



**Orange County  
Partnership *for*  
Young Children**



# The Healthy Kids Campaign

HELPING CHILDREN EAT SMART, MOVE MORE,



BE HEALTHY

# A wise man should consider that health is



## Uniquely qualified to lead

**The Orange County Partnership for Young Children recognizes a clear link between childhood obesity, school achievement and lifelong success.** Alarmed by the devastating impact of childhood obesity, The Partnership is bringing our unique combination of leadership and early childhood expertise to bear on this critical issue in our community.

**The Partnership—Orange County’s Smart Start agency—has been dedicated to helping ensure that young children arrive at school healthy and ready to succeed since our inception in 1993.** Our organization promotes young children’s school readiness by planning and funding critically needed programs—for young children, from birth to age five, and their families—in the areas of early childhood education, children’s health and family support.

**One of the hallmarks of The Partnership is collaboration.** Through our Board of Directors and various committees and taskforces, we bring together hundreds of people each year including parents, child care providers, schools, congregations, businesses, community agencies and local governments. The synergy that results from adding together multiple viewpoints, perspectives and resources results in effective services for young children and families.

**The Partnership has consistently been recognized as one of the top Smart Start agencies in North Carolina and has received acclaim for its award winning programs and fiscal stewardship.** Our agency, which administers \$3.1 million annually in Smart Start funding, has developed 16 model early childhood programs for young children and their families. The Partnership guarantees that every dollar is wisely invested in critically needed programs.



### WHEN A MOTHER GAZES DOWN

at the face of her newborn baby, she imagines the joys that await her child. Most important, her dreams for her child include the hope that we all have for our children: **a healthy life.**

The foundation for good health—an essential for lifelong happiness and success—is established in early childhood and lasts a lifetime.

For too many families, the hope for a child’s well-being is being destroyed by the growing epidemic of childhood obesity.

HEALTHY KIDS GROW UP TO BE HEALTHY ADULTS.

# Childhood obesity on the rise in Orange County

**Y**ou can hardly read a newspaper without seeing headlines about the childhood obesity crisis in the United States. Children are overweight from an increasingly young age. Disturbingly, this crisis is especially acute right here in Orange County and it is getting worse.

**In Orange County, one out of every five preschool children and one in every four school age children is overweight.**

- Orange County childhood obesity rates are among the highest in the state and are rising.
- The number of overweight or obese children, age two to four, increased by 33% between 2002 and 2004.

**Because of obesity, the youth of today may live less healthy and even shorter lives than their parents, according to the *New England Journal of Medicine*.**

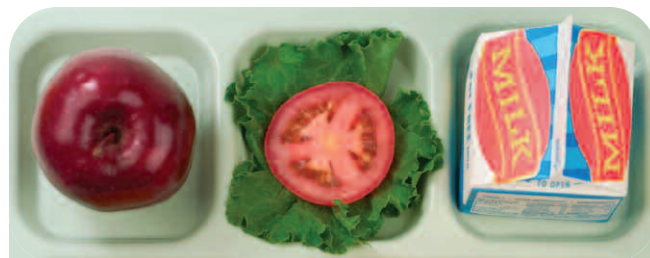
There are devastating lifelong health consequences for young children who are overweight:

- Increased risks for **health complications** including heart disease, stroke and diabetes. Children are now getting Type 2 diabetes, something which was unheard of just a decade ago.
- **Depression and low-self-esteem:** Children with weight problems often face ridicule by their peers and have fewer friends. This affects their self-esteem and confidence, which affects their ability to learn.
- **Enduring health problems:** An overweight toddler is likely to be even more overweight in school and as an adult.

**Unhealthy lifestyle choices and physical inactivity cost North Carolina's economy \$24 billion each year.**

Childhood obesity is an economic issue as well:

- Annual hospital costs for childhood obesity-related conditions in children ages 6 to 18 rose from \$35 million to \$127 million in the past two decades.
- Obesity and health related diseases cost employers on average \$5,000 per employee.



*Our school system is actively addressing the challenge of childhood obesity, but no agency is working on this issue with the community's preschool population. Consequently, I am happy to see The Partnership—which is the leader in our community on early childhood issues—use its leadership to make a difference in the fight against childhood obesity.*

**Dr. Neil Pedersen, Superintendent  
Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools**

# THE HEALTHY KIDS CAMPAIGN—

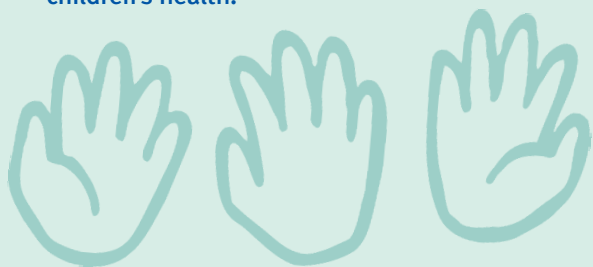
The Partnership has embarked on our first ever campaign to raise \$600,000 for five model programs that address the critical issue of childhood obesity in Orange County. **The Healthy Kids Campaign** is a broad-based collaborative effort that targets the health concerns of young children that are not being met by any other organization in the county.

The goal of The Healthy Kids Campaign is to reach thousands of young children and their families wherever they live, learn, play or pray. The campaign funds will be used to establish innovative and research-based programs designed to increase healthy eating and physical activity among young children and families in Orange County. Community support is needed because state funding is woefully inadequate to address the health concerns facing young children today.

The Healthy Kids Campaign programs will reach out to children and families in a variety of settings including: child care facilities, doctors' offices, places of worship, farmers' markets and homes. Each new program will be funded and evaluated for two years.

To guarantee that these new programs achieve positive results for children and families, The Partnership will:

- maintain oversight of each project's development and management
- implement comprehensive program evaluation
- involve parents in evaluating improvements in their children's health.



## 1. The ABCs of Good Health

*Nutrition and Physical Activity for Child Care Programs*  
\$90,000 per year

Child care programs can teach young children more than their ABCs and how to make friends. Early education settings, where many young children spend the majority of their daytime hours, also offer opportunities for children to develop healthy eating and exercise habits. Too many child care programs offer children poor food choices and limited play and physical activity options.

**With the support of The Partnership, The ABCs of Good Health will support 10 child care centers each year, reaching 1,000 young children and their families through consultants, technical assistance and grants.**



This support will help child care staff members to plan healthy menus, create classrooms in which healthy food and exercise are taught and reach out to parents to partner in this important effort.

The Partnership will work with model programs, including some developed by the University of North Carolina and BlueCross BlueShield, to promote nutrition and physical activity in child care programs in Orange County.

## 2. The Pediatrician and Parent Connection

*Health Care Focus on Childhood Obesity*  
\$85,000 per year

Pediatricians, who have a trusted relationship with their patients and families, are in an ideal position to discuss with families the sensitive topic of a child's weight. Since a child's health care provider is often the first person to notice that a child is overweight, the doctor can be the key in helping to change a child's habits.

**The Pediatrician and Parent Connection** is based on a project of the UNC Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Department. This project is designed to help pediatric care providers who work with families of young children to identify a child's healthy weight and start a conversation with the family on health objectives. A case manager—who serves as a mentor



# funding five model programs

for the family, connecting them with community resources—follows up with the family to provide ongoing consultation and support on meeting their health goals for their child.

**The Partnership will implement this project, reaching hundreds of young children, in one local health site in Orange County each year.**



### 3. Faithfully Exercising and Eating Healthy

*Faith Community Project*  
\$35,000 per year

Faith organizations are among the most influential and social establishments in which children and families participate. Families learn many powerful lessons in their places of

worship. With the support of The Partnership, one of these lessons will be about healthy eating and physical activity.

**Faithfully Exercising and Eating Healthy** will partner with Orange County's faith community to establish healthy eating programs such as monthly potlucks during which nutritious foods, recipes and fellowship can be shared. Faith organizations will also be encouraged to establish exercise programs for young children and families.

This project—which will offer faith organizations small grants to support their new programs—will utilize training and public information materials developed specifically for faith communities. **The Partnership will support up to six congregations each year in both the southern and northern parts of Orange County.**

### 4. Move It!

*Promoting Children's Physical Activity*  
\$50,000 per year

When most of today's adults were children, they spent much of their free time playing outside. Unfortunately, today's children increasingly spend more time indoors watching television and playing video games. Parks are often inaccessible or unsafe, and local



recreation and physical activity programs are too expensive for low-income families.

Since physical activity and exercise are essential in helping children maintain a healthy weight, **Move It!** will enhance public playgrounds, expand exercise programs and classes for families and young children, and offer scholarships to low-income families for local fitness activities. This program will partner with local Parks and Recreation Departments, the YMCA and Triangle Sportsplex to make sure that all families have access to a wide array of community physical activity programs and safe places to play and exercise.

**The Partnership will assist in improving two playgrounds and providing scholarships to 50 low-income families each year.**

### 5. Growing Healthy Kids

*Kids' Garden and Healthy Food Project*  
\$40,000 per year

**Growing Healthy Kids** will capitalize on the innate curiosity of young children and their love of getting their hands dirty. This program will work with area farmers to support the creation of community gardens where children and their families can experience the delight of growing their own foods. **Growing Healthy Kids** will also partner with local farmers' markets on programs to encourage children and families to select fresh fruits and vegetables for family meals. In addition, cooking classes will be coordinated with these programs so that families can learn how to prepare healthy meals using fresh produce.

The community gardens will help children make the connection between healthy and tasty food. At the same time, youngsters will gain teamwork skills, an increased respect for the environment and greater patience and responsibility—all skills needed to succeed in school and in life.

**The Partnership will initiate one program per year with a local farmers' market and will support up to three community gardens for children and families each year.**





# Hope for the future through collaboration

The Orange County Partnership for Young Children is taking the lead—by creating The Healthy Kids Campaign—to help families change unhealthy patterns and build a foundation for a lifetime of health. We are fortunate to have many partners here in Orange County who stand ready to work together in this effort to address early childhood obesity.

The Partnership launched a year-long community planning process which brought together community agencies, health care professionals, faith leaders, child care teachers and parents to ask the tough questions about the childhood obesity crisis:

- Why is childhood obesity such a problem in Orange County?
- What needs aren't being met for young children?
- What kinds of programs are needed?

Through The Healthy Kids Campaign, Orange County is poised to become a leader in young children's health by reversing the trend of childhood obesity. When Smart Start began in 1993, Orange County had a low-quality child care system that today is among the best in the state, thanks to the leadership of The Partnership. The same results can be achieved with community support for The Healthy Kids Campaign.

## Top Reasons Young Children are Overweight

- Insufficient physical activity
- Poor quality diet including too much fast food
- Lack of access to parks and recreation programs
- Too much television

## Changing family and community lifestyles

Over the years, dramatic changes in the ways that families eat and live have led to young children becoming overweight. Fast food meals, which are laden with high fat and sugar, have become a routine part of the diet of most children. And many of today's children lead sedentary lifestyles in which they spend more time playing computer games and watching television than they do playing outdoors and being active.

**The average American child spends nearly five hours a day in front of a screen of some kind.**

It is imperative that we help families change these patterns so they can break the cycle of obesity and ensure that children lead happy, healthy and successful lives.



EATING WELL AND KEEPING FIT ARE ESSENTIAL TO GOOD HEALTH.

*Childhood obesity is a concern in Orange County as it is throughout North Carolina. A child's healthy weight helps prevent future health problems. It's time for the community to get involved, and we look forward to being a part of The Healthy Kids Campaign.*

**Dr. Rosemary Summers, Director  
Orange County Health Department**



# An invitation to make a difference

## WITH SUPPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY,

the Orange County Partnership for Young Children will work to ensure that young children, from birth to age five, have opportunities for healthy lifestyles wherever they live, learn, play, and pray.

A healthy start leads to a child's success in school and in life. Join The Healthy Kids Campaign and make a gift to our children's future!

For more information on The Healthy Kids Campaign, please contact Michele Rivest, Executive Director of the Orange County Partnership for Young Children, at (919) 967-9091 or visit The Partnership's website at [www.OrangeSmartStart.org](http://www.OrangeSmartStart.org).

Donations may be made directly at [www.OrangeSmartStart.org](http://www.OrangeSmartStart.org) or by sending a check to:

### Orange County Partnership for Young Children

1829 E. Franklin Street  
Suite 1200-C  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514



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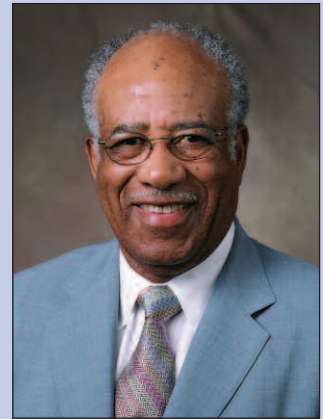
*As the leader of a faith-based ministry, I know how important it is that we work with families to address the critically important issue of childhood obesity. I look forward to continuing to collaborate with The Partnership in developing programs that address this issue for children and families in churches and other faith settings.*

**Reverend Sharon Freeland, Executive Director  
Orange Congregations in Mission**

## Healthy Kids Campaign Cabinet Co-Chairs



**Carmen Hooker Odom**  
Secretary,  
North Carolina Department  
of Health and Human Services



**Howard Lee**  
Chairman,  
North Carolina  
State Board of Education

*Addressing the crisis of early childhood obesity is critical for our children's health and future. We are both pleased to be working together as campaign co-chairs for The Healthy Kids Campaign organized by the Orange County Partnership for Young Children. We hope you will join us!*

**Carmen Hooker Odom and Howard Lee**



**Orange County  
Partnership for  
Young Children**

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*The Orange County Partnership for Young Children—one of the original Smart Start partnerships—has been a leader and a model for North Carolina and the nation. Given The Partnership's high level of organizational and fiscal integrity, I am confident that their Healthy Kids Campaign will be a huge success.*

**Karen Ponder, Executive Director  
North Carolina Partnership for Children**