



Using Grassroots Research to Strengthen Childhood Obesity Prevention Initiatives

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National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute



A close-up photograph of a young girl with freckles and blue eyes, smiling as she eats a sandwich. The sandwich is filled with lettuce, tomato, and cheese. The background is plain white.

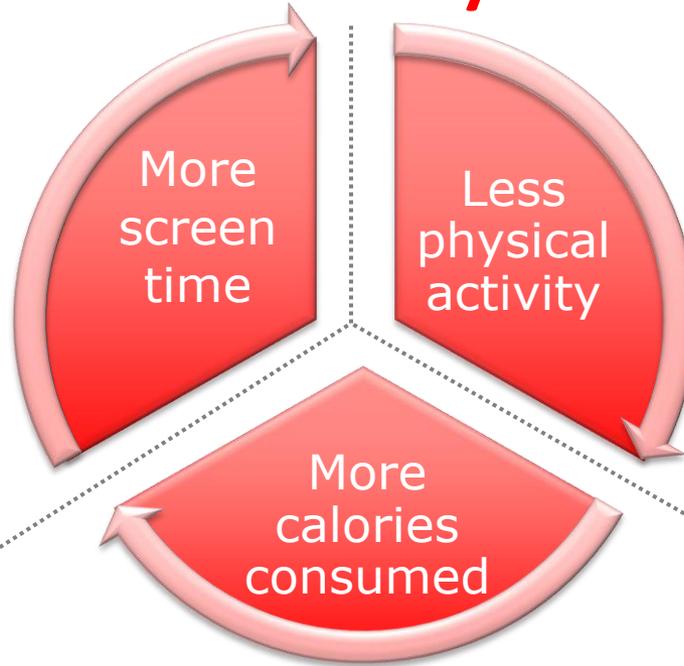
1 in 3 children between the ages of 2-19
are overweight or obese

80% of children who were overweight at ages 10-15
were obese at age 25

The current generation may have
a shorter lifespan than their parents

What is causing the increase in childhood obesity in the US?

- Nearly 30% of 0-1 year olds have a TV in their bedroom
- On average, 8-18 year olds spend about 4 and a half hours a day watching TV and movies
- On average, 8-18 year olds spend about an hour and a half on their phones.

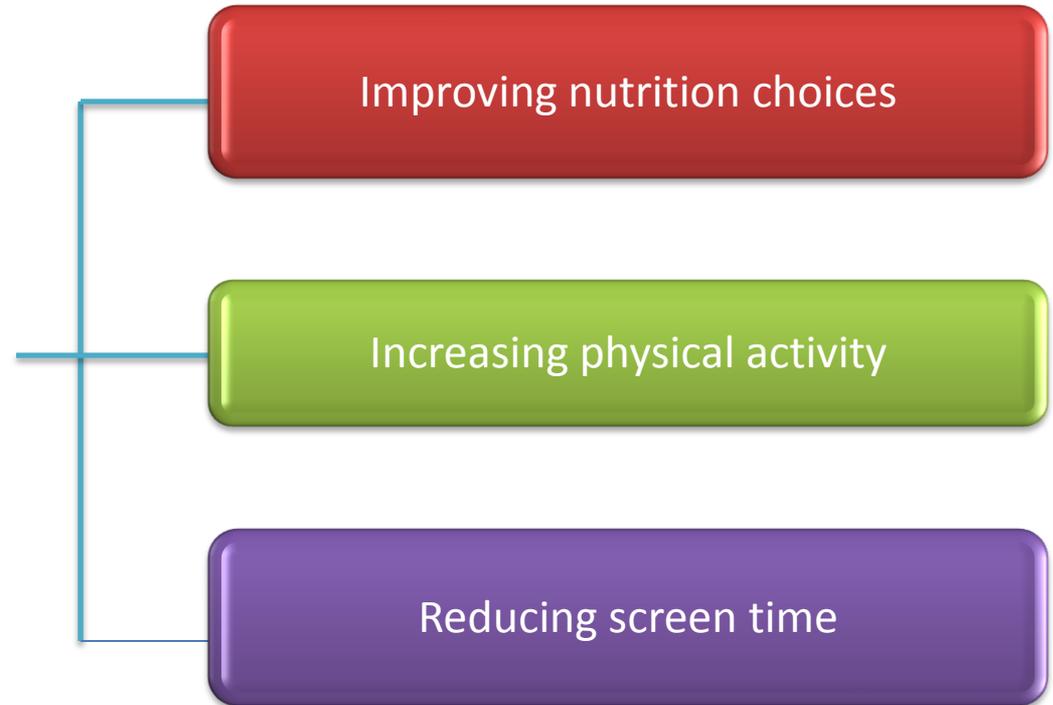


- 26% of high school girls and 44% of high school boys get at least 1 hour of physical activity 5 days a week
- About 33% of elementary children have daily physical education and <20% have extracurricular physical activity programs at school

- Added sugar contributes to about 16% of the total calories in American diets
- Pizza and candy consumption have increased by 425% and 180%, respectively, since 1977
- On average, Americans eat less than half of the recommended amount of fruit per day

What is *We Can!*?

A national education program – developed by the National Institutes of Health’s National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) – designed to give parents, caregivers, and communities a way to help children 8 to 13 years old prevent overweight and obesity, and maintain a healthy weight.



A photograph of a woman with dark hair and a pink top holding a young girl in a white top. They are standing in front of several large brown paper shopping bags. The woman is smiling slightly, and the girl is looking towards the camera. The background is a plain, light blue wall.

Research Goals

1. Explore parents' attitudes, beliefs and behaviors related to childhood obesity and their role in preventing or addressing it.
2. Assess parents' reactions to program messages.
3. Prioritize program messages, based on parents' reactions and feedback.

Methodology: Project Milestones

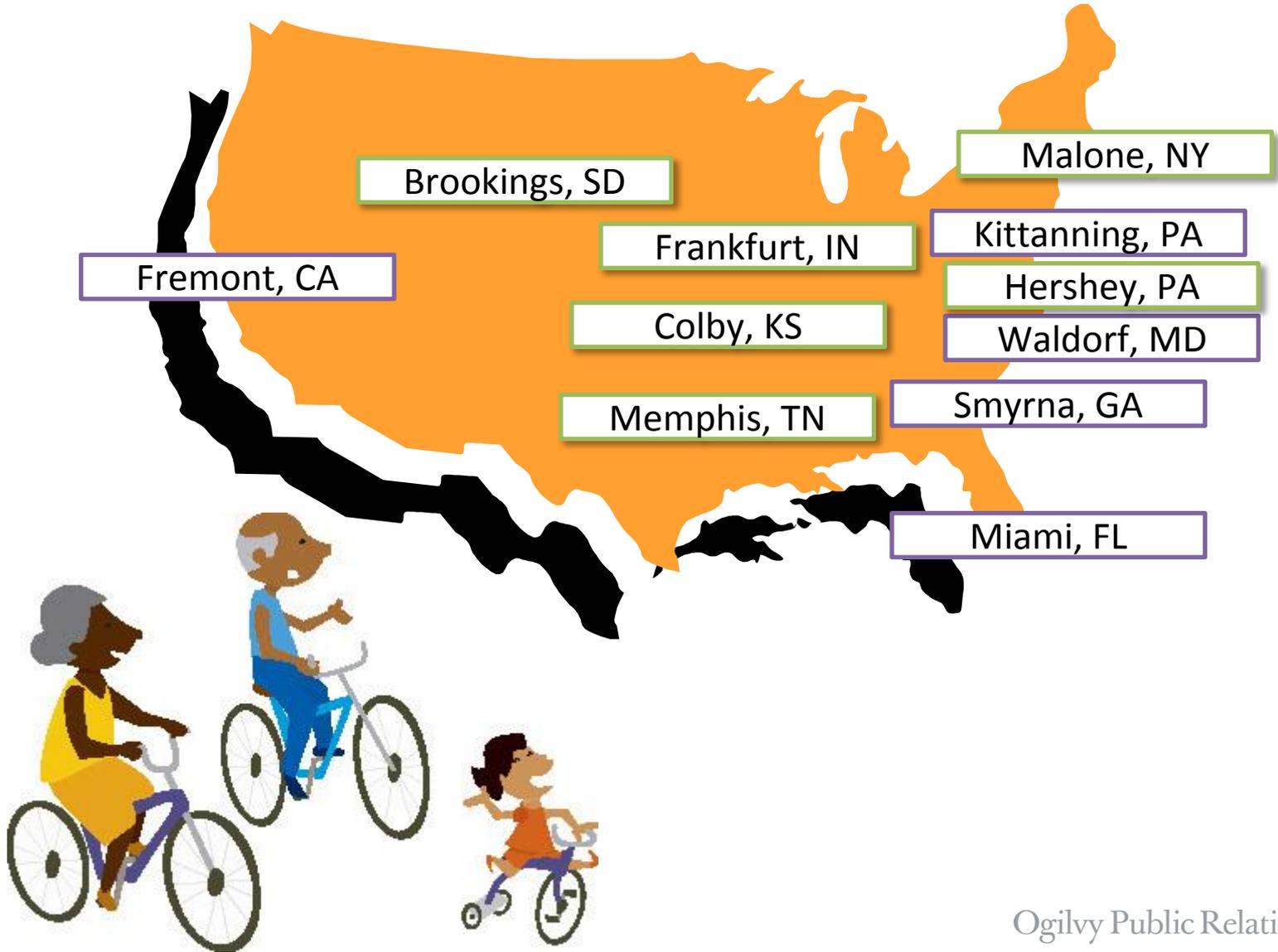


Methodology: Participant Criteria

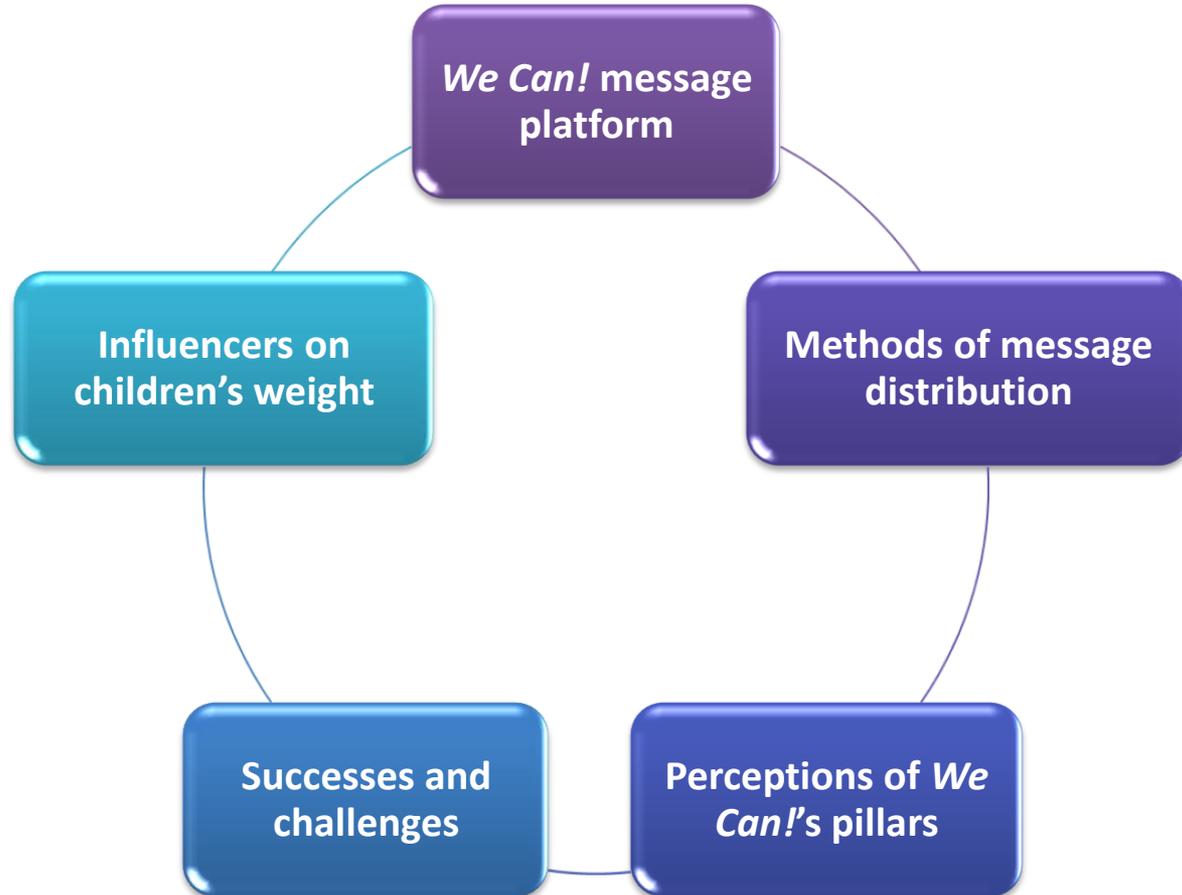
Mothers or primary female caregivers with at least one child 2 - 13 years old, and who:

1. lived in the household at least 50% of the time;
2. cared for a child with no physical or developmental disabilities that would affect his/her nutrition or physical activity level.

We Can! Community Forum Sites



Community Forum Topic Areas



Message Platform

Risk

- Childhood obesity is on the rise and has significant implications throughout your child's lifetime – from toddler, to teen and beyond.

Efficacy

- You play a vital role in helping your child maintain a healthy weight.

What You Can Do

- There are three steps you can take to help your child maintain a healthy weight. Help them:
 - eat right
 - be active; and
 - reduce screen time
- Parents/caregivers must also keep their children in energy balance.

Call to Action

- www.nih.gov/wecan provides ideas and tips to help families eat right, be physically active and reduce screen time through every stage of development – from toddler to teen.

Key Findings

- Participants recognized that childhood obesity is an issue in America.
- They acknowledged the implications of obesity grow more serious as an overweight child becomes an obese adult.
- They are interested in discussing and sharing mutual problems in an attempt to uncover solutions to their challenges.

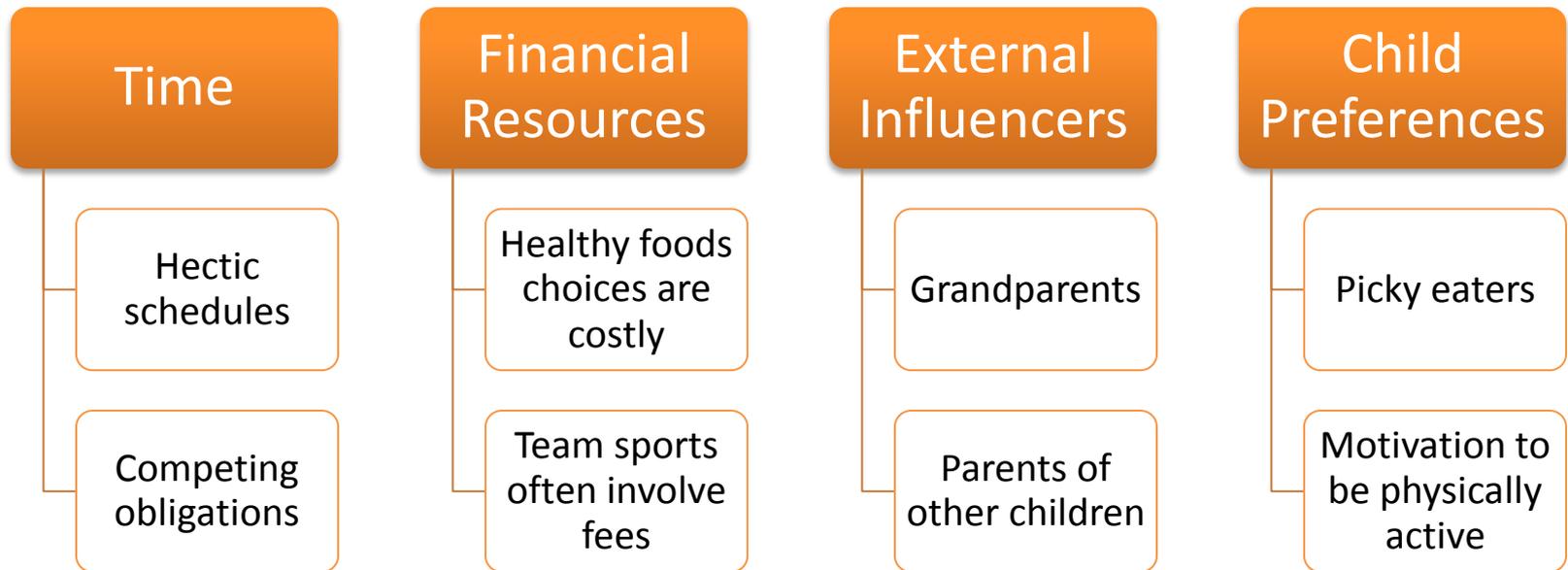


Obesity is a sensitive subject

“When you have a child that’s overweight it’s sensitive...it’s very hard.”

Participants face a number of challenges and obstacles

Participants noted a number of obstacles that inhibit their ability to help their child maintain a healthy weight.



QUIZ:

Which Messages Resonated Most?

A: Risk

B: Efficacy

C: What You Can Do

D. Call to Action

What resonated with participants?

During the ranking process, a clear hierarchy emerged:

1. Efficacy
2. What You Can Do
3. Risk
4. Call-to-Action



What do parents want?

- Strategies and tips on how to get their child to engage and accept healthy behaviors
- Frequent reminders and encouragement
- Manageable lifestyle changes
- Tailored messages by geographic region



Applying Research to *We Can!* Materials

We can!

Eat Right. Get Active. Reduce Screen Time.

Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition

About *We Can!*

Get Started With

Fun Family Recipes
Your kids will love these tasty, quick, and good-for-you recipes.

View our New PSAs
Challenge your kids to eat right and move more.

Tip Sheets for Parents
Bright, engaging, and useful!

parent tips

We can!

At the Store - Save Money and Shop Healthy

Try some of these tips to save money and eat better!

- Use ads or the store's bonus or discount card.
- Weekly ads may offer discounts on healthy foods, like fruits and vegetables.
- Store cards can save extra money.
- You may need the card to get sale prices.
- Store brands are usually cheaper.

Stock up and save.

- Buy the biggest size of canned, frozen, or packaged foods to save money.
- When on sale, buy lean meat, and fat-free or low-fat milk, cheese, and yogurt.
- Buy a whole chicken and cut it up. Pre-cut chicken costs more. Take off the skin before cooking.
- Buy milk in a gallon or half-gallon, instead of smaller sizes, to save money.

Read and compare the Nutrition Facts label on packaged foods.

- Look at the serving size and how many servings are in the package.
- Check the numbers for calories, saturated and trans fats, sodium, and sugars.
- Compare brands and package size to find the best buy.

Buy fruits and vegetables in season.

- In-season fruits and vegetables may cost less.
- Shop at local farmers' markets when you can.
- If your favorite fruits and vegetables are not in season, buy canned (without added sodium salt) or frozen (without added fat).

What Your BMI Means

Be a healthy weight. BMI is a number that tells you if your weight is healthy for your height. BMI is made from two numbers that explain how you are healthy.

What does your BMI mean?

- BMI of 19 to 24 means you are a healthy weight.** Make it your goal to stay at that way.
- BMI of 25 to 29 means you are overweight.** Avoid gaining more weight. You may need to lose weight. Check with your doctor.
- BMI of 30 or higher means you are obese.** You probably need to lose weight. Lose weight slowly—about 1 to 2 pounds a week. Talk to your doctor about the best ways to lose weight.

Waist Measurement

Waist measurement is another way to see if you are at a healthy weight. Your waist measurement is a sign of how much fat you have around your waist. The more "belly" fat you have, the higher your risk for getting heart disease, type 2 diabetes (high blood sugar), or other illnesses.

Need help getting started?
Turn this page over for a sample grocery list!

SAVE



Questions?