

# PATTON – FULLER COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

## Childhood Obesity Program

**Program Goal:** Reduce the childhood obesity rate in the local community

**Program Purpose:** Examine how school districts can implement evidence-based programs to reduce childhood obesity

**Program Scope:** Childhood obesity is a serious medical condition that affects children and adolescents. It occurs when a child is well above a healthy weight for his or her age and height. Childhood obesity is particularly troubling because the extra pounds often contribute to health problems that were once limited to adults, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.

**Program Audience:** Children; parents; school personnel; local health care providers; federal, state, and local health departments; and other community stakeholders

**Program Background:** Childhood obesity rates have been increasing for the past 30 years. Presently, it is considered an epidemic. Since 1980, the percentage of children who are considered overweight has tripled to include 10–15% of all children and adolescents. Ten percent of children age 2 to 5 are overweight; 60% of obese children between the ages of 5 and 10 have at least one risk factor for cardiovascular disease, and 25% have two or more risk factors (National Association for Sport and Physical Education [NAPSE], 2006). Almost one-half of children who are obese become obese adults (NAPSE, 2006).

As a response to the current trend in school districts to limit time allowed for physical education and physical activity, there have been major investments by public and private organizations; local, state, and federal government; and sectors of the health care industry—including payers, plans, and providers—to play an increasingly essential role in addressing and challenging this epidemic (Homer & Simpson, 2007).

The American Heart Association has actively tackled this health issue for 30 years with the Jump Rope For Heart program (<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=2360>). This program unites children, parents, school personnel, and the community to address childhood obesity.

## References

National Conference of State Legislatures. (2008). Childhood Obesity – 2008 Update of Legislative Policy Options. Retrieved from <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/health/ChildhoodObesity-2008.htm>

National Association for Sport and Physical Education [NAPSE]. (2006). Retrieved from <http://www.aahperd.org/Naspe/>

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