



SAN DIEGO COUNTY
**CHILDHOOD
OBESITY
INITIATIVE**

Working Together to Shape a Healthy Future

www.OurCommunityOurKids.org



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The San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative (Initiative) actively seeks newsletter content from its partners including resources, events, news, legislative updates, and funding opportunities related to childhood obesity prevention and reduction. Individuals and organizations may submit content for inclusion in the newsletter to the editor by [e-mail](#) or phone at 858.609.7964.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Unless otherwise noted, all San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative meetings are held at Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP), located at 9370 Chesapeake Drive, Suite 220; San Diego, CA 92123.

Domain 1: Government

TBA (see [calendar](#))

Domain 2: Healthcare

Tuesday, December 6, 1 - 2:30 p.m.
CHIP Office

Domain 3: Schools and After-school

Tuesday, January 17, 2012*, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
CHIP Office

*Due to the holidays, the December Schools and After-school domain meeting has been cancelled.

Domain 4: Early Childhood

Tuesday, December 13*, 9 - 10:30 a.m.
YMCA Childcare Resource Service, 4th Floor Executive Conference Room
3333 Camino Del Rio South, San Diego, CA 92108

*This is not the regularly occurring date and time of this domain meeting; scheduling accommodates holidays.

Domain 5: Community

TBA (see [calendar](#))

Domain 6: Media

Tuesday, December 6, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

[Subscribe](#) to our email list

Domain 7: Business

TBA (see [calendar](#))

DOMAIN PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

Early Childhood Domain

Kristine Smith, RD
Director of Nutrition Services
Neighborhood House Association

Kristine Smith is a vanguard, whether she is taking on a new hobby, leading her food services team in the kitchen, or making changes in her community. From the time she was a young girl to present day, Kristine has let her passions drive her, but she is definitely the one steering!



Kristine is the Director of Nutrition Services at Neighborhood House Association (NHA). NHA's Central Kitchen, housed at the Nutrition Services Department, serves more than 7,000 meals to approximately 3,500 preschool-aged children every day. Her commitment to providing preschool - aged children with real, quality breakfasts, lunches, and snacks every single day is no easy feat. Nonetheless, Kristine has led her food services team to do just that, revamping the entire menu so that preschoolers throughout the County receive only the freshest ingredients with every meal.

Kristine was hired at NHA in June 2007. When she started, she immediately began working with the agency on food services to hire a chef. Kris explains that in addition to having a supportive chain-of-command and high performing staff, it is key to have a registered dietitian and chef on staff to lead a foodservice operation like this. She and the chef developed recipes together because "heat and serve" meals do not require cooking, and Kris wanted a food services department that cooked. The heat-and-serve menu ceased in June 2008, and by September (just 3 months later), they were cooking everything from scratch. She wanted to raise the bar with her food service crew just as much as she raised the bar for the menu. Kristine taught staff culinary skills, knife skills, team building, customer service, how to read food labels, etc. Her department selects individuals with high quality skills and trains them. They went one step beyond and painted the offices of the Nutrition Services department, giving it a fresh and professional look. Kris explains that enhancing the office environment was just one other way for her team to feel ownership and pride in the services they are delivering each day.

Kristine hails from Tacoma, Washington. Prior to assuming the role she's in today, Kris has explored several other interests which led to great experiences that have ultimately created the leader we see today. As a teenager, Kris was really passionate about music. She was in the marching band and played the clarinet. For a time, she also played the violin. When she was a senior in high school, the Marine Corps marching band performed at her school, a compelling moment for her. She recalls thinking that they looked so professional in their uniforms, and went home that night letting her parents know that she wanted to join the Armed Forces.

"I joined the Navy because I wanted to see the world," Kristine says as she remembers the early years of her career. Although her initial intent was to practice music, she quickly took on other responsibilities during her time served. Before long, the Navy sent her on assignment to the island of Sardinia, off the southwest coast of Italy. It was here that she met her husband, who was also in service. She not only found love in Italy, but also her passion for nutrition and how it impacts the body. She was still serving in the Navy when

she decided to take night classes in nutrition toward becoming a Registered Dietitian, and now is almost finished with her Masters Degree. She said it has been a long process because she “loves doing so many things.”

Kristine is a devoted partner of the Early Childhood domain, and at meetings she is eager to share best practices with other stakeholders in the community working to shape healthy environments for young children. She first became inspired by San Diego County’s childhood obesity prevention efforts when she attended the Childhood Obesity Summit, hosted in 2007. It was the first event she ever attended in San Diego, as she’d been working in her home state of Washington before taking the job at Neighborhood House Association. Kris said that as the Summit progressed, she knew instantly that her work would be aligned.

“The Initiative has been such a great way to network in the community and I am so happy it exists,” Kristine said.

The Initiative values Kristine's partnership as well.

In her spare time, Kristine enjoys running, and has completed several marathons and half marathons. She also loves boxing and has trained with a coach for 5 years! Kristine also enjoys scrapbooking.



DOMAIN UPDATE

Schools and After-school Domain

The San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative Schools and After-school domain is committed to helping our region’s school districts “make the grade” when it comes to coordinated school health.

In 2010, Schools and After-school domain partners worked together to obtain 40 wellness policies from school districts throughout San Diego County in order to identify examples of policy language related to 20+ coordinated school health topics. In 2011, the Initiative created an online database containing the coordinated

school health topics that were examined, the districts that cover each topic, and the actual policy language used for each health topic. All school districts participating in the School Lunch Program are required by law to develop a district wellness policy; this is a valuable resource for school administrators as they outline goals and standards for improving physical activity and nutrition at schools and in school-based activities. It also allows school administrators to see how their wellness standards measure up to other districts in the region. The Initiative staff and Schools and After-school domain is committed to keeping this database current, and will work together over time to be sure that it contains the most up-to-date policies available. [Click here to learn more about this database.](#)

What is next for the COI Schools and After-school domain? Some key stakeholders from agencies such as the San Diego County Office of Education, California Project LEAN, and the Network for a Healthy California will be identifying best practices in physical education and physical activity programming within school districts. It is the domain’s hope that by highlighting some of the districts that are successfully meeting these requirements, they can empower other districts with resources to do the same.

This domain is consistently seeking new and innovative ways to support school and after-school providers in preventing and treating obesity. To learn more about the domain or

investigate partnership opportunities, please contact [Erica Salcuni](#).

RESOURCES



**Physical Activity
& Nutrition**

211 San Diego: Nutrition, Healthy Weight, Physical Activity, and Diabetes Resource

The San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative, Rady Children's Hospital San Diego, The American Academy of Pediatrics, San Diego Diabetes Coalition, Champions for Change/Network for a Healthy California, and Community Health Improvement Partners have joined with 211 San Diego, a 24/7 multilingual phone service and searchable online health and human service database, to create a comprehensive obesity and diabetes information and referral database. This resource provides San Diego County residents, healthcare providers and social services agencies a FREE "one stop shop" for programs and services in nutrition, healthy weight, physical activity, and diabetes. These free resources can be accessed via phone by dialing "2-1-1" or clicking on the green apple icon above.

Seeding the City: Land Use Policies to Promote Urban Agriculture

This report by PHLP and NPLAN is a resource for communities looking to engage in urban agriculture through community gardeners, urban farms, and backyard gardens. This toolkit provides the framework and model language that policymakers can use to promote sustainable urban agriculture in their communities. [More...](#)

Research Synthesis: Preventing Obesity among Preschoolers

The Active Living Research Program has released a research synthesis describing various strategies to that counteract the childhood obesity epidemic on a national level. The synthesis includes the most current research on environmental factors related to childhood obesity by examining child-care settings like preschools, Head Start Programs, and family child-care homes. The synthesis identifies many opportunities for improving the nutritional quality of foods provided to children, increasing physical activity among children and providing better support to help caregivers promote healthy behaviors. [More...](#)

UCLA Center for Health Policy Research: A Patchwork of Progress

The UCLA Center for Health Policy Research released a study entitled "A Patchwork of progress: Changes in Overweight and Obesity Among California 5th, 7th, and 9th Graders from 2005-2010". This study used BMI data collected from the state-mandated California Physical Fitness Test which is administered to 5th, 7th, and 9th graders across the county. The study found that while the percentage of overweight and obese children in the state dropped 1.1 percent over the past five years, the overall percentage is still 38 percent. On the county level, the change has been uneven with some counties having significantly higher increases and decreases than others. San Diego County's percentage of overweight and obese children decreased 3.7 percent from 2005-2010. [More...](#)

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Click [here](#) for this month's legislative update. For more information, please contact [Melanie Cohn](#), COI Manager.

EVENTS/CONFERENCES

Classroom Breakfast – Health, Academics, and the Bottom Line

December 6, 2011, 1:00 to 2:00pm PT

This session is designed to answer your "what," "why," and "how to" questions about Classroom Breakfast. Hosted by Action for Healthy Kids, this webinar will discuss key

elements of the model from menus to equipment to daily operations. It will also examine factors that are critical to the successful implementation of Classroom Breakfast. You will leave the webinar with resources and next steps for launching Classroom Breakfast in your community. [More...](#)

BOOST Collaborative Annual Healthy Behaviors Conference: Changing Lives, Saving Lives

December 7-9, 2011

San Diego, CA

This conference is part of the BOOST family of conferences and co-sponsored by the Center for Collaborative Solutions, which developed the Healthy Behaviors Initiative that has demonstrated the power of afterschool programs in addressing the childhood obesity crisis. Our Healthy Behaviors Conference carries a level of credibility and quality that will appeal to the leaders supporting youth in the out-of-school field. [More...](#)

Film Screening: Lunch Line

December 8, 2011, 6:30 to 9:30pm

San Diego, CA

Every day, millions of school children across the United States grab a lunch tray and get in line. Few, if any, know the history behind the line or that they have the power to change what gets placed on the tray. The new documentary Lunch Line hopes to empower Americans to be part of solutions that can help build a better lunch for future students. The screening will be preceded by a networking reception with light appetizer and a cash bar, and followed by a discussion with the filmmakers, Ernie Park and Michael Graziano. [More...](#)

Regional Garden Education Center Classes

Spring 2011 through Spring 2012

Locations throughout San Diego County

Take free gardening classes at your local Regional Garden Education Center. A complete listing of classes is available on the [Healthy Works Calendar](#). You can sign up directly with the following Regional Garden Education Centers:

[Olivewood Gardens and Learning Center](#) (National City)

2525 N Ave, National City 91950

Contact: Michelle Cox, (858) 204-6949

[Solana Center](#) (Encinitas)

137 N El Camino Real, Encinitas 92024

Contact: Elizabeth, (760) 436-7986 ex 225

[International Rescue Committee](#) (City Heights)

5348 University Ave, San Diego 92105

Contact: Anchi Mei, (619) 641-7510

[San Diego Youth Services](#) (Spring Valley)

3845 Spring Dr, Spring Valley 91977

Contact Steven Jellá, (619) 221-8600 x229

[Wild Willow Farm and Education Center](#) (South San Diego)

2550 Sunset Ave, San Diego 92154

Contact: Erynn Pierce, (619) 540-2431

For more information, contact [JuliAnna Arnett](#).

GRANTS

"I Can Grow" Youth Garden Awards

Deadline for Applications: December 23, 2011

Burpee Home Gardens is offering small grants to support urban school and community gardens. The grants will be awards to plans that focus on youth-based activities and programs with an emphasis on sustainable nutrition and food production as well as social responsibility. Winners will receive plants, on-site assistance, \$2500 in gardening supplies, and a video camera to document the process. [More...](#)

School and Community Garden Grants

Deadline for Applications: December 31, 2011

Whole Foods Market's Whole Kids Foundation, in partnership with FoodCorp, is accepting applications to award 1000 school/community garden grants in the amount of \$2000 each. These grants offer a unique opportunity to increase kids access to fresh, nutritional, local produce. I encourage you all to forward this information to any schools or community groups that may have an interest in applying. [More...](#)

Grants for Sports Programs: LA84

Deadline for Applications: February 24, 2012

This grant is intended for the development of sports programs for underserved communities targeting ethnic minorities, girls, and physically challenged children. Non-profits and tax-exempt organizations may apply. [More...](#)



GARDENING CORNER

More and more people and agencies across San Diego County recognize the unlimited benefits of gardening.

Gardens are "living classrooms" that teach students of all ages the life cycle and how to grow their own food and develop social skills. These are just a few of the benefits of gardening, and the horticultural therapy program at East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility in East Otay Mesa is among the first in our region to equip incarcerated youth with vocational skills the promise a positive future.

The horticultural therapy program at East Mesa Juvenile Detention Center launched in October 2011 as part of the Healthy Works *School and Community Garden program*. The horticultural therapy program is comprised of in-class lectures and an outdoor lab class. Topics on the syllabus include vermiculture, methods of urban agriculture, and garden design. The horticulture class also doubles as a part of the San Diego County Regional Occupational Program (ROP) which allows the thirty individuals enrolled to obtain career and vocational training. Bill Moberly, the project manager at the East Mesa Juvenile Detention Center, describes the goals of the program: promote the consumption of nourishing foods, build basic work habits, and learn to grow vegetables in an urban setting.

"Creating a vegetable garden incorporates all three of these goals into one class," he says.

Additionally, the garden project has potential to improve the science, math, and language arts curriculum as well as serve as the facility's resource conservation effort. In speaking about the benefits of pairing horticulture with incarcerated youth, Mr. Moberly cites the gains that the students are enjoying from the seemingly-immediate success of gardening. At first, the students did not believe that anything would grow in their garden, which began as an asphalt courtyard surrounded by razor wire. After a few blooming plants were placed in

the garden area, however, students' enthusiasm bloomed too. Before long, students were noticing the life fostered by the garden, pointing excitedly to hummingbirds. Soon the class will plant milkweed as part of their class session on pollinators to attract butterflies.

"The students are captured by the wonder of seeing their plants grow," says Moberly.

According to the American Horticultural Therapy Association, gardening as cognitive therapy can provide important social benefits from memory improvement to greater social skills. The Horticultural Therapy Partnership in New York links plants and gardening as tools in human healing and rehabilitation and includes benefits like mood improvement, stress reduction, depression alleviation, and vocational training. Horticultural therapy has been linked to lower recidivism rates, and higher job prospects for released prisoners. Rikers Island, one of the largest prison complexes in the world, has operated a very successful horticultural therapy program, and recidivism rates of those participating in the program are about 25% as compared to the prison's overall rate of 65% (Jiler, 2007).

The East Mesa Garden Project is part of a growing trend across the country which identifies horticulture as therapeutic and valuable to both prison inmates and at-risk youth. Horticultural therapy programs have been instituted with success in several large prisons, most notably in Rikers Island. Another partnership between Evergreen State College and the Washington Department of Corrections resulted in several successful projects that included prisoners in support of ecological research and biodiversity in the state.

San Diego County is beginning to offer more horticultural therapy programs in juvenile detention centers. While the East Mesa ROP course is one of the first in San Diego County, several other programs are sprouting up around the County. Camp Barrett, another juvenile detention center, started an urban garden in 2009 but just recently got ROP certified. The Camp Barrett program has a ten to twelve week program in which a small group of students work in a greenhouse and a raised bed garden. Second Chance, an organization dedicated to serving low-income and at-risk populations in San Diego County, also started its own sustainable urban garden in May 2011. Since the inception of the Second Chance Urban Garden, three classes have participated in the garden's construction and continue to operate a garden on Second Chance property.

The Initiative and partners such as Bill Moberly are hopeful that horticultural therapy and other gardening programs continue to grow opportunities for people of all walks of life around San Diego County, whether these opportunities are for work or play. If you know of a food access initiative in San Diego County promoting health through innovative activities or would like to learn more about a highlighted project, please contact [JuliAnna Arnett](#).

LOCAL NEWS

[Iraqi Immigrant Brings Fresh Produce, Jobs to Neighborhood](#)

['Candy Buy Back' Program Under Way](#)

[Food Is On The Menu And The Curriculum At One San Diego High School](#)

NATIONAL NEWS

[UC Davis Study Questions Link Between Obesity and Fast Food](#)

[In High Schools, a Critical Lens on Food](#)

[State Asks Funds for Healthy Food in New Farm Bill](#)

[More Coverage on the Study Linking Poor Neighborhood to Diabetes and Obesity](#)

[NAACP and Surgeon General Unveil Plan to Combat Obesity](#)

[Planting the Seed: Public Transportation](#)

[Fewer California Kids Overweight, but Bay Area Struggles](#)

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The San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative (Initiative) is a public/private partnership whose mission is to reduce and prevent childhood obesity in San Diego County by creating healthy environments for all children and families through advocacy, education, policy development, and environmental change. The Initiative oversees implementation of the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Action Plan, a comprehensive plan to end childhood obesity in San Diego County. The purpose of the Initiative is to create, support and mobilize partnerships among multiple domains; provide leadership and vision; and coordinate countywide efforts to prevent and reduce childhood obesity. The Initiative has established active workgroups in multiple domains, i.e. community sectors, including Government, Healthcare, Schools & After-school, Early Childhood, Community, Media, and Business to act as a forum for the development, replication, and leverage of best practices and resources.

San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative

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