



**NIHCM**  
FOUNDATION

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**National Institute for Health Care Management Foundation**  
**Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health Update**  
**December 2007**  
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**NIHCM Foundation Activities**  
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Archives of NIHCM Foundation's 2007 Webinars are available on our website:

- ***Filling in the Cracks: Public and Private Strategies to Extend Health Insurance to Children and Families***, October 31, 2007, 1:00-2:30pm (EDT). The event featured presentations by Susan Dentzer, MA, PBS's NewsHour with Jim Lehrer; Gabriela Garcia, National Governors Association; Keith Evans, MBA, WellPoint, Inc.; and David Pizzi, MPA, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Florida and Dr. Michael Hutton, PhD, The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida. Conference materials are also available on our website.
- ***Preventing Adult Chronic Disease During Adolescence: The Role of Health Plans***, August 29, 2007, 1:00-2:30pm (EDT). This event featured presentations by Marc Jacobson, MD, FAAP, Schneider Children's Hospital in New York; Dawn Porter, MPH, and Betsy La Forge, MPH, Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina; Jonathan Klein, MD, MPH, American Academy of Pediatrics Julius B. Richmond Center and University of Rochester Medical Center; and Philip Smeltzer, MS, Humana. Conference materials are also available on our website.

NIHCM Foundation will be publishing a paper in early 2008 entitled, *Prevention of Adult Cardiovascular Disease Among Adolescents: Focusing on Risk Factor Reduction*. Co-authored by Arik Marcell, MD, MPH, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health; Marc Jacobson, MD, FAAP, Schneider Children's Hospital in New York; and Jonathan Klein, MD, MPH, University of Rochester Medical Center; this paper will describe the incidence of hyperlipidemia, obesity and overweight, and tobacco use among adolescents, and how these factors contribute to early onset of cardiovascular disease. The paper will also outline practical strategies health care professionals, especially health plans, can employ during adolescence to prevent future cardiovascular disease.

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**Progress, Tools, and New Ideas in the Fight Against Childhood Obesity**  
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The School Health Policies and Programs Study (SHPPS), the largest and most comprehensive assessment of America's school health policies and programs, reports that the nation's schools have made considerable improvements in promoting health and safety to children since 2000. The study, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), evaluates policies and practices across ten school health program components: health education, physical education and activity, health services, mental health and social services, nutrition services, healthy and safe school environment, faculty and staff health promotion, family and community involvement, crisis preparedness and response (new this year), and the physical school environment (new this year). A link to the Journal of School Health article and additional materials including fact sheets, state-level summaries, questionnaires, data files and archives of previous studies are available on CDC's website at [www.cdc.gov/SHPPS](http://www.cdc.gov/SHPPS).

Kaiser Permanente has partnered with Scholastic to distribute a new tool to teach children to eat healthier foods, increase physical activity and decrease their computer and television time. The Incredible Adventures of the Amazing Food Detective is a free, online video game in which children follow the routines of eight culturally diverse children whose activities or conditions benefit from exercise and healthy foods. The game is targeted to children aged 9-10 years and is available in English and Spanish at [www.kp.org/amazingfooddetective](http://www.kp.org/amazingfooddetective). Scholastic, the global children's publishing education and media company, will deliver CDs of the game along with supplementary educational materials including a teaching guide, wall poster and family resources to over 5,000 public school nationwide.

IBM announced a new wellness program aimed at reducing obesity among its employees' children. The Children's Health Rebate program, offered as part of IBM's annual benefits enrollment, is a 12-week, interactive web-based program that promotes healthy eating and active lifestyles to children. Employees can manage their families' eating and fitness habits through the website's resources, including sample menus, physical activity suggestions and nutritional information of popular foods, and tools such as self-paced tracking plans to monitor such things as frequency of family meals or daily fruit and vegetable consumption. Families set their own goals, maintain a daily diary over 12 weeks and upon program completion, complete an online assessment of their progress. Employees whose children complete the program receive a \$150 cash incentive.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has partnered with the Association of Children's Museums to extend the reach of the national "We Can!" childhood obesity prevention program. "We Can!" which stands for "Ways to Enhance Children's Activities and Nutrition" is an educational program teaching children aged 8-13 years to maintain a healthy weight. Partnering with communities, organizations and corporations, it is currently being implemented in more than 450 communities in 44 states. The latest museum partnership will include interactive exhibits of exercise and healthy food choices and community outreach through volunteers with traveling trunks - trained volunteers will visit schools and after-school programs with a trunk full of games and resources developed to foster healthy habits among participating children. More information on "We Can!" is available at: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/index.htm>.

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**New Research and Resources for Women's Health**  
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Making the Grade on Women's Health: A National and State-by-State Report Card reports that states are not making progress toward improving women's health, and rates the nation overall as "unsatisfactory". The report, compiled by the National Women's Law Center and the Oregon Health & Science University, evaluated women's health along 27 measures ranging from the

rates of routine screening test for breast and colon cancer to obesity and access to health care. According to the report only three of the benchmarks were met: the percentage of women 40 years and older getting mammograms, regular dental care and colorectal cancer screening for women over 50 years old. All states declined on the obesity status indicator; the most improved state policies were coverage of smoking cessation services in Medicaid; the most declined state policies were co-payments on prescription drugs and requiring waiting periods for women who need an abortion. The benchmarks were based on the US Health and Human Services' Healthy People 2010 objectives. The full report is available at: <http://hrc.nwlc.org/Default.aspx>.

The US Department of Agriculture's Center for Nutrition and Policy in Promotion and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) have collaborated on an expansion to the government's *MyPyramid* nutritional guidelines. "MyPyramid for Pregnancy and Breastfeeding" provides individualized nutritional advice, consistent with the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, to meet the unique nutritional needs of women who are pregnant or nursing. By inputting basic data, women can receive a tailored "MyPyramid Plan for Moms" that provides recommended amounts to eat from each food group by trimester of pregnancy or stage of breastfeeding. Additionally, users will find information on nutritional needs during pregnancy and breastfeeding, weight gain during pregnancy, weight loss during breastfeeding, dietary supplements, food safety, and special health needs, as well as links to information from other federal agencies. The information is also available in the form of three fact sheets from WIC clinics and from the WIC Works website at [http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Topics/MyPyramid\\_Resources.html](http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Topics/MyPyramid_Resources.html).

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**Adolescents, Young Adults and Health Insurance Coverage**  
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The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) released a radiocast to educate young adults about the importance of health insurance coverage. The two-minute radiocast is the third in a series of four Healthcare 411 Radiocasts to promote AHRQ and AHIP's guide Questions and Answers about Health Insurance, and explains that higher risk for sports injuries and motor vehicle accidents is a good reason for young people to become insured.

A recent poll by Kaiser Family Foundation finds that one third of young Americans are uninsured, and 42% of those ages 18-34 express concerns about their ability to pay for health services they need. Another poll by Rock the Vote indicates that health care is second to the Iraq war as the most critical issue among young Americans. To promote their concerns about the issue, young Americans are turning to Facebook, a social networking site, where over 20 groups, many with hundreds of members each, have been created to promote the cause of expanding government health coverage.

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**Health Plan Initiatives**  
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Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey's "Blue Expressions" Toastmasters club sponsored a Youth Leadership Program. The eight-week program was part of Horizon's Teen Empowerment Program to help teach junior high school children communication, problem-solving, and decision-making skills. Program organizers describe these as the core basics for youths to become leaders and inspire others.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM) tackles childhood obesity and teen smoking cessation. In consultation with eight Michigan physicians, BCBSM developed a toolkit available

to all Michigan pediatricians and other specialists. The kit assists physicians in the prevention and management of pediatric obesity, focuses on engaging both children and parents, and includes a range of topics and resources including age-specific body mass index charts, risk assessment tools, treatment recommendations, family communication techniques, and resources for identifying and managing type 2 diabetes and hypertension in children. As part of their overall comprehensive tobacco prevention efforts, BCBSM funded an antismoking campaign aimed at 16,000 high school students. The campaign will engage students in awareness programs and peer advocacy efforts through the 2007-2008 school year. Participating schools have chosen from various activities to promote smoke-free environments including surveys of smoke-free apartment buildings to encourage smoke-free policies, reports to businesses on the economics of going smoke-free, and creating coupon books to smoke-free restaurants.

**BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee** hosted a Youth Conference to address health and quality of life issues. BCBSTN invited 25 local teens to help plan, promote and host a free conference for 600 local youth aged 13 to 20 years. The five-hour conference included a general session; choice of 10 breakout sessions; free health screenings for cholesterol, blood pressure and diabetes; and an educational display area for participants to pick up health information. The teen-selected topics covered during the day included obesity, healthy relationships, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, suicide, media influences, peer pressure, stress/depression and gang violence. Special adult sessions were offered to parents and covered exercise and nutrition, gang violence, and alcohol and drugs. More information is available at [www.teenhealthexplosion.com](http://www.teenhealthexplosion.com).

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**AIM and PIPPAH Collaborative Activities**  
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**NIHCM Foundation** is part of two alliances aimed at improving the health of Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health: the Alliance for Improving Maternal and Child Health (AIM) and the Partners in Program Planning for Adolescent Health (PIPAAH) Collaborative. Both alliances are comprised of national membership organizations representing decision makers within state and local government, maternal, child and adolescent health professions, foundations, the health insurance industry, and business, as well as advocates for families. As part of these efforts, NIHCM occasionally highlights the publications and activities of the other organizations participating in the collaboratives.

The National Business Group on Health released *Investing in Maternal and Child Health: An Employer's Toolkit*. The toolkit is divided into seven sections: recommendations on evidence-informed, comprehensive health benefits to support child, adolescent, and pregnancy health; cost-impact assessments of recommended benefit changes; data on the cost of maternal and child health (MCH) care services; the business case for investing in child and adolescent health, healthy pregnancies, and primary care services for all beneficiaries; tools employers can use to develop an MCH strategy, communicate the value of their MCH benefits and link MCH outcomes to organizational performance; strategies employers can use to effectively communicate with beneficiaries and to tailor existing health programs and policies to the unique needs of children, adolescents and pregnant women; and health education information specifically developed for beneficiaries.

Grantmakers in Health's (GIH) annual meeting on health philanthropy will take place from February 27-29, 2008 in Los Angeles, CA. Meeting material and registration information for this year's meeting, *Building, Bridging, and Beyond: Breaking Down Barriers to Health Improvement*, are now available on GIH's website. GIH's latest Issue Brief, "Communicating for Policy Change," describes grantmakers' growing recognition of the importance of communications, specifically to influence health policy.

The [Association of Maternal and Child Health Program's \(AMCHP\)](#) Annual Conference will take place from March 1-5, 2008 in Alexandria, VA. The conference entitled, *We are Making a Difference: Leadership, Innovation and Investment in Maternal and Child Health*, will provide participants with new skills, knowledge of emerging MCH developments, as well as tools and information to further their daily activities to improve maternal and child health. Information and registration is available at <http://www.amchp.org>.

NIHCM Foundation is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to improving the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of America's health care system. The Foundation conducts research, policy analysis and educational activities on a range of health care issues. It fosters dialogue between the private health care industry and the public sector to find workable solutions to health system problems. Detailed information about the Foundation's projects and publications is available on our website, <http://www.nihcm.org>.

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