

**Healthy Communities Study  
Brochure for Key Informants**

**FRONT COVER**

Headline:

**The Healthy Communities Study**  
Your opportunity to have a major impact on the health of America's children

**BACK COVER**

Headline:

**Why Your Participation Is Essential**

Childhood obesity is a growing public health problem.

YOU are a critical link to your community and the activities happening at the grassroots level to keep children healthy.

By sharing your experience with community programs and policies that improve nutrition and increase physical activity, you can help us understand how *best* to tackle this problem.

The knowledge and experience you share could help children in your community and across the country maintain a healthy weight, and improve their health for many years to come.

**INSIDE**

Headline:

**A Landmark Study...A Major Impact On The Health of America's Children**

Body Copy:

*About 17% of all children are obese, and the percentages are even higher among some minority groups.*

*Communities are responding with programs and policies designed to improve nutrition and increase physical activity among children and youth.*

*Some of these activities appear to be having an impact.*

*However, we don't yet know "what works" ACROSS community programs and policies nationally – and this information would be of great value to local leaders and policy makers.*

*The Healthy Communities Study is the first scientifically rigorous national study designed to explore "what works" at the community level.*

*This first-of-its kind study could have a major impact on the health of our country's children.*

### **How The Study Will Work**

We've selected a representative sample of 279 communities with over 23,000 children (ages 3-15) across the country to participate in this study. Communities and individual families within communities will participate.

The study research team will collect data from four sources:

- 1) interviews with community leaders about their community's programs and policies for improving nutrition and increase physical activity – **this is where YOU can play a critical role;**
- 2) observations of community and school environments;
- 3) interviews with parents about their children's nutritional and physical activity habits; and
- 4) the children's past and current BMI (or healthy weight) scores.

By collecting and analyzing past and current data, we will be able to track the relationship between community programs and policies, children's diet and physical activity, and children's BMI scores within and across communities over time.

### **Your Participation Is Essential**

You know better than anyone else what your organization (and community) is doing to tackle the problem of obesity and the challenges and successes you're having. This is why your participation is so important.

The study requires the comparison of responses from community leaders with those of families. So **your input is critical** to gathering a scientifically accurate picture of *which* community programs and policies are associated with positive trends in children's diets and physical activity levels.

Once completed, the study's findings can inform the decisions made by local leaders and policy makers, including those in YOUR local area.

### **How You Were Selected For This Study**

Participation in this study is by invitation only. You have been selected because of your role and responsibilities in your community. If you agree, you'll receive a small gift as a "thank you" for giving your time and knowledge.

**What Will Happen Next?**

If you agree to participate, one of our researchers will call to arrange an interview with you at your convenience about your organization's programs and policies for preventing obesity in children.

The discussion will focus on ways local programs and policies – including those you are involved in – are encouraging better nutrition and increased physical activity in children. The interview should take no more than 60 minutes.

Please welcome the call from our research team when they contact you!

**Remember, this is your chance to make a lasting contribution to the health of all our children. We hope you accept and give us the benefit of your expertise.**

**Box-----**

**Meet The Research Team For The Healthy Communities Study**

The *Healthy Communities Study* is funded by several National Institutes of Health (NIH) institutes. These include the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, the National Cancer Institute, the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disorders, the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child and Health and Human Development, and the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are key scientific partners in this study.

Battelle Memorial Institute, the world's largest independent scientific organization, is carrying out the study under contract to the NIH. Battelle formed the following research team to handle different aspects of the study:

University of California at Berkeley investigators will be responsible for assessing the nutritional status of the participating children. University of South Carolina investigators will assess the children's physical activity and sedentary behavior. University of Kansas team members will assess the programs and policies of the communities under study. Examination Management Services, Inc. (EMSI) will perform the in-home data collection. Battelle will coordinate methods, instruments, training, data analysis, and dissemination.

**Box-----**