

HOW COALITIONS MOVE PAST TALKING AND ACT

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Clayton Travis, MSSW, Director of Advocacy
Texas Pediatric Society

Tim Schauer, Senior Vice President
Cornerstone Government Affairs

Kim Kofron M.Ed., Executive Director
Texas Association for the Education of Young Children

Adriana Kohler, JD, Senior Health Policy Associate
Texans Care for Children

Today's Topics

- Essential role of local coalitions - How local & state coalitions can collaborate
- Partnership for Health Texas (PFHT) - statewide coalition advocating for policies that prevent and reduce obesity in Texas
- Building partnerships across sectors for more effective advocacy
- Case study - Legislation to improve nutrition and active play in Early Care and Education. Successes and lessons learned
- Moving forward - how to get involved!



HEALTHY LIVING
MATTERS
Connecting Policy to the Future

A Houston/Harris County Childhood Obesity Prevention Collaborative

Building the Coalition

1. Leaders came together on issue
2. Funding pursued (No \$\$\$, No Mission)
3. Coalition developed (Big Tent)
4. Inclusion in building *Community Action Plan*
 - a. Assess, Learn, Policy Scan, Recommend, Prioritize
 - b. ACT



HEALTHY LIVING
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Community Action Plan

- Put everything on the table
- Be specific and measurable, no platitudes
- Mean what you say (clarify if necessary)
- Trust the wisdom of the participants
- HLM Community Action Plan: *Eat, Play, Learn*
 - *www.healthylivingmatters.net*



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Lessons Learned

- Big goals take big commitments of time and treasure
- Communicate and grow
- Reload the “bench” within the coalition for ongoing leadership and energy
- Local actions are good but if statewide policy is needed, must look for statewide partners



**PARTNERSHIP FOR
A HEALTHY TEXAS**

CONQUERING OBESITY

Mission: To develop and promote policies that prevent obesity in Texas

Guiding Principles:

- Encourage collaboration among all interested parties in reducing obesity
- Inform policy makers about the consequences of the disease
- Promote evidence-based strategies at multiple levels: individual, family and community
- Serve as a resource for individuals and entities interested in addressing obesity prevention

CONQUERING OBESITY

About the Partnership for a Healthy Texas



LEARN MORE

About Our History

The Partnership began in 2006 when key health-related organizations banded together to address the ever-growing problem of obesity in Texas communities. The Partnership brought together research experts to develop a statewide policy document, the Texas Obesity Policy Portfolio, which identified evidence-based policy initiatives that have proven to have a positive impact on fighting obesity. During the Partnership's first session educating lawmakers, five of six legislative priorities were passed. The Partnership for a Healthy Texas is now the most recognized and valued advocacy voice in the fight to end obesity in Texas.



Major Accomplishments:

- Passed legislation to require minimum minutes of physical activity in schools and established Fitnessgram
- Consistently defeat legislation to eliminate Fitnessgram and coordinated school health
- Worked with the Texas Department of Agriculture to put nutrition policy in rule rather than have to go through legislature
- Strengthened School Health Advisory Councils by expanding their scope to all components of coordinated school health and adding accountability through Campus Improvement Plan requirements
- Supported passage of funding for Dept. of State Health Services for evidence based obesity prevention initiatives
- Early childhood interagency council established to study nutrition and physical activity in early childcare setting

In the News



NEWS

HEALTH ADVOCACY GROUP TAKES ISSUE WITH DEEP FRYERS IN SCHOOLS

The medical parents of a children's health advocacy group had a recent issue to resolve a group of school deep fryers in school, and the wrong message is sent...

[READ MORE](#)

September 3, 2010



NEWS

STATEWIDE SURVEY SHOWS CHILDHOOD OBESITY RATES IN EAST TEXAS

More than 20 percent of certain school-aged children in East Texas are considered obese or severely obese, but the region is not getting the word in the state, according to a new report.

[READ MORE](#)

September 16, 2010



NEWS

JUNK FOOD COMPANIES LOVE SID MILLER

The results are in for public comments about Agricultural Commissioner's goal to mark down 10 items in schools, and it's a landslide. 100-0.

[READ MORE](#)

June 4, 2010



Steering Committee Organization Members





Texas Association for the Education of Young Children

Vision: All young children, birth through age 8, thrive and learn in a society dedicated to ensuring they reach their full potential.

Mission: Celebrating, Educating, and Advocating for Young Children, Families and Early Childhood Professionals.

Membership: Over 3,400 Early Childhood Professionals in Texas



Texas Association for the Education of Young Children

Military
Child Care

ISD Pre-K

Faith-Based care

Licensing Standards

Texas Rising
Star

Subsidized Care

Reggio

Head Start

Family

Home

Providers

Infant Toddler
Guidelines

Accreditation Standards

Pre-K Guidelines

Texas School Ready

1st - 3rd Grade

Birth - 8
years old

Private
Funded

Single Owner
Child Care

Montessori

Corporate
Child Care

Health and
Nutrition Standards



Texas Association for the Education of Young Children

Partnerships are Vital to Our Work

- Texas Rising Star Standards
- Licensing Standards
- Professional Guidelines for our Educators
- Behavior Consultants
- Texans Care for Children
- Children at Risk
- Texas Pediatric Society
- Behavior Consultants
- United Way
- And SO many others



Texas Association for the Education of Young Children

To Make Partnerships Work

- Be at the table
- Network
- Understand each other's missions and priorities
- Be supportive--the favor will be returned
- Look for unlikely supporters

The background of the slide is a photograph of the Texas State Capitol building in Austin, Texas. The building is a large, classical-style structure with a prominent central dome topped by a statue. The building is surrounded by green trees and a clear blue sky. The text is overlaid on this image.

Legislative Efforts to Improve Nutrition and Active Play in on Early Care

Building Partnerships & Momentum
for Kids' Health

We drive policy change to improve the lives of Texas children today for a stronger Texas tomorrow

Our Focus Areas:

- Maternal and Child Health
- Mental Wellbeing
- Child Safety and Protection
- Early Childhood
- Youth Justice

Adriana D. Kohler

Senior Health Policy Associate

akohler@txchildren.org

First, Some Political Context

- House and Senate leadership, along with the Governor, set priorities at the beginning of session. In 2017, there was historic disagreement among leadership on what priorities should be.
 - Public health was largely NOT a priority item
- Tight budget - The state's public health agency was asked to make significant cuts to their basic operations
- Over 6,600 bills filed, only 1,200 bills passed - lowest number of bills passed since 1995

Elements of the Legislation (HB 2664/SB 818)

Nutrition: Updated minimum standards for nutrition in child care to align with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Bill did not require CACFP participation.

Active Play: Clarified the amount of time children should be allowed to move & play while in child care (in line with Caring for Our Children evidence-based standards).

Screen Time: Aligned guidelines for allowable screen time with nationally-recognized standards to promote brain development.

Training: Added nutrition and physical activity to the state's list of annual training topics that child care staff and directors can choose from to meet training requirements.

Texas Rising Star Rating System: Added CACFP participation as a metric in the state's child care quality rating system (a voluntary recognition program that rewards providers that go above and beyond state minimum standards).

Identify Achievable, Yet Meaningful Steps

Before Legislative Session

- Researched best practices in early care settings - what's best for kids
- Analyzed current policies in Texas and other states
- Got input from subject matter experts
- Interviewed child care directors and staff
 - what's working
 - what changes are needed
 - what are barriers to healthy food and active play
- Collaborated with health professionals, community groups, and families
- Built relationships with legislators and staff
- Set out policy recommendations

Make Your Case -- Create a “Big Tent”



Leading up to Session

- Issued briefs and one-pagers
- Held briefings to educate lawmakers & staff
- Engaged child care directors and staff
- Built momentum with *variety* of players
 - health professionals
 - early childhood educators
 - families
 - child advocates
 - Food security groups (e.g. food banks)

Build Momentum to Prioritize Kids' Health

During Session

- Media –
 - Op-eds
 - Letters to editor
 - TV, online media
 - Social media
- Testimony from pediatricians, child care directors
- Grassroots – *utilize local coalitions!*
 - emails, calls
 - letters of support to lawmakers
- Meet with lawmakers and staff





Successes & Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- Child care licensing is complex
 - Time and energy spent educating stakeholders and legislators on current child care standards and best practices to improve nutrition, screen time, and active play
 - Misinformation - perceptions about extent of changes
- Political environment against the perception of growing government
- Identify spokespeople early - especially in key legislative districts
- Think about statewide media coverage, not just local markets

What Worked

- Unifying messages on health and early learning – *“help kids build strong minds & muscles”*
- Cross-sector support - health, obesity prevention, early education groups, and child care providers at the table
- Coordination is key!
 - Weekly coalition meetings ensured ongoing communication
 - E-newsletters helped activate before hearings/key votes
- Built cohort of supportive child care providers
 - Can speak about how bill would impact kids and their business

Get Involved!

- **Sign up** for coalition emails at:
www.PartnershipforaHealthyTexas.org
- **Follow** us on Twitter @txlegeobesity
- **Apply** to be on PFHT Steering Committee

