



SAN DIEGO COUNTY  
**CHILDHOOD  
OBESITY  
INITIATIVE**

Working Together to Shape a Healthy Future

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



## NOVEMBER 2012

The San Diego County Childhood Obesity 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.

### IN THE NEWS

- Upcoming Meetings
- Domain Update
- Domain Partner Highlight
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- Events/Conferences
- Grants
- Legislative Update
- Community Corner
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### UPCOMING MEETINGS

**Please note that Community Health Improvement Partners will be moving to our new location at 5095 Murphy Canyon Drive, Suite 105; San Diego, CA 92123 as of November 29, 2012.**

**San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative meeting locations will be announced prior to each meeting. Please check the calendar for the most up-to-date information.**

#### Domain 1: Government

TBA (see [calendar](#))

#### Domain 2: Healthcare

Tuesday, December 4, 1 - 2:30 p.m.

**Old CHIP Office** (9370 Chesapeake Dr., Suite 220; San Diego, CA 92123)

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

Tuesday, January 15, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Location TBA

#### Domain 4: Early Childhood

TBA (see [calendar](#))

#### Domain 5: Community

TBA (see [calendar](#))

#### Domain 6: Media

TBA (see [calendar](#))

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TBA (see [calendar](#))

## DOMAIN UPDATE

### Business

The Business Domain engages business leaders in policies and practices that make good health and business sense. This fall, the domain has been busy coordinating the [2012 Halloween Candy Buy Back](#), a collaborative effort among local health care providers and community members to address the issue of obesity and dental health among our local children.

After Halloween, participating dentists and physicians purchased unopened candy from young trick-or-treaters for \$1 per pound. They then coordinated with local shippers to send the candy to Operation Gratitude, which filled thousands of care packages for troops overseas.

Thanks to this year's project partners—Healthy Kids Choice, Inc., The San Diego Dental Society, The San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative, Mailboxes and More, and That Place that Ships—and the 25 dentists, physicians, and business offices that participated in the buy back, this year's collection totaled 6,200 pounds and counting!

New this year, children dropping off candy received healthy snacks in return for their candy. Healthy snacks included Smart Puffs from Pirate Brands and fresh organic apples donated by Jimbos. Through these in-kind donations, the Candy Buy Back was able not only to reduce candy consumption but also to suggest healthier snack alternatives.

Though dentists across the country participate in a national candy buy back for Operation Gratitude, San Diego County's program includes a wider array of health and business partners and is also meant to combat childhood obesity.

Sabrina Covington, leader of Healthy Kids Choice, Inc., said: "San Diego County is the only area we know of that takes a comprehensive view on the program to include childhood obesity prevention and not solely dental health."

The Business domain is confident that the dollars and "sense" of fighting childhood obesity add up. The Domain is always looking for new participants interested in establishing more practices that encourage good health and business. To learn more about the domain or investigate partnership opportunities, please contact [JuliAnna Arnett](#).

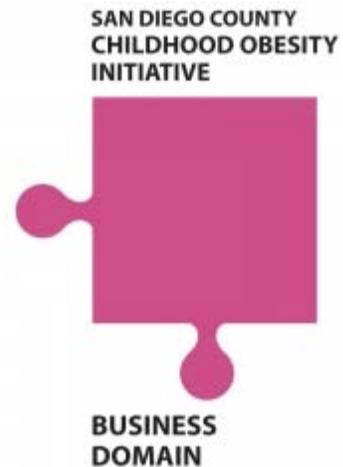
## DOMAIN PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

### Early Childhood

#### Norma Mendoza

Health Educator, YMCA Childcare Resource Service

It's often said that the strength of our society can be measured by how we treat our children. Norma Mendoza, a health educator at the YMCA Childcare Resource Service and valuable partner in the Early Childhood Domain at the San Diego County Childhood





Obesity Initiative, knows and lives this mantra.

Norma journeyed with her mother and stepfather from Tijuana to Temecula when she was a junior in high school. Having spent her formative years in Mexico, she felt like she was starting life over at age 16.

"It was very challenging. I couldn't speak any English, and I was the only non-English speaker in my class. It was total immersion in a new language."

Temecula's schools hadn't yet adjusted for the influx of Mexican immigrants who would make new lives in the city, and Norma's school had no formal ESL classes. She remembers well-intentioned teachers doing their best, working with kids one-on-one. Living in a majority-English-speaking community, though, she quickly picked up the language, and her bilingual fluency serves her well today.

Norma thrived in her new hometown, graduating high school, attending community college, and finally heading to San Diego State University, where she earned a double major in journalism and Spanish and a minor in public health. Despite widely varying interests during college, "I always knew my heart was in public health," she said.

She never saw her journalism, Spanish, and public health studies as mismatched, but rather mutually reinforcing. Norma always intended to build a career hearing people's stories, debunking popular myths, boiling down and communicating complex information, and empowering her community. And she's doing it—not as a newspaper woman but as a health educator.

She said: "Lots of people have asked me how those are connected, but I thought if I knew how to disseminate information and work with the community, I'd do well," in public health.

While still in college, Norma got a chance to test her multi-disciplinary talents. She volunteered as a sexual health peer educator and also became involved in a public health project at SDSU's Institute for Behavior and Community Health. Under project manager Jamie Moody (a fellow COI partner), Norma worked with the Institute's MOVE project, a recreation center-based childhood obesity intervention. Norma's role was to take confidential measurements of the participating children, and it was this work that opened her eyes to the severity of the childhood obesity epidemic in San Diego County.

"I saw some toddlers who were 90 pounds. It was very serious," she remembers.

Norma was overjoyed when she landed her dream job right out of college. She joined the San Ysidro Health Center as a health educator, working with families with children on improving their diets, increasing physical activity, and making healthier choices. "I'm very hands on," she emphasized, and working directly with members of the San Diego community was immensely exciting and fulfilling.

While at San Ysidro, Norma became involved in the San Diego Healthy Weight Collaborative, in which COI also participates. When COI rolled out its 5210 Every Day! campaign this past summer, she generously volunteered to translate the campaign materials into Spanish and work with other members of the Collaborative to get their input. The posters, flyers, and brochures are now being used in English- and Spanish-language settings across the county, providing vital health information for families with children.

Less than three months ago, Norma left San Ysidro to join the YMCA Childhood Resource Service, another COI partner organization. She works as a health educator for the Quality Preschool Initiative (QPI) with First 5 San Diego, where she performs health and safety checks at QPI sites and provides technical assistance to sites that need follow-up services to ensure that preschool environments are safe. COI also benefits from her continued involvement, now with the Early Childhood Domain.

Outside of work, Norma is pursuing a Masters of Public Health in Health Promotion at San Diego State University, expecting to complete the program within two years. In her (increasingly scarce) spare time, she loves "looking for adventures" with friends at the beach and on long hikes. She's also an enthusiastic dancer, participating in social dance at a local studio and virtually anywhere else she can grab a partner. Norma enjoys the South Park area of San Diego and looks forward to spending more time with her parents, who recently moved to the city.

## 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.

### **Get to Know Your New School Meals**

New school meal requirements resulting from the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 mean positive changes for your students' school meals! Learn more about San Diego County's new, improved school meals, and help spread the word!

- [San Diego Unified School District Food Services Department Website](#) - Information on SDUSD's new menu items, salad bars, dipper bars, and more!
- [The School Day Just Got Healthier](#) - USDA toolkits for school administrators, school employees, parents, students, community residents, and members of the media.
- ["Build a Healthy Lunch!" Flyer](#) - This Team Nutrition Iowa flyer helps kids choose a well-balanced (and federally reimbursable) lunch.
- ["School Lunches Get a Makeover" Fact Sheet](#) - A reader-friendly fact sheet for parents.

### **Getting Equity Advocacy Results**

Childhood obesity rates are particularly high among San Diego County's communities of color. How can obesity prevention organizations promote racial equity in public health?

Getting Equity Advocacy Results (GEAR) is a new interactive tool from PolicyLink to help non-profits build, measure, and improve their equity campaigns. [More...](#)

### **HBO Weight of the Nation**

Obesity is a problem all segments of our community must address. As a proud sponsor of this documentary, Kaiser Permanente's hope is that these films will prompt meaningful discussions and catalyze individuals, groups and communities to act. Looking for ways to take steps NOW for yourself, your family and/or your community? Here are a few ideas:

- SPREAD THE WORD: Pledge for Progress to confront the obesity epidemic. [Like The Weight of the Nation™ on Facebook.](#)
- HOST A SCREENING: [Get the free DVD screening kit and discussion guides.](#) To help employers, faith-based organizations, schools and others take action, check out the [Get Engaged information](#) that provides easy-to-use tools to support your efforts and stimulate change in your community.
- GET MOVING. GET INVOLVED. SIGN UP for the [Every Body Walk!](#) program and add more activity to your day:

[Click here for more information on HBO Weight of the Nation.](#)

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Vote for the Solana Center and Healthy Day Partners to Become San Diego's 2012 ECO-Ambassador**

The [Solana Center](#) and [Healthy Day Partners](#) have been honored as joint finalists for the 2012 ECO-Ambassadors People's Choice campaign! The ECO-Ambassador campaign is a collaborative effort to highlight innovative environmental programs positively impacting the San Diego region. Their Waste Revolution program has been entered into an online voting competition for \$25,000 and they need your help! [Vote here](#) by December 6th.

### **Part-Time Job Opening: LA Hospital Leadership Team (HLT) Coordinator**

The San Francisco Bay Area Physicians for Social Responsibility is looking to expand its work making hospitals healthier food environments. The LA HLT Coordinator will collaborate with the LA Food Policy Council and Farm to Institution efforts, conduct outreach to area hospitals, organize HLT meetings and events, and participate in monthly Healthy Food in Health Care calls. [More...](#)

## **EVENTS/CONFERENCES**

### **Free Composting Workshop**

December 15, 2012

San Diego, CA

The Solana Center is hosting a free composting workshop for school and community garden teams and San Diego County residents interested in learning how to make their organic waste work for their gardens. The workshop will run from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Town & Country Apartments Community Garden. [More...](#)

## **GRANTS**

### **Annie's Grants for Gardens**

**Deadline for Applications:** December 15, 2012

Annie's offers grants to new and existing school gardens that connect children directly to real food. These funds can be used to buy gardening tools, seeds or other needed supplies.

[More...](#)

### **Fiskars Project Orange Thumb**

**Deadline for Applications:** December 15, 2012

Fiskars believes in contributing to the growing community garden effort. Ten grant recipients will receive \$5,000 in cash and tools to help support their goals of neighborhood beautification and horticulture education, and one lucky applicant will receive a complete garden makeover. [More...](#)

### **Sundt Foundation Grants Program**

**Deadline for Applications:** December 15, 2012

The Sundt Foundation funds activities and programs undertaken by non-profit organizations that improve the quality of life for disadvantaged children in the communities where Sundt has an established office (Phoenix, Tucson, Sacramento, San Diego, and San Antonio). [More...](#)

### **The Big Help Grant Program**

**Deadline for Applications:** December 31, 2012

The Big Help Grant Program supports projects that inspire kids to (1) take care of the environment; (2) lead active, healthy lives; (3) engage in community service; or (4) improve their educational experience. Elementary and middle schools and afterschool community-based organizations serving kids ages 5 to 15 are eligible to apply. [More...](#)

### **Rite Aid Foundation Community Grants**

**Deadline for Applications:** January 1, 2013

The Rite Aid Foundation makes grants to programs that focus on health and wellness in the communities in which Rite Aid operates. [More...](#)

## **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

[Click here](#) for a comprehensive update on obesity prevention-related legislation.

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



## **COMMUNITY CORNER**

This fall, San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD), along with districts across the country, has been working hard to implement the 2010 Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA), the first major overhaul of school meal regulations in 15 years.

The [new requirements](#) make major improvements to the food served to our students. HHFKA regulations set maximums and minimums on grains and meat/meat alternatives, age-appropriate calorie limits, and larger servings of fruits and vegetables. HHFKA also specifies types of vegetables—dark green, starchy, beans and peas, red and orange—to ensure that students are receiving a healthy variety of produce in their meals. In order for the meal to be reimbursable by the USDA, students must take three of the five components, and students cannot decline both the fruit and vegetable components.

These standards mean big changes for SDUSD food service providers, who serve more than 135,000 meals and snacks every day. The Food Services Department has been working quickly to train staff, implement the changes, and introduce other healthy innovations on the traditional school meal. For example, SDUSD has introduced a new salad bar menu, created a new dipper bar (fruits and vegetables with an assortment of healthy dips),

reformulated recipes to produce healthier menu items, incorporated more local and organic foods, reduced the number of entrees, and introduced smaller portion sizes. Additionally, SDUSD has designated a test kitchen at Gompers Preparatory Academy to allow staff to refine recipes and do student taste testing.

SDUSD's Food Services Department has also embraced the concept of [garden to cafeteria](#). Vanessa Zajfen, SDUSD's Farm to School Specialist, has trained food service staff on the implementation of the program and worked to designate a salad bar slot for any items grown in school gardens. SDUSD is partnering with the Schools and After-School Domain of the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative; Solana Center for Environmental Innovation; Olivewood Gardens and Learning Center; Master Gardener Association of San Diego County; Square Foot Gardening Foundation; and Victory Gardens San Diego, a program of San Diego Roots Sustainable Food Project, to develop a quarterly training for garden coordinators in the implementation of the protocols.

Though the meal changes have initially met with a mixed student response, SDUSD hopes that continued exposure to and education about the healthier meals will boost student approval. Many schools have created "share tables" in school cafeterias to help reduce waste. In addition, school food officials are communicating with parents through newsletters and flyers and have asked principals to communicate changes to teachers so they can promote the meals to students. Over the next several months, the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative will be working with its partners to help spread the word about healthier school meals.

To learn more HFFKA and help promote the positive changes you're seeing on school lunch trays, see the "Resources" section above.

If you know of an innovative project in your community that advances San Diego County's opportunities for fresh food access and physical activity, please contact [JuliAnna Arnett](#).

## LOCAL NEWS

['Farm to School' Initiative Puts Fresh Produce in Classes](#)

[Chula Vista Schools Revamp Food Events Under New Wellness Policy](#)

[How did we get so fat?](#)

[Sell Back your Halloween Haul for a Good Cause](#)

[Los Angeles City Council Declares Mondays Meatless](#)

[Links studied between walkability of neighborhoods and obesity](#)

## NATIONAL NEWS

[Parents in Survey Take Responsibility for Childhood Obesity](#)

[Kansas City Hospital Bans Sugary Drinks, Soda](#)

[Federal, State and Local Tax on Sugar Sweetened Beverages Endorsed by Nation's Oldest, Largest Public Health Organization](#)

[Childhood Obesity Help from Innovative Companies](#)

[Poor Neighborhoods Home to More Obese Kids: Study](#)

[A Look at How Public Health Fared in the Election](#)

[Building a Solid Foundation for the Future of Detroit](#)

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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**

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