Wayne State University Center for School Health Joins the Fight Against Obesity

Childhood obesity is one of the most pressing issues of our time. In the last 20 years, childhood obesity has nearly tripled, posing significant physical health, mental health, academic achievement and economic consequences which challenge the vitality of nearly every community in Michigan, especially in our underserved core urban areas.

Health experts have reported that addressing this crisis must involve: reaching youth when they are young and developing healthy living habits, offering interventions before obesity occurs, and focusing on schools as programming sites. To address the growing childhood obesity crisis, the Wayne State University College of Education Center of School Health, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, and the Michigan Fitness Foundation are joining forces around a healthy school transformation program called "Building Healthy Communities." The mission of the program is to use K-12 schools as epicenters for the improvement of children's health by supporting comprehensive, school-wide healthy school transformations in the areas of physical activity and healthy eating. The program unites principals, classroom teachers, physical education teachers, librarians and recess supervisors to reach children with consistent messages and numerous opportunities to learn about and choose healthy foods and be physically active. The model is evidence-based and school-friendly, and brings together 20 years of cumulative experience and expertise of all three organizations to make lasting positive health change for Michigan children.

The Director of the Center for School Health is Dr. McCaughtry, Division of Kinesiology, Health and Sport Studies; the Associate Director is Dr. Annie Murphy of the Research Division of the College of Education.

Find out more about the WSU College of Education Center for School Health at coe.wayne.edu/centerforschoolhealth.