



Healthy Foods, Healthy Moves

Delivering the Childhood Obesity Prevention
Message in Schools and Communities.



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Introduction

Dear Friends:

Thank you for being a part of the growing movement to address and prevent childhood obesity. Childhood obesity is a national epidemic and it will take the dynamic efforts of people and institutions in all sectors of society to combat this public health issue on behalf of future generations. Whether you are already actively engaged in your local area or you are exploring how you can get involved, we are pleased to share our model, expertise and experiences. The *Healthy Foods, Healthy Moves: InForm Chicago* project builds healthier communities by promoting the importance of good nutrition and physical activity to Chicago youth of all ages, in school and community settings.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, approximately 17 percent of children and teens are overweight nationally, with millions more at risk. While recent research shows that this level may have been constant for the last few years, it is still an overwhelming number. We have yet to see a reversal in this national trend, which is some 30 years in the making. More information is needed about recent prevalence trends at the regional and local level. For example, Chicago has a disturbing prevalence rate – up to four times the national average in predominantly minority communities – according to a study released by the Sinai Urban Health Institute.

The Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC) and Communities In Schools of Chicago (CISC) have joined forces and developed a project that built on our existing community outreach efforts. Shortly after it was founded in 2002, CLOCC developed *5-4-3-2-1 Go!*™, a social marketing message promoting healthy lifestyles for youth, and has since been striving to increase its dissemination throughout the city. CISC, with more than a decade of connecting school-based social, emotional and health services to students, had identified nutrition education and physical activity as a growing priority for schools.

Healthy Foods, Healthy Moves: InForm Chicago has helped both organizations to advance these priorities. The project embraces the notion that community coordination is essential in any effort to address and prevent an epidemic as critical as childhood obesity. We recognize that community stakeholders, including schools, community organizations, and families, must contribute to increased awareness of childhood obesity and engage in improving healthy lifestyle behaviors that can combat it.

We formalized and developed a structure for partnership, secured funding, and implemented a joint effort to educate and engage Chicago communities.

Key project goals include:

Promoting the 5-4-3-2-1 Go! message through networks of community partners.

- The *5-4-3-2-1 Go!* message promotes healthy lifestyle choices for children. It represents 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day, 4 servings of water a day, 3 servings of low-fat dairy a day, 2 or less hours of screen time a day, and 1 or more hours of physical activity a day.

Developing and deploying nutrition and healthy lifestyle ambassadors.

- CLOCC created a Go Team of teenagers to serve as role models by engaging young children (ages 3-7) and their caregivers in activities that encourage healthy eating and physical activity.
- CISC built awareness of the issue in schools and trained community-based program providers and school staff to provide students with high-quality school-based nutrition and physical activity services.

While every region and community has characteristics that make it unique and distinct, we believe that the core model and components of *Healthy Foods, Healthy Moves: InForm Chicago* can be modified and successfully

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replicated around the country. There are resources and assets in every community that can be mobilized in a common effort to address this public health concern.

This manual will guide you through the steps we took to: establish and manage a strong partnership, identify and engage community assets, recruit and train ambassadors for our message; and connect the ambassadors with children and families. We invite you to examine our model and to replicate any or all of its components in your community. We hope you will learn from our experience. We welcome you to adopt the *5-4-3-2-1 Go!* message and modify our tools so they meet the needs and fit the dynamics of your specific community or region. You may even choose to replicate our logo and project name, *Healthy Foods, Healthy Moves: InForm Chicago*, with your community's name inserted.

We are proud of the progress we have made in promoting our healthy lifestyle message. During the first two years of project implementation we have achieved the following milestones:

- A Go Team of teens was deployed to more than 250 community events;
- Nearly 350 community organizations have been trained or provided with information to support the *5-4-3-2-1 Go!* message;
- More than 80 schools have engaged in awareness-building about the importance of nutrition and physical activity; and
- More than 6,000 students have received nutrition and physical activity education and programming.

While it is too early in our evaluation process to report the full extent of the impact of *Healthy Foods, Healthy Moves: InForm Chicago*, preliminary information shows promising indicators of positive impact. The Go Team members are incorporating changes into their own lifestyles, reporting that they are eating healthier, engaging in more frequent discussions with family and friends about the benefits of physical activity, and feeling more in control of their own health. Organizations that have hosted the Go Teams are making the commitment to continue to promote *5-4-3-2-1 Go!* to the youth they serve by supporting its message through action. We are seeing signs that students are increasing their knowledge and improving their behavior related to nutrition and physical activity.

We continue to build upon these successes and look forward to additional opportunities to engage community stakeholders in the prevention of childhood obesity. We must note, however, that while public education is a critical component of behavior change, it cannot bring about such change on its own. It must be embedded within environmental change strategies that address community-level conditions such as access to healthy food and safe places for physical activity. Such strategies often include broader social and public policy initiatives that can help to transform communities and institutions. For more information about how this broader work is occurring in Chicago, we encourage you to browse our websites; www.clocc.net and www.chicagocis.org.

We would like to thank our generous funder, the PepsiCo Foundation, for investing in the implementation of our project in Chicago and the dissemination of this model on a national scale.

We hope that you find this manual inspiring and helpful in your community's journey to address the childhood obesity epidemic.

Sincerely,



Adam B. Becker, PhD, MPH
Executive Director

Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children



Jane Mentzinger
Executive Director

Communities In Schools of Chicago

How to Use This Manual

This manual includes overviews of CLOCC and CISC's networking models and recommendations for:

- Structuring project management;
- Mobilizing existing community resources;
- Creating message; and
- Coordinating community-based organizations, youth ambassadors, and school-based educators.

Each chapter includes a narrative describing our experience, the choices we made and lessons learned, followed by step-by-step instructions for replication. We have included specific tips to help you best implement the recommended steps. You will find evaluation recommendations in overview sections and integrated into many of the components. Importantly, each chapter is followed by a series of attachments – tools and materials we developed that can be used as templates for your purposes.

Clarification of Terms and Acronyms

A C R O N Y M S :

CLOCC: Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children

CISC: Communities In Schools of Chicago

Lead Project Partners: Refers to the small group of organizations that are responsible for the management and implementation of the project. In the case of HFHM, the lead project partners are CLOCC and CISC.

Agencies/Network Partners/Members: Refers to the broader set of community institutions, including community organizations, schools, and school-based program providers, that play a role in project implementation, but are not responsible for project management.