



SAN DIEGO COUNTY  
**CHILDHOOD  
OBESITY  
INITIATIVE**

Working Together to Shape a Healthy Future

[www.OurCommunityOurKids.org](http://www.OurCommunityOurKids.org)



## IN THE NEWS

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

- Upcoming Meetings
- Domain Partner Highlight
- Domain Update
- Resources
- Legislative Update
- Announcements
- Events/Conferences
- Grants
- Farmers' Market Corner
- Local News
- National News

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, March 6, 1 - 2:30 p.m.

CHIP Office

### **Domain 3: Schools and After-school**

Tuesday, March 20, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

CHIP Office

### **Domain 4: Early Childhood**

Tuesday, March 27, 10 - 11:30 a.m.

YMCA Childcare Resource Service, 4th Floor Executive Conference Room

3333 Camino Del Rio South, San Diego, CA 92108

### **Domain 5: Community**

TBA (see [calendar](#))

### **Domain 6: Media**

TBA (see [calendar](#))

### **Domain 7: Business**

TBA (see [calendar](#))

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## DOMAIN PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

### Business Domain

Ron Troyano  
Managing Co-Partner  
Alchemy Restaurant



Ron Troyano is one well-rounded restaurateur. He and his partners offer a menu at Alchemy Restaurant (located in South Park) known for its savory fare reflecting cuisine from all over the globe, but his focus is truly local. Ron believes in business that gives back to the community it serves, and San Diego is lucky to have a restaurateur that is passionate about sustainable food, creative expression and healthy people.

Ron was born in Newport Beach, California, but when he was very young his family moved to Camino, a quiet little town in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Ron and his business partner Matt Thomas grew up together, and they are like-minded in their sense of community, which plays out well in their business.

When you step into Alchemy Restaurant, it is clear that Ron and his team value community and collaboration. In a town with many dining options, Ron takes an organic approach to building his customer base. From the intriguing local art decorating the walls to a menu that features produce from local farms, this is a place run by folks that honor their place in the community. It's working for them, too; Alchemy enjoyed its 3rd birthday this month on February 20th!

It is because of Ron's sense of community that he is such a great partner within the business domain. His dedication to providing children with education and hands-on experience with healthy foods is a great example for any restaurateur that wants to join the fight against childhood obesity. As Ron and Matt built Alchemy, they were also hopeful to build a relationship with a neighboring South Park elementary and middle school, Albert Einstein Academy. Ron was interested in partnering with the school to replicate a program similar to the Edible Schoolyard created by Chef Alice Waters at a middle school in Berkeley California, which she designed to equip students with skills in garden and kitchen classroom settings in order to provide a hands-on environment for students in which to apply skills learned in traditional math, science, and humanities classes. Luckily, the school had similar plans to build a gardening program.

It was a match made in heaven; Ron and Matt offered use of the kitchen facility at Alchemy to bolster the program with a cooking component. Student cooking classes launched in Fall 2009, where kids become immersed in the world of cooking through an 8-week course where they learn nutrition education, food preparation skills, menu planning, and even get to try their hand at waiting tables. The course "graduation" is an evening at Alchemy, where parents and teachers enjoy dinner prepared and served by the students.

Since its inception, the Alchemy student cooking course has been held 8 times. Up until this point, the course has been held for 4th through 8th graders, but future courses will split up the age groups a bit more; Ron and his chef Ricardo Heredia are excited to teach the older students more in-depth information about nutrition science. The long-term plan is to

expand the program as much as possible in the future, as several other schools that have expressed interest in having this curriculum for their students. Ron expresses his delight that the community has rallied around the notion that children should have access to fresh, nutritious foods as a part of their day.

Ron is also an acting member of the San Diego Farm to School Task Force, co-facilitated by the Childhood Obesity Initiative's very own Food Policy Manager, JuliAnna Arnett. The task force is comprised of school food service representatives, business owners, and public health advocates who convene to exchange resources and best practices on healthy food procurement to improve school lunch programs across the region. Ron is also a board member of the San Diego Hunger Coalition, an anti-hunger network also in support of increased access to nutritious foods and a sustainable food system that reaches all San Diegans.

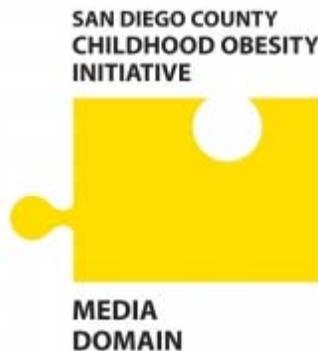
"It's exciting to have local partners that recognize that a system-wide approach is needed to address childhood obesity," Ron reflects on his participation in these programs and initiatives. "We have to market the attractiveness of healthy food to kids, and can so many issues by doing this."

Ron's background provides a little insight into his good instincts for culture and taste. He has worked in several creative fields before finding his place in the food service world. Prior to opening Alchemy, he built several art galleries throughout both San Diego and Santa Monica and helped with the creation of a new beverage program in the popular New York restaurant, Django. He is a member of the American Sommelier Association as well!

In his free time, Ron enjoys spending time with his fiancée, Marisa—they'll be married on March 7th! They live in Golden Hill, but are accustomed to walking around all the different neighborhoods in San Diego. Together, they are watching this "young city be born."

## DOMAIN UPDATE

### Media Domain



Check out the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative's social media!

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[YouTube](#)

Our domain partners are always working together to expand and enhance the communications that positively impact the health of our community and the people that live in it. For more information on this domain and its activities, please contact COI Manager, [Melanie Cohn](#).

## RESOURCES

### 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.

#### Kitchen Garden Planner

This garden planner from Gardeners Supply is a resource for people wishing to start and maintain kitchen gardens. The planner includes an encyclopedia of fruits, vegetables, and herbs as well as a design-your-bed tool with planning instructions! [More...](#)

#### State Initiatives Promoting Healthier Food Retail

This report by the Center for Disease Control surveys legislation that individual states have taken to increase access to healthy foods in low-income communities. This report provides public health practitioners with insight into a variety of state policies as well as action steps to move forward in their own states. [More...](#)

#### Life's Sweeter with Fewer Sugary Drinks

Life's Sweeter with Fewer Sugary Drinks is a new campaign by the Center for Science in the Public Interest. The following public service announcements (in [Spanish](#) and [English](#)) are meant to promote the campaign and educate people about the harmful effects of excessive consumption of sugary drinks. The video clips can be viewed on YouTube and on Hulu and Hulu Latino.

### LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

[Click here](#) for an update on the latest in obesity prevention-related legislation.

For more information, please contact COI Manager, [Melanie Cohn](#).

### EVENTS/CONFERENCES

#### Accelerating the Movement: SNAP-Ed to NEOP

March 5-6, 2012

Sacramento, CA

The Network for a Healthy California Statewide Conference will focus on the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 that directed the USDA to develop new regulations to transform SNAP-Ed into a Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention grant program. All network partners and organization involved with obesity prevention are encouraged to attend. Free registration for the conference begins December 2012. [More...](#)

#### Active Living Research Annual Conference

March 12-14, 2012

San Diego, CA

The 2012 ALR conference will highlight research that examines socioeconomic and racial-ethnic disparities in environmental opportunities for physical activity, policies that may lead to environmental disparities, and potential solutions to these disparities. [More...](#)

#### Healthy Schools, Healthy Budgets Conference

March 21, 2012

Los Angeles, CA

The Dairy Council of California is hosting a conference regarding low-cost ways to implement wellness policies in everyday school activities while maintaining a healthy budget. This all-

day conference will take place at the California Endowment in Los Angeles. [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**

### **Innovation Competition**

Deadline for Applications: April 2, 2012

The Active School Acceleration Project is providing multiple grants of 25,000 - 100,000 to elementary schools using the most innovative programs and technologies to promote school-based physical activity. Elementary schools (ages 5-12, K-6th grade) are eligible to apply.

[More...](#)

### **Fuel Up to Play 60 Grants**

Deadline: June 1, 2012

The National Football League is offering multiple grants to schools to implement their wellness programs. The grant money can be used for food service materials and equipment, nutrition and physical education materials, staff development, and overall Fuel Up Play 60 programming. Awards of up to 4,000 will be granted to selected applicants. [More...](#)

### **School Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies, Obesogenic Behaviors and Weight Outcomes**

**Deadline for Applications:** January 7, 2013

This is a funding opportunity for researchers evaluating how policies can influence school physical activity, nutrition environments, youth behavior and weight outcomes. The program is intended to support small research projects that can be carried out in a short period of time with limited resources. [More...](#)



## SCHOOL & COMMUNITY GARDENS CORNER

A growing number of schools across the nation recognize the importance of school gardens in addressing childhood obesity and creating a successful learning environment, and San Diego County is no exception. In some districts in our region, school food services are taking an important leadership role in the school garden movement—partnering with parents, teachers and administrators to develop garden to cafeteria programs that extend the lessons learned in the garden to the school cafeteria.

A garden to cafeteria program connects a school garden to the cafeteria by incorporating garden-grown produce into school meals. The school cafeteria is a classroom itself for teaching students the benefits and joy of life-long healthy eating habits. Research has shown that students that grow their own food are more likely to eat the food they helped grow, and they also tend to be more adventurous and healthier in other food choices (U Colorado 2009). Using and promoting school garden produce in the cafeteria can be a valuable teaching tool, even if the amount of produce available can only be a supplement to the other food. Nonetheless, school cafeterias face many challenges providing students with fresh and healthy foods, and community partners have been hard at work to share resources with schools that would like to explore this program as an option.

In January 2012, the Healthy Works School and Community Gardens Program partnered with the SD County Childhood Obesity Initiative, Community Health Improvement Partners, SD Unified School District, Resource Conservation District of Greater SD, Roosevelt Middle School, and the SD Zoo to host a Garden to Cafeteria Food Service Workshop at the SD Zoo and Roosevelt Middle School. The workshop targeted food service directors and staff, school administrators, and school food service support teams (e.g., parents, school gardeners, teachers, etc.). It was attended by 48 participants representing 12 school districts, 3 preschool/childcare providers, and the County of SD Probation. Attendees received received training on the County of San Diego's Department of Environmental Health Culinary Garden Food Source Regulations, garden to cafeteria best practices and procedures, and hands-on garden to cafeteria instruction. In addition, SD Unified School District launched its Conditional Approval of a Food Source for SDUSD's Garden to Cafeteria Program. The conditional approval lays out the process for all SDUSD schools interested in serving school garden-grown produce in school meals to get approved by both SDUSD and the County of San Diego's Department of Environmental Health. There were questions at the workshop on whether self-produced, non-commercial compost could be used on the garden, but all questions have been resolved. The County of San Diego's Department of Environmental Health will allow schools to use non-commercial, self-produced compost on edible school gardens as long as the compost contains no fecal material. The County of San Diego's and SDUSD's protocols can be accessed on the COI web site at:

<http://ourcommunityourkids.org/domains--committees/schools-and-after-school/healthy-works-school-gardens.aspx>.

We are excited so much activity is happening across the county to ensure kids have access to healthy foods and can even participate in the process as the most local food is that grown in your own yard. If you would like to help schools in supporting farm to school or offer your services to a school garden, please contact JuliAnna Arnett, Healthy Works<sup>SM</sup> Food Policy Manager, at 858.609.7962 or [jarnett@sdchip.org](mailto:jarnett@sdchip.org).

## LOCAL NEWS

[Kaiser Permanente Tackles Obesity In Lemon Grove with \\$1 Million Grant](#)

[South Bay YMCA Puts \\$10,000 Grant to Work](#)

[City Council Unanimously in Favor of Urban Agriculture Amendments](#)

[Supervisor Roberts Discusses Childhood Obesity in State of the County Address](#)

[Law Proposes Keeping Food Trucks from Schools](#)

[Growing Opportunities](#)

## NATIONAL NEWS

[USDA School Lunch Rules 'Best Ever' – Though Pizza is Still a Vegetable](#)

[Sugar Tax Needed, Say US Experts](#)

[Sugary Drinks Tied to Breastfed Kids' Weight](#)

[Richmond Mulls Pathbreaking Soda Tax](#)

[Trust for America's Health: Reducing Obesity Rates by 5% Could Result in \\$29 Billion in Health Care Savings in 5 Years](#)

[USA Today: Junk Foods Widely Available at Elementary Schools](#)

[LA Times: Anger in Congress Over Anti-obesity Ads](#)

[UC Denver Study Says Breastfeeding Can Prevent Diabetes-related Childhood Obesity](#)

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Disclaimer: The Initiative provides the monthly newsletter solely as a service to its partners to support domain activities and promote other related nutrition and physical activity programs and policy/environmental changes in San Diego County. The newsletter is for educational purposes only and does not constitute an endorsement of any product, resource, legislation, or intellectual content included in the newsletter outside of specified Initiative domain workgroup activities or official partnership statements approved by the Initiative's leadership council.

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**

[Cheryl Moder](#) : Director | 858.609.7961

[Julianna Arnett](#) : CPPW Food Policy Manager | 858.609.7962

[Melanie Cohn](#) : Manager | 858.609.7963

[Erica Salcuni](#) : Coordinator | 858.609.7964

9370 Chesapeake Drive, Suite 220, San Diego, CA 92123

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