

## The Childhood Obesity Brain Trust (COBT)

South Central Los Angeles, Los Angeles County

### Collaborating Grantees

The Accelerated School (lead agency); Los Angeles Unified School District; and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health-SPA 5/6. Other partners include: Coalition for Community Health; Saint John's Well Child Center; Sustainable Economic Enterprises of L.A. (SEE-L.A.); City of L.A. Commission for Children Youth and Their Families; Norwood St. Elementary School; Hooper St. Elementary School; Worksite Wellness L.A.; Orthopaedic Hospital, South Central Family Health Center; Center for Food and Justice at Occidental College; California Food Policy Advocates; Esperanza Community Housing Corporation; L.A. Care; SOS Foundation; Los Angeles County Department of Physical Activity; Los Angeles Department of Nutrition; Los Angeles Department of Injury and Violence Prevention; Los Angeles Department of Public Health; Chronic Disease Division; and Community Health Council's REACH 2010 project.

### Community Description

The HEAC project is focusing its efforts on people living in zip codes 90007 and 90011, with a total population of 146,235, predominately Latino residents (60%), and with significant numbers of African

American (12%), Asian (11%) and white (16%) residents as well. Between 65% and 80% of the residents of these two zip codes speak English as a second language. Between 33-37% of children are overweight and 48-54% of children are not physically fit. Neighborhoods in this area are noted for a preponderance of fast food outlets and lack of access to safe spaces for physical activity.

The Childhood Obesity Brain Trust grew out of a series of discussions on the issues and impact of childhood obesity in South Central Los Angeles, including a Community Dialogue/Panel with Congressman Xavier Becerra in August 2004. COBT is comprised of a group of dedicated individuals and organizations with significant experience in health promotion/disease prevention, health care, community outreach and education, community organizing, and an understanding of the needs of special populations.



Provider training at St. Johns Well Child and Family Center conducted by Dr. Cruz from Kaiser Permanente.

## Key Policy Goals and Strategies

### School Sector

- Enforce SB12 and SB965 standards districtwide.
- Improve the quality of and participation in school breakfast, lunch and summer nutrition programs.
- Provide professional development for teachers and administrators on standards-based instruction for physical education.

### After School Sector

- Support the City Child Nutrition Policy to provide healthy meals/snacks at all city funded programs, including vending and fundraising on city property.
- Create, adopt and implement comprehensive new policies to address physical activity in after school programs.

- In partnership with *A World Fit For Kids*, institutionalize a structured physical activity program in schools in which a credentialed teacher will extend physical activity instruction into the after school setting.

### Neighborhood Sector

- Assess, identify and implement policies to improve the food and physical activity environment in the low-income communities of South L.A.
- Recruit community residents and conduct train-the-trainer workshops on nutrition, policy/advocacy and physical activity.
- Conduct a series of pedestrian audits to advocate for safe, walkable neighborhoods.

- Work with pushcart vendors to assess knowledge, attitude and behavior regarding vending policies around schools.
- Train parents on LA Unified School District policies including the Obesity Prevention Motion, Cafeteria Reform Motion, and the Healthy Beverage Resolution.

### Healthcare Sector

- Expand health coverage to include primary and secondary prevention services.
- Support and promote LA County Vending Machine Policy and implement worksite wellness policies.

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## Accomplishments

- In partnership with Sustainable Economic Enterprises of L.A. (SEE-LA), trained six community health promoters as HEAC Health Ambassadors to teach practical food budgeting, nutrition cooking skills that emphasize the use of fresh vegetables and fruits available at farmers markets. Participants also received policy/advocacy training and physical activity instruction.
- Adapted Kaiser Permanente childhood overweight prevention presentations and train-the-trainer workshops to 1-2 hour modules and conducted them at targeted S. Los Angeles clinics, often in the form of lunchtime grand rounds. The workshops were overwhelmingly well attended and well received, thanks in large part to their being conducted during already scheduled lunchtime clinical staff meetings.
- Formed a partnership with the Los Angeles County Community Health Plan, Office of Managed Care. Working closely with the Medical Director to conduct a baseline provider survey and various pediatric overweight management and prevention trainings to interested clinics, such as the H. Claude Hudson Comprehensive Health Center.
- Partnering with Kaiser Permanente to implement a community-adapted version of the highly acclaimed Kaiser Permanente Kids in Dynamic Motion (KP KIDS) Pediatric Weight Management Program in H. Claude Hudson in 2007.
- Working to link S. Los Angeles health-care providers interested in community advocacy training, with the California Medical Association Foundation's (CMAF) Physicians for Healthy Communities Initiative in 2007. Will partner with CMAF in planning, conducting and evaluating a Physicians for Healthy Community training in Los Angeles in Spring 2007.
- In the newly formed Subcommittee on Youth Engagement, Public Health Nurses, HEAC Sector Leads, Youth Health Educators, the South LA Youth Coordinator, and students prioritized the next several months' work on HEAC Youth Engagement in South LA. Topping the list were education and outreach to students at The Accelerated School (TAS), and recruitment, retention, and building a positive youth culture in a Health & Wellness youth team on campus.
- Launched the Healthy Summers project, an eight-week Education & Advocacy seminar with ten students who met twice weekly for several hours. Students scripted, recorded and hosted an hour-long set to air on the web-based Youth Radio ([www.youthradio.org](http://www.youthradio.org)), helped to plan TAS's school-lunch menu, and developed recommendations on Youth Engagement for our community partners at The Apostolic Christian Faith Center.
- Several students participated in the Berkeley Media Studies Group training on Marketing & Advertising, where they did preliminary work on a combined neighborhood assessment/video document entitled, "Where I Get My Five-A-Day."
- Providing physical education training to teachers through a "Train the Teacher" program, teaching credentialed teachers to provide physical education lessons to children grades K-5.
- Introduced Marathon Kids program, in which students run quarter mile increments to complete a full marathon over a 6-month period. Marathon Kids extends into after school in the form of a jogging club.
- Provided nutrition training to Recreation and Parks directors to support the City of Los Angeles Child Nutrition Policy.

### To Get Involved, Contact:

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