



NATIONAL CONFERENCE *of* STATE LEGISLATURES

The Forum for America's Ideas

State Actions on Childhood Overweight and Obesity– An Overview of Policy Options

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Obesity & Children's Health

- Sixteen percent of U.S. children and adolescents age 6-19 are overweight (9 million children).
- Since 1980, obesity has doubled for children and tripled for adolescents.
- The number of children diagnosed with type 2 diabetes (formerly "adult onset diabetes") has increased.
- Obesity is costly to state taxpayers, who fund about half of obesity-attributable U.S. medical expenses through Medicare and Medicaid.
- The national cost of childhood obesity is estimated at approximately \$3 billion for those with Medicaid.



Obesity – Legislative Responses

○ Nutrition Topics

● Nutrition Standards in Schools

- At least 17 states enacted school nutrition legislation in 2005 - AZ, AR, CA, CO, IL, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, NM, NC, OK, RI, SC, TX and WV.
- At least 23 states introduced bills concerning school nutrition in 2006 - (AK, CA, CO (vetoed), CT, FL, HI, ID, IN, KS, KY, MD, MA, MS, MO, NJ, NY, PA, RI, TN, VT, VA, WV, WI).

● Nutrition Education

- States that considered or enacted nutrition education legislation in 2005 include CA, CO*, CT, HI, IL*, KS*, ME*, MA, MN, MO, NH, NM, NY, OH, OK, PA, SC*, TN, TX*, VT, VA, and WV*.

(*Enacted)

Updated information can be found on the NCSL web site at:
<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/health/ChildhoodObesity-2005.htm>



Obesity – Legislative Responses

- Nutrition Topics

- Measurement of Student Body Mass Index

- (Arkansas enacted in 2003) - At least **seven states (AR, CA, FL, MO, PA, TN and WV) currently have BMI reporting requirements in effect.** Some are aggregate BMI data reporting, rather than requirements for individual student BMI reports to parents.

- The Arkansas, California, Missouri, Tennessee and West Virginia BMI screenings were enacted legislatively. Pennsylvania and Florida's BMI requirements are part of mandated state health department developmental screenings.

- **13 states** considered or enacted BMI legislation in 2005.

- TN, WV enacted BMI legislation

- AK, CT, GA, IA, ME, NJ, NY, NC, OR, SC, TX proposed BMI legislation

- AR considered BMI report repeal - but did not pass

- Nutrition Menu Information for School Foods

- Providing nutrition content information for foods on school menus or all foods and beverages served in schools to enable students and parents to make healthy choices was considered in 2005 in California, Illinois, Massachusetts, and New York and enacted as part of broader obesity initiatives in Colorado, Maine and West Virginia.



Obesity – Legislative Responses

- Physical Activity Topics
 - Physical Education or Physical Activity in Schools
 - As of 2006, 49 states will require P.E. in schools, but scope of requirement varies.
 - 60% of states require schools to follow national or state P.E. guidelines. 80% require adapted or mainstream P.E. for IEP students.
 - In 8 states, bills to strengthen P.E. or physical activity requirements passed both chambers of the legislature in 2005: AZ, CO, CT (vetoed), KS, KY, MT, SC, TX.
 - 25 states introduced legislation to implement or strengthen P.E. or physical activity requirements in 2005: AL, AK, DE, GA, HI, IL, IN, IA, MA, MI, MS, MO, NE, NH, NM, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, TN, UT, VA.
 - Walkable communities - city planning, transportation
 - Safe routes to school



Obesity – Legislative Responses

- General Obesity-Related Legislation
 - Non-invasive Diabetes Screening for Schoolchildren
 - School child **screening**
 - Enacted CA and IL – 2003
 - Considered NY and PA - 2004
 - Considered PA – 2005
 - Diabetes Management Training for School Personnel
 - At-school **treatment and training** of school personnel in diabetes management
 - Passed both chambers of legislature – HI – 2005
 - Considered TX – 2005; CA, IL, MA, NJ, PA, TN, VT, VA – 2004
 - Diabetes **awareness** in schools
 - Enacted resolution - CA – 2005 (SCR 4)
 - School Wellness Policies
 - Obesity Task Forces, Commissions, or Studies
 - Raising Awareness



School Wellness Policy Legislation

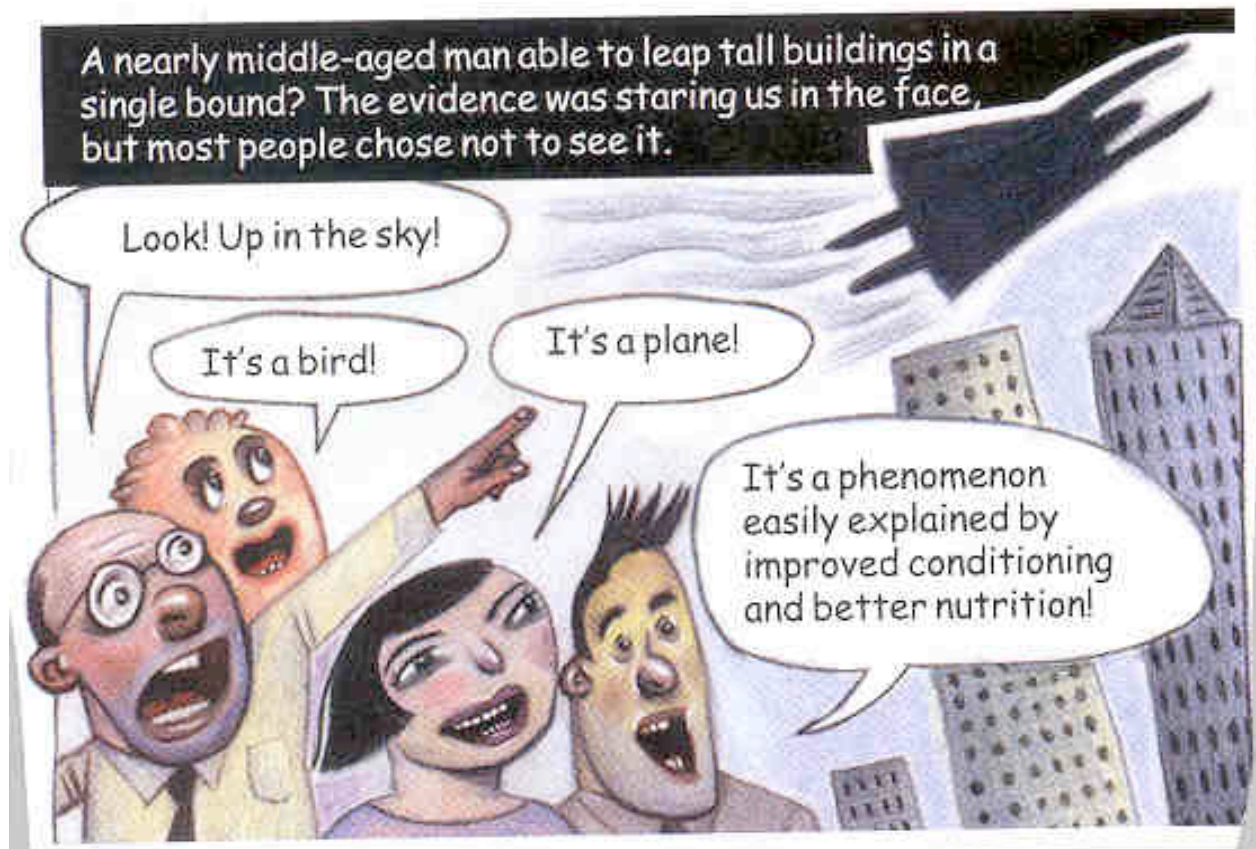
- **Federal Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004** – Requires local school districts participating in the National School Lunch or Breakfast Programs to establish local wellness policies by the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year.
- **Statewide wellness policy legislation** – **considered** in 2005 in CA, OH, TN.
- **Statewide wellness policy legislation** – **enacted** in 2005 in CO, IL, RI, in 2004 in WA.



Task Forces, Commissions, or Studies

- **Six states previously enacted obesity task forces, commissions, or studies** – Arkansas, Maine, New York, Texas, Rhode Island, Washington
- **Legislation introduced for obesity task forces, commissions, or studies in 2005** – Kansas, New Mexico, North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia

Nutrition and Physical Education – Food for Thought





Additional Resources

Links for NCSL and other resources on legislation and policy options to address childhood obesity are:

- NCSL updated overview of childhood obesity policy options considered in 2005 at:
<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/health/childhoodobesity-2005.htm>
- NCSL overview of childhood obesity policy options considered in 2003-2004 at:
<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/health/childhoodobesity.htm>
- NCSL web page on 50-state school physical education requirements at:
<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/health/perequisite.htm>
- Information about federal wellness policy requirements on the U.S. Department of Agriculture web site at:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Healthy/wellnesspolicy.html>