

The MetroWest Experience in Child Obesity Prevention



**Harvard-Pilgrim Health Care Foundation
Growing Up Healthy Conference
November 5, 2009**

About the Foundation

- Hospital conversion foundation founded in 1999
- Placed-based funder – 25 communities west of Boston
- History of reactive & proactive grantmaking to address key health issues
- Since inception, over \$30 million invested in the community

About the Foundation

- Focus on child obesity since 2005
- Why child obesity?
 - Compelling evidence of this as a major health issue
 - Issue was multi-dimensional, led itself to multiple strategies and actions
 - Cuts across all of our communities
 - We could have an impact

*"Childhood obesity is, without doubt,
the most pressing threat confronting the future
health and well-being of the US population."*

*Homer C, Simpson L. Childhood obesity: what's health care policy got to do with it? *Health Affairs*. 2007;26(2):441


- **Strategic Plan Objective:**

Increase emphasis on leading proactive community health Initiatives where the Foundation highlights a priority MetroWest health need and actively works to address it, in partnership with local organizations and through grants and value-added non-grantmaking activities.

- **Our original goal statement:**

The Child Obesity initiative is designed to create local collaborations among schools, community organizations, public health and/or recreation departments that will provide leadership in the development and implementation of effective policies and practices to promote and support healthy nutrition and exercise choices among children

- **Areas for Impact:**



Individual
Behavior

School & Org.
Behavior

Community
Behavior

MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation's Childhood Obesity Initiative

- Childhood Obesity Task Force
- Programmatic Grants (to date: \$2.8 million) (targeting individual and organizational change)
- Local advocacy
- Community-wide planning grants (targeting community change)
- Grantee training & technical assistance
- Public awareness campaign
- Mass in Motion

Grant Programs

Towns involved:

Ashland, Framingham, Franklin, Marlborough, Medway
Milford, Millis, Natick, Needham, Northborough,
Westborough

Organizations involved:

local farms

food pantries

WIC programs

Boys & Girls Clubs

education foundations

Boards of Health

elementary, middle & high
schools

YMCAs/ youth centers

Parks & Recreation Depts.

health advisory councils

community agencies

Examples of Grants (Framingham)

- Fitness is Elementary: after school programs in 6 elementary school includes a healthy snack, nutrition education and physical activity
- MetroWest YMCA, KidStrong Program: integrate nutrition education and physical activity into all Y after-school programs
- Framingham Dept of Parks & Recreation, KidFit Program: provides vouchers to low income children to participate in a specialized fitness program at a local health club
- Framingham High School Wellness Center: extended hours, staffing and training workshops at the wellness center
- Framingham Education Foundation, Ballroom Dancing: after school ballroom dancing program in all elementary schools
- Framingham WIC, Healthy Habits at Home Program: provides parent nutrition education to WIC families and women living in shelters
- Boston University, CHEER Program: Provides Framingham parents and families with education around diet and exercise
- Framingham School Food Service: provide a vegetable steamer to provide healthy school meals
- n Framingham State College, Dept of Food & Nutrition: provides training and
- n technical assistance to childhood obesity grantees

Examples of Advocacy Efforts

- Support for a local community organizer (MPHA) to influence school wellness policy
- Food service director/changes to school meal offerings
- Changes to other school-related food and beverage challenges
- Using BMI/YRBS data to support policy change

Public Awareness Campaign

- Goal: bring attention to the issue as a way to change individual and family behavior
- Key audience: parents
- Key message: It's about kids, their health & their future
- Budget: \$300,000 over two years
- Elements: Billboards ▪ Newspaper ads ▪ Cable TV ads
▪ Materials for pediatric practices ▪ Collateral media
- Website



FAT CHANGE

Obese children are a good bet for type 2 diabetes. Heart disease. Stroke. Cancer. Sleep apnea. Depression.

Obesity is robbing our kids of their future. Anything you can do about it? First step, go to

www.metrowestkids.org

A MESSAGE FROM THE METROWEST COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION

Estimated daily impressions for RTE. 9 billboard: 36,900
Total Impressions: 1.1 million

METROWEST
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CARE
FOUNDATION



If that's your kid, what are you waiting for?

Obese children have an excellent chance of developing type 2 diabetes. Heart disease. Stroke. Cancer. Sleep apnea. Depression.

Obesity is robbing our kids of their future. Get help now.

www.metrowestkids.org

A Message from the MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation.

METROWEST
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CARE
FOUNDATION

OBESITY.
IT'S ROBBING OUR KIDS OF THEIR FUTURE.
WWW.METROWESTKIDS.ORG
A MESSAGE FROM THE METROWEST COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION.

CLEAR CHANNEL

CENTRE PIZZA
SPAGHETTI • GRINDERS

CENTRE PIZZA

GORDON REAL ESTATE
COMMERCIAL • RESIDENTIAL 978-822-8222

CAFE Fresh BAGEL

HOME THEATER

Home Depot

Costco



CHILD OBESITY ~~BEGINS~~ AT HOME.

ends

**PROTECT YOUR CHILD
FROM STROKE.**

www.metrowestkids.org

A MESSAGE FROM THE METROWEST COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION.

METROWEST
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CARE
FOUNDATION



**THIS IS NOT A BLAME GAME.
IT'S A CALL TO ACTION.**

Obesity is robbing our kids of their future. By now, we've all heard about the serious health consequences of obesity in young people. But there's a lot that you can do. There's hope. And there's help. The time to act is now.

WWW.METROWESTKIDS.ORG

A MESSAGE FROM THE METROWEST COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION.

Newspaper advertisement

METROWEST
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CARE
FOUNDATION

OBESITY IS ROBBING OUR KIDS OF THEIR FUTURE.


**Ask for help during your appointment.
Visit www.metrowestkids.org**

A MESSAGE FROM THE METROWEST COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION.

Materials for Pediatric Practices

**METROWEST
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CARE
FOUNDATION**

**OBESITY PUTS KIDS
IN HARM'S WAY.**

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO 

**LA OBESIDAD PONE
EN PELIGRO A
NUESTROS NIÑOS**

¿QUÉ PUEDE HACER? MUCHAS COSAS, POR EJEMPLO... 

Material for Pediatric Practices

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The Healthy Family Table

Sweet Potato Sensation

by Katherine Stanton

Student Dietician, Framingham State College

November, 2007



Ingredients:

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled, quartered and cut into 1/2 inch thick slices
3 small beets, peeled, quartered and cut into 1/4 inch thick slices
4 medium carrots, cut into 1/2 inch thick slices
1 large acorn squash, peeled, seeded, and cut into 1/2 inch thick slices
3 tablespoons maple syrup
Salt and pepper

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 425 F.
In a large bowl combine vegetables and oil and toss to coat vegetables evenly.
Place vegetables in 2 large baking dishes, roast in oven for 25 minutes.
Remove from oven, toss vegetables in syrup and season with a pinch of salt and pepper.
Return vegetables to baking dish and roast for 15 minutes.

Nutrition Analysis (per serving)

Serves 6

Calories: 72 Fat: 2g

Cholesterol: 0mg Sodium: 97mg

Protein: 1g Carbohydrate: 9g

Fiber: 2g



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Metrowestkids.org

- Information & ideas for kids, parents and schools
- Ask the Experts
- Tips for Healthy Eating
- Tips for Getting Active
- Local Resources
- Interactive Tools



Community-wide Planning Grants

- 1) Coalition Building
- 2) Community Assessment
- 3) Strategic Planning



Framingham
Northborough
Franklin

- 4) Integrate with Mass in Motion

Impact

- Campaign generated significant interest – 10,000 hits @ month
- Significant attitude change among school leadership on the importance of nutrition and physical activity in school
- Changed how structured afterschool programs address nutrition and physical activity
- For those that participated in funded projects, good individual outcomes (↓ BMI, ↑ awareness of and adherence to good nutritional practices)
- Little impact on community change efforts
- Who owns this issue in the community?