

CREATING HEALTHY FOOD AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ENVIRONMENTS



Oregon
Health
Authority

PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION
Center for Prevention and Health Promotion

The Creating Healthy Food and Physical Activity Environments section explores the economic, environmental and health benefits of decreasing barriers and promoting access to physical activity and healthy food. It is designed to help health departments, interested organizations and their partners leverage the Weight of the Nation documentary to implement effective responses to obesity in populations that are facing health disparities.

About this section

*This section is intended to be a resource that complements the bonus clip *Poverty and Obesity* from the *Weight of the Nation* Documentary series. The toolkit and bonus clip address the interrelationships between obesity, income and health disparities through key data facts and resources, core messages, definitions and policy, systems and environmental resources. Discussion questions to help facilitate a conversation in your community on how to utilize the change strategies, featured in the bonus clip, are also provided.*

Leveraging the Weight of the Nation

Poverty and Obesity: WHEN HEALTHY FOOD IS NOT AN OPTION

Watch this bonus clip as a group along with other public health colleagues or community partners - schedule a conference room, invite your colleagues working to promote health and participate in our state-local conversation! Together, you'll build a common foundation of knowledge, share ideas and perspectives, and foster collaboration. *Poverty and Obesity* is approximately 20 minutes long.

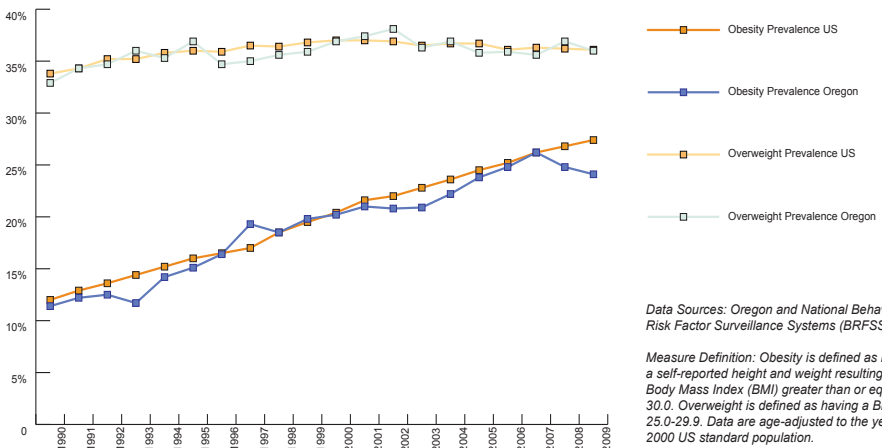
Suggested discussion questions:

1. What are you doing in your community to promote physical activity and access to healthy foods?
2. When it comes to obesity, what matters more: your zip code or your genetic code?
3. What factors do you think explain the health disparities between rich and poor neighborhoods?
4. How healthy is the community you live or work in? Does it have sidewalks, do you have to travel far to get healthy food, are there safe parks?
5. What barriers do you encounter when you are working to promote physical activity and healthy eating in your community?
6. How can you overcome those barriers?
7. How can you work with elected officials to promote physical activity and healthy eating in your community?
8. What are some action steps you can take as a result of this viewing this bonus short and the subsequent discussion?

Key Data Facts

- » In Oregon, obesity contributes to the deaths of about 1,400 Oregonians each year, making it second only to tobacco as the state's leading cause of preventable death.
- » In Oregon nearly 15 percent of children, aged 2-5 years who participate in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program are already obese.
- » Between 2001 and 2009, the percentage of Oregon students who were obese increased 53 percent for eighth-graders and 55 percent for 11th-graders.
- » Since 1990, Oregon's adult obesity rate has increased 121 percent.
- » Overweight and obesity are also major risk factors for chronic diseases such as diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, arthritis, heart disease and stroke.
- » About 13.6 percent of households in Oregon - more than 491,000 Oregonians - equivalent to the entire population of Marion and Polk counties - suffered food insecurity in 2009-2011.
- » About 5.9 percent of households in Oregon - more than 213,000 individuals suffered very low food security - also known as hunger - in 2009-2011.

Overweight and Obesity Prevalence Among Adults Aged 18 and Older, Oregon and United States, 1990-2009





Core Messages:

- » When it comes to obesity and its related chronic disease your zip code may matter more than your genetic code.
- » The food environment in which people live may play a role in the connection with poverty and obesity. A lack of access to healthy foods and an overabundance of cheap, unhealthy foods are present in rural and urban communities across the state.
- » Access to safe places for physical activity such as walking trails, parks, sidewalks, safe places for children to play and safe routes to walk to school all help people in a community be active.
- » Unfortunately, even today, there are difference in life expectancies between lower and higher income communities.
- » If we want people to make appropriate choices, they have to have access to appropriate choices to make.
- » Improving access to healthy food and physical activity environments will require many approaches, strategies and partners, but we know that this important work starts with us - the public health workforce in Oregon!



Definitions:

Certain key terms are used throughout the bonus short and toolkit. Below are a set of definitions that outline the intended meaning and scope of these terms.

Built Environment: The availability and accessibility of food and drink, and the safety, accessibility, and existence of space for physical activity.



Food Desert: a low-income census tract where a substantial number or share of residents has low access to a supermarket or large grocery store.

Food Security: access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.

Health disparities are particular types of health differences that are closely linked with social, economic and/or environmental disadvantage. Health disparities adversely affect groups of people who have systematically experienced greater obstacles to health and/or a clean environment based on their racial or ethnic group; religion; socioeconomic status; gender; age; mental health; cognitive, sensory, or physical disability; sexual orientation or gender identity; geographic location; or other characteristics historically linked to discrimination or exclusion.

Health equity is achieving the highest level of health for all people. Health equity entails focused societal efforts to address avoidable inequalities by equalizing the conditions for health for all groups, especially for those who have experienced socioeconomic disadvantage or historical injustices.

Social determinants of health are the complex, integrated and overlapping social structures and economic systems that are responsible for most health inequities. These social structures and economic systems include the social environment, physical environment, health services, and structural and societal factors. Social determinants of health are shaped by the distribution of money, power, and resources throughout local communities, nations and the world.

Social Norms: rules or standards of behavior shared by members of a social group.

Resources

- » **CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Prevention Health Equity Resource Toolkit to Address Obesity Disparities**
The Toolkit's primary focus is on how to create policy, systems, and environmental changes that will reduce obesity disparities and achieve health equity. http://www.centerfortrt.org/?p=equity_toolkit.
- » **PolicyLink** connects the work of people on the ground to the creation of sustainable communities of opportunity that allow everyone to participate and prosper. This online toolkit on Health Equity and Place provides tools to reduce environmental risk and build health-promoting neighborhoods. http://www.policylink.org/site/c.lkIXLbMNJrE/b.5136713/k.3948/Health_Equity_and_Place_Tool_Group.htm
- » **Prevention Institute**
The O Word: Why the Focus on Obesity is Harmful to Community Health. Published in the Californian Journal of Health Promotion, this article sheds light on the five unintended consequences of "obesity." <http://www.preventioninstitute.org/component/jlibrary/article/id-66/127.html>
- » **The Partnership for Southern Equity**
Just Transportation: Documenting the case for transportation equity through programming, research data and personal accounts from policy makers and those impacted offers examples of how to tell the community story obesity in a community. <http://partnershipforsouthernequity.org/index.php/issue-areas/just-transportation>
- » **Leadership for Healthy Communities: Advancing Policies to Support Healthy Eating and Active Living:**
The policy options and resources within the Leadership for Healthy Communities Action Strategies Toolkit represent a collection of current best approaches that have been identified, evaluated and selected by Leadership for Healthy Communities and the policy-maker organizations that have participated in the program.
- » **The Action Strategies Toolkit** contains policy and program strategies in ten action areas related to active living and healthy eating. <http://www.leadershipforhealthycommunities.org/index.php/home-toolkitnav-161?task=view>
- » **USDA Food Desert Locator** <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-desert-locator/go-to-the-locator.aspx>

Key Policy References

- » **Access to Healthy Food: Challenges and Opportunities** from the Public Health Law Center is a policy options brief that provides public health advocates, policymakers and community organizers with an overview of key policy and legal strategies being pursued to reduce or prevent obesity by increasing access to healthy food.
<http://publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/PHLC%20Access%20to%20Healthy%20Food%20-%20%20Challenges%20and%20Opportunities%202012.pdf>

- » **Ending Hunger Before it Begins: Oregon's Call to Action 2010-2015**
Resource and guide to engage all Oregonians in a wide range of public policy options and decisions at the local, state and federal levels.
<http://oregonhunger.org/oregon-hunger-plan>

- » **A New Way to Talk About the Social Determinants of Health**
This report represents a comprehensive effort at identifying ways of talking with the general public, including swing voters and opinion elites, about social determinants of health
<http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/legacy-parents/a-new-way-to-talk-about-the-social-determinants-of-health>

- » **Active Living and Social Equity: Creating Healthy Communities for All Residents: A Guide for Local Governments**
Describes how local governments can design healthy communities for all residents and explains the connection between active living and social equity. 65.181.142.130/images/stories/rpt_icma_jan2005.pdf



Model Policies

- » **Public Health Law Center** is a national non-profit organization that provides guidance on using the law to advance public health in the areas of healthy eating, physical activity and tobacco control. Resources include fact sheets, legal memos, model policies, technical assistance and webinars. www.publichealthlawcenter.org
- » **Change Lab Solutions** works with neighborhoods, cities and states to transform communities with laws and policies that create lasting change. Their solutions promote the common good by making healthier choices easier for everyone. Examples of model policies include joint use agreements and complete streets. *Joint Use:* <http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/model-agreements-joint-use-california>
Complete Streets: <http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/laws-resolutions-cs>
- » **Healthy Corner Stores Network** provides a collection of healthy retail related information with over 100 academic, program and industry resources to assist in starting or growing a Healthy Corner Stores program in communities.
<http://www.healthycornerstores.org/resources>



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