters are a tool in the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department's effort to encourage children to eat nutritious foods and be more physically active, according to the *Chattanooga Times Free Press*.

National News

[Health Advocates Urge Parents to Keep Kids Busy During Summer Break](#) (6/24/08)

With most U.S. students on summer break, researchers and health advocates are urging parents to ensure that children are maintaining healthy eating habits and regularly participating in physical activity, the *New York Times* reports.

[Childhood Obesity: Experts Talk of Plateau, Mayors Talk of Progress](#) (6/16/08)

Newspapers across the country have reported that the incidence of childhood obesity, which had risen sharply in the last three decades, may be starting to level off. While this is good news on the surface, it should be digested with a hefty dose of perspective, according to *US Mayor*.

[How America's Children Packed On the Pounds](#) (6/12/08)

Time magazine reports on the childhood obesity epidemic. The series of articles provides an interesting look at how environmental factors, such as safety and the built environment, affect children's healthy eating and active living choices.

[Bike Ridership Increasing in U.S. Cities](#) (6/12/08)

Bike ridership in several major U.S. cities is soaring due to efforts by urban planners and others to promote the activity's environmental, economic and health benefits, *Reuters* reports.

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[Push for Calories on Menus Gains Support](#) (6/11/08)

The *Wall Street Journal* reports that the California and New York state legislatures are moving toward requiring restaurants to post calorie counts on their menu items, joining a movement that until now has gained traction mostly in cities and counties.

[Childhood Obesity: Cities Respond to a National Crisis](#) (6/2/08)

Childhood obesity is an issue that is commanding growing attention. It is an epidemic that threatens not just the health of children, but also the viability of communities. *US Mayor* reports that cities are responding.

[Let Them Eat Kale: Schools Get Serious about Nutrition](#) (6/01/08)

With America's kids in danger of becoming obese, a growing number of schools are thinking outside the lunchbox, reports *School Library Journal*.

[Hint of Hope as Child Obesity Rate Hits Plateau](#) (5/28/08)

The *New York Times* reports on survey data gathered from 1999 to 2006 by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that shows that after rising for more than two decades, childhood obesity appears to have hit a plateau. While the latest data suggest the obesity epidemic may have been contained, researchers say the real question is whether it is possible to reverse the obesity trend among American schoolchildren.

Reports and Studies

[Childhood Obesity in Massachusetts: Costs, Consequences and Opportunities for Change](#) [PDF file]

This is an issue brief that was released June 19, 2008 by the Massachusetts Health Policy Forum. The brief also provides a comprehensive overview of childhood obesity nationwide and the factors contributing to the epidemic.

Useful Websites

[Bodyworks: U.S. Program Targets Obesity at Grassroots Level](#)

A new program developed by the U.S. government is tackling the obesity epidemic by helping "tween" girls and their parents make small but important changes to build a healthier lifestyle. The goal is to give parents and caregivers "hands-on tools to make small behavior changes to prevent obesity and help maintain a healthier weight."

Tools You Can Use

[July 2007: Elementary Fitness Calendar—Explore the Great Outdoors!](#) [PDF file]

Produced by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education, this daily calendar for July is designed to encourage physical activity among elementary-school age children.

[How to Create and Implement Healthy General Plans](#) [PDF file]

A toolkit for building healthy, vibrant communities through land use policy change, published in 2008 by Public Health Law & Policy, a project of the Public Health Institute.

[Leveraging Resources and Building Partnerships with Safe Routes to School](#) [PDF file]

This guide explains the collaborative process around Safe Routes to School and highlights four success stories of communities that built safe routes to school through unique partnerships. Although Safe Routes to School partnerships vary by community, they all are built on "the 5 Es," which are Evaluation, Engineering, Education, Encouragement, and Enforcement.

[Mayors' Guide to Fighting Childhood Obesity](#) [PDF file]

The *Mayors' Guide to Fighting Childhood Obesity* provides suggested action steps that mayors and other local government leaders can take to address the childhood obesity epidemic in their communities in three areas: the community food environment, the physical environment, and the school and out-of-school environment.

Funding Opportunities

[Faith-based Advocacy: Galvanizing Communities to End Childhood Obesity](#)

Through this solicitation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is interested in supporting faith-based coalitions to advance community policies or environmental changes that improve access to healthy foods and/or opportunities for physical activity.

Deadline: July 25, 2008

[Hiking Society Seeks Applications for Trail Grants](#)

The National Trails Fund is the only privately funded, national grants program dedicated solely to building and protecting hiking trails.

Deadline: August 15, 2008

[2008 Healthy Sprouts Award](#)

To be eligible for the 2008 Healthy Sprouts Awards, schools or organizations must plan to garden in 2009 with at least 15 children between the ages of 3 and 18. The selection of winners is based on the demonstrated relationship between the garden program and nutrition and hunger issues in the United States.

Deadline: October 15, 2008

[The Jared Foundation](#)

Established in 2004 by SUBWAY® restaurants spokesperson Jared Fogle, the foundation educates children and parents about the importance of healthy nutrition and exercise. School administrators are eligible to apply.

Deadline: October 31, 2008

[2009 Youth Garden Grants Program](#)

The Youth Garden Grants are given to schools and community organizations with child-centered garden programs.

Deadline: November 1, 2008

[Bikes Belong Offers Funding for Bicycle Advocacy and Facilities](#)

U.S. nonprofits and public agencies working to put "more people on bicycles more often" will be awarded grants of up to \$10,000 for facilities and advocacy projects.

Deadline: Quarterly

[Active Living Research/Healthy Eating Research Rapid-Response Grants](#)

This call for proposals (CFP) supports time-sensitive, opportunistic studies to evaluate changes in policies or environments with the potential to reach children who are at highest risk for obesity, including African-American, Latino, Native American, Asian American and Pacific Islander children (ages 3 to 18) who live in low-income communities or communities with limited access to affordable healthy foods and/or safe opportunities for physical activity.

Deadline: Rolling

[Funding Sources for Healthy Food Retail](#)

This Web site serves as a clearinghouse for funding opportunities related to developing food retail outlets. The funding sources, which are categorized by eligibility, source, and type of assistance for easy searching, include several available to local governments.

Upcoming Conferences

SAVE THE DATE: The Mayors' Healthy City Summit: Solutions to Reverse Obesity and Create Healthy Communities, **December 3-5, 2008**, Tucson, AZ

Upcoming Health Observation Dates

[July is Recreation and Parks Month](#)

New Publication

[BALANCE Issue 5: 2007 End of Year Report](#)

A report on state action to promote nutrition, increase physical activity and prevent obesity.

In 2007 policy-makers across the country made a significant effort to address obesity.

This E-Newsletter is distributed monthly via email to members of USCM's Mayors' Healthy Cities Campaign and others by request. Funding for the newsletter has been provided by Leadership for Healthy Communities--a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. To submit a question, comment, or local best practice or to subscribe or unsubscribe, please contact pcarter@usmayors.org.