



Children grow and maintain school gardens as part of The Education Fund's Plant a Thousand Gardens Collaborative Nutrition Initiative, which is in part funded by The Blue Foundation.

The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida

Embrace a Healthy Florida 2008 - 2010



The Blue Foundation
FOR A HEALTHY FLORIDA



The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida and its Parent, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, are Independent Licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.



The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida Embrace a Healthy Florida

The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida recognizes the serious and widespread threat of the obesity epidemic for children, families, communities and the health care system. To address the causes of childhood obesity, The Blue Foundation developed Embrace a Healthy Florida, a statewide initiative that goes beyond traditional nutrition and fitness programs. Since the launch in 2008, grants to nonprofit organizations and health departments to support model programs, fund applied research and foster community collaboration and engagement were made. Critical to the success is coordination with other private and public funders across the state and nationally to impact this epidemic. This report presents a summary of our goals and information on our community partners, the organizations that have received grants to address the causes of childhood obesity in Florida.

Embrace a Healthy Florida

is a statewide initiative that goes beyond traditional nutrition and fitness programs.

Goals of the Embrace a Healthy Florida Initiative

The Blue Foundation identified the following as critical activities in the effort to prevent and reduce childhood obesity:

- Educate the public about the causes of the childhood obesity epidemic and its effects on physical, mental, social and economic health, and translate evidence into practice.
- Encourage families, schools, community organizations and policymakers to collaborate in designing and carrying out interventions.
- Serve as a source of practical tools for interventions (educational resources, programs, legislation, policy, web site links and contact points).
- Form partnerships and build the capacity of five communities to achieve results over time (Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, Tallahassee and Tampa).

Approach

Embrace a Healthy Florida recognizes the significant relationships between research, policy and practice. In the interest of developing a sound strategy to achieve sustainable impact, The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida developed an approach built on three platforms:

- Statewide Promising Practice Grants to build stronger practice and policy endeavors at the local and community level.
- Applied Research Grants that focus on effective methods of prevention and early intervention rather than treatment.
- Community Planning and Engagement Grants to build capacity in five targeted municipalities (Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, Tallahassee and Tampa) and support fundamental efforts to address the causes of obesity at a local and community level.

Working Principles for Embrace a Healthy Florida

To achieve lasting change, the initiative will focus on building a constituency and improving policies and institutional practices to prevent and reduce childhood obesity in Florida. Drawing on evidence from research,

the initiative will work to change the children's environments in ways that will encourage healthy choices. Emphasis on the environment comes from an understanding that individual choices and optimal child development happens in a larger supportive context. Fostering partnerships with local communities and linking local work to statewide and national efforts are central in:

- Improving access to healthy foods;
- Improving opportunities for physical activity;
- Engaging youth, parents, residents, health professionals, administrators, public officials, community leaders and advocates for ongoing changes; and
- Building community capacity to create a continuum that will sustain ongoing work.

Embrace a Healthy Florida Survey Results

The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida conducted a scan of the sixteen nonprofits that had received Embrace a Healthy Florida grants to identify the types of programs that they offer, with the following results:

- Endorse and/or provide in-school **(80%)** and out-of-school **(71%)** healthy eating and/or physical activity programs; and/or provide community-based recreation, physical activity and/or exercise programs **(53%)**.
- Advocate for, develop plans related to and are involved with programs that focus on the built environment and/or land use **(60%)** or focus on community transportation **(40%)** to encourage physical activity.
- Work with targeted groups: children 0 to 5 years **(20%)**; specific racial, ethnic and/or immigrant populations **(60%)**; parents **(57%)**; health care practitioners **(33%)**.
- Sponsor policies and/or programs that support food availability **(42%)**; healthy eating and/or physical activity for the entire community **(53%)**; economic development and/or community initiatives to enhance healthy living **(46%)**.
- Encourage an examination of food advertising **(47%)**.
The full report can be acquired by contacting The Blue Foundation.

Embrace a Healthy Florida Grantees 2008-2010



Alachua County

- Church-Partnered Family Health Self-Empowerment Program
- ▲ UF Institute of Food & Agricultural Sciences Extension

Duval County

- Healthy Jacksonville Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition
- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
- War on Poverty

Hillsborough County

- Florida Child Health and Healthcare Quality Chartbook
- St. Joseph's Children's Advocacy Center

Leon County

- ◆ Florida 180° Initiative
- Leon County Health Department

Miami-Dade County

- The Education Fund
- War on Poverty and Florida Memorial University

Orange County

- Get Active Orlando
- Hebni Nutrition Consultants
- ● MicheLee Puppets
- Nemours Child Care Obesity Prevention
- Reducing Obesity in Central Florida Kids

Palm Beach County

- PrimeTime Palm Beach County

- Grantees are located in these counties
- ▲ ◆ ● Program sites are in these counties

Grantee Highlights

The Education Fund: Plant A Thousand Gardens - Collaborative Nutrition Initiative (CNI)

Miami-Dade County
305-892-5099

Student-centered, seed-to-table interdisciplinary curriculum with edible garden “laboratory” that involves school administrators, teachers, children and parents.

Florida 180° Initiative

Leon County
850-577-8743

Integration of four proven programs in the prevention and reduction of childhood obesity and diabetes by improving health literacy, increasing levels of physical activity, improving nutrition and recognizing the importance of a balanced approach to consumption. The four programs are: Big Fat Industries (BFI), Kidz Bite Back (KBB), Couch Potato Companies (CPC), and Wellness, Academics & You (WAY).

Florida Child Health and Healthcare Quality Chartbook: Focus on Childhood Obesity

Hillsborough County
813-974-6692

Comprehensive report that briefly updates key findings from national data sets that report on the health and healthcare quality for children and adolescents in Florida; provides an in-depth examination of the nature, scope and impact of childhood obesity in Florida; and showcases promising approaches to addressing the obesity epidemic at the levels of community, county and state.

Get Active Orlando

Orange County
407-245-7313

Partnership that serves Orlando by inspiring the community to make active and healthy lifestyle changes; provides education; promotes opportunities for physical involvement; and develops and implements activities that create an environment conducive to physical activity.

The Health-Smart Church Program to Promote Health and Modify and Prevent Obesity Among African American Women and Their Families

Alachua County
352-273-2167

A church-partnered version of the Health-Smart Behavior (HSB) Program to increase health promoting behaviors, and ultimately modify and prevent overweight/obesity among families, particularly those from racial/ethnic minorities.

Healthy Jacksonville Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition

Duval County
904-253-2276

Coalition made up of health care professionals, policymakers, business leaders, school personnel, parents and community residents to identify and coordinate policy changes, environmental changes and programmatic opportunities to reduce childhood obesity.

The prevalence rate of overweight and obesity is more than two out of five for Florida children who are

- **Poor (43.1%)**
- **On public health insurance (40.8%), or**
- **Black non-Hispanic (45.3%)**

CAHMI/Data Resource Center analysis of the 2003 National Survey of Children's Health. Developed by the Child Policy Research Center and the Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative/Data Resource Center (www.childhealthdata.org) on behalf of the NICHQ Childhood Obesity Action Network.





Children who are overweight or obese are more likely than others to become obese as adults.

Robert C. Whitaker and others, "Predicting Obesity in Young Adulthood from Childhood and Parental Obesity," New England Journal of Medicine 337 (1997): 869-73.

Hebni Nutrition Consultants, Inc. – K.Y.D.S. Take Charge! (Keeping Your Diet Straight)

Orange County
407-872-1333

A nutrition education program that targets African American elementary and middle school youth who are at-risk of becoming overweight or obese. Components of the program include cooking demonstrations, weekly tennis lessons and exercise classes, pedometer tracking, food diaries, weekly weight and BMI readings and a 6-week parent workshop and cooking demonstrations.

Leon County Health Department

Leon County
850-606-8173

A research project that will provide insight into the community and home food environments in a low-income area of Leon County, Florida. Data collected from food stores, individuals and families will be used to determine how to increase access to healthy food, promote nutritional food habits and ultimately address policy and environmental changes that will positively impact the entire community.

MicheLee Puppets, Inc.: EXTREME Health Challenge

Orange County
407-898-7925

A lively game show-style presentation, featuring puppets and audience participation performed in elementary schools for Pre-Kindergarten-5th grade students and their teachers with the goal to increase knowledge and awareness of good nutrition and exercise and to promote healthier choices among children.

Nemours Child Care Obesity Prevention: Healthy Habits for Life

Orange County
407-650-7177

An educational intervention and program evaluation that disseminates the Healthy Habits for Life child care resource kit among child care centers and evaluates its impact on the eating and physical activity of children ages 3 to 5.

Prime Time Palm Beach County: Project GROW (Guided Reflections on Wellness)

Palm Beach County
561-805-9927

A comprehensive, curriculum-based wellness program designed to demonstrate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle for elementary school-aged children. The program promotes good nutrition and healthy eating, engaging in fun play and non-competitive physical activity.

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

Duval County
850-942-2379

Plan and implement trail integration and programs that provide safe trail access, and encourage increased use and improved trail amenities in Duval County.

ROCK: Reduce Obesity in Central Florida Kids

Orange County
407-977-1610 ext. 224

A regional childhood obesity consortium that will unite efforts to decrease childhood obesity for greater collective impact and measurability. The project includes website development, educational outreach, dissemination of a consistent social marketing message and advancing community initiatives by fostering connections and promoting collaboration among stakeholders.

**St. Joseph's Children's Advocacy Center –
Kidz Bite Back**

Hillsborough County
813-615-0589

A school-based, peer-to-peer grassroots effort for 4th and 5th graders to encourage healthy eating and physical activity habits through two counter-marketing components (Big Fat Industries and Couch Potato Companies) that promote the concepts of moderation, healthy choices and educated consumerism.

**War on Poverty: Building a Healthy Community –
Childhood Obesity Prevention Project (BHC-COP)**

Duval County
904-766-7275

An awareness campaign designed to promote active lifestyles and healthy eating habits for youth and their families. The program educates and engages residents in the process of modifying barriers and behaviors, increasing access to physical assets, and providing opportunities to prevent childhood obesity through increased awareness and education.

War on Poverty with Florida Memorial University

Miami Dade County
904-766-7275

Coordination of local efforts in support of a community engagement process which seeks to reduce obesity among children, promoting physical activity, providing education and increased access to urban agriculture, and increased awareness of and access to healthy foods.

**University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural
Sciences Extension: Food of the Month Club –
The OrganWise Guys Comprehensive School Program**

Alachua County
352-273-3555

A dynamic, interactive, science-based, cross-curricular program that uses fun characters based on the organs of the body, coupled with high energy activities, to teach children how to make positive eating, health and fitness choices.

Evaluation

Evaluation is a critical component of the Embrace a Healthy Florida initiative and the use of external evaluators was included as a key element in the design of the initiative. Reports from grantees, the community engagement process, regional data and program scan will be used to make program adjustments to improve efficiency and effectiveness, to document program impact and make the case for sustainability, to measure the benefits of the funding and to present outcomes and outputs.

In Florida, 32.5% of children ages 10–17 are overweight or obese; nationally, the percentage is 30.6.

CAHMI/Data Resource Center analysis of the 2003 National Survey of Children's Health. Developed by the Child Policy Research Center and the Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative/Data Resource Center (www.childhealthdata.org) on behalf of the NICHD Childhood Obesity Action Network.



For more information or the full report, contact
The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida
at www.bluefoundationfl.com
or thebluefoundation@bcbsfl.com



The Blue Foundation
FOR A HEALTHY FLORIDA



The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida and its Parent, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, are Independent Licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.