



**NIHCM**  
FOUNDATION

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**NIHCM Foundation Hosts Webinar on MCH Disparities**

NIHCM Foundation will host a webinar, "Strategies & Challenges to Reduce Disparities and Ensure Culturally Competent Maternal & Child Health Care," on **October 30, 2006 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. (EST)**. The event will convene experts from the public and private sectors including: Dana Hughes, Dr.P.H., Institute for Health Policy Studies, UC San Francisco; Laura P. Shone, M.S.W., Dr.P.H., Department of Pediatrics, University of Rochester; John Auerbach, Executive Director, Boston Public Health Commission; Rhonda Johnson, M.D., Medical Director, Highmark Inc.; Jennifer Cayan, Market Intelligence Leader, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida; Betsy Hernandez Silva, VP Diversity, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts; and Ken Patric, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee. A [detailed agenda](#) and [registration form](#) are available.

NIHCM Foundation will also publish an overview paper on disparities in children's health, including examples of current health plan initiatives and public-private

sector collaborative activities. NIHCM Foundation encourages you to share information about your organization's work in this area. Please contact NIHCM Foundation at [nihcm@nihcm.org](mailto:nihcm@nihcm.org) for more information.

## **New Resources and Findings in Childhood Obesity and Overweight**

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The Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) latest report, [Overweight and Physical Activity Among Children: A Portrait of States and the Nation 2005](#), documents findings from the 2003-4 [National Survey of Children's Health \(NSCH\)](#). This data report highlights trends in obesity prevalence among America's youth, including increased overweight prevalence among males compared to females of the same age (18.1% vs. 11.5%) and among younger versus older children (21.9% vs. 10.7%). A [chartbook](#) presenting survey findings for each state and the District of Columbia in comparison with national statistics is also available and will be useful for health professionals, program administrators, educators, policymakers, and others promoting healthy weight and physical activity among children and youth.

The Institute of Medicine's (IOM) Committee on Progress in Preventing Childhood Obesity released a report, [Progress in Preventing Childhood Obesity: How Do We Measure Up?](#) This report, requested by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as a follow-up to a 2004 report, concludes that greater effort is needed to effectively combat the nation's childhood obesity problem. Key recommendations include the need for: commitment from public and private stakeholders to childhood obesity prevention, evaluation of current policies and programs, and dissemination of promising practices.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) [Verb Campaign](#) ended last month after Congress failed to renew funding. The campaign used television advertising in addition to school and web-based marketing to promote physical activity among school-aged children. An [evaluation of the mass media campaign](#), published in the *Pediatrics* journal, found that the program was effective in reaching the target population and in increasing physical activity: 74% of those studied were aware of the campaign and within this group, there was a 34% increase in physical activity. A larger evaluation is currently underway with results to be published next year.

Additional resources on obesity and overweight, including innovative health plan initiatives to combat obesity, can be found at [http://www.nihcm.org/finalweb/pg\\_publications\\_obesity.htm](http://www.nihcm.org/finalweb/pg_publications_obesity.htm).

## **Developments in Preventive Health Care Services**

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Results from the 2002 Partnership for Prevention expert panel [ranking of effective clinical preventive services](#) were published in the July 2006 issue of the

*American Journal of Preventive Medicine.* The expert panel, comprised of decision-makers from health insurance plans, an employer group, academia, clinical practice, and government health agencies, ranked the 21 primary and secondary services recommended by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force and childhood immunizations recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. Rankings were based on clinically preventable burden and cost effectiveness.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced an elimination of racial disparities in childhood immunization coverage rates. The results, drawn from CDC's National Immunization Survey (NIS), indicated that for the first time in the past ten years, rates for the full series of recommended vaccines did not vary significantly by race and ethnicity. Several programs, including the federal Vaccines for Children (VFC) program that provides uninsured or underinsured children free vaccines, have contributed to decreasing the gap.

### **Adolescent Health: A Strengthened Commitment & New Research**

NIHCM Foundation has been awarded a 5-year cooperative agreement, "Partners in Program Planning for Adolescent Health (PIPPAH)," with the Health Resources and Services Administration's Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB). Through this project, NIHCM Foundation will strengthen the leadership, infrastructure and capacity of its member health plans to promote and improve adolescent health. This new section of the Update, focused on developments in adolescent health, is part of NIHCM Foundation's commitment to improving adolescent health, and we encourage submission of adolescent health materials for inclusion in the quarterly Update. For more information about this project, please read our Press Release.

In July 2006, NIHCM Foundation released Young People's Health Care: A National Imperative," Claire Brindis et al., The Public Policy Analysis and Education Center for Middle Childhood, Adolescent and Young Adult Health (Policy Center), University of California, San Francisco. This issue paper highlights the unique health issues faced by young adults, as well as the vastly different socioeconomic, cultural and demographic factors influencing their health status, access to care and utilization of services. The paper advocates for tailored solutions to prevent a crisis in the health status and access to care of young adults and documents current innovative state, county and local programs targeted to meet the needs of the young adult population. The paper also includes an appendix describing current programs addressing young adult health and selected resources for additional information and research.

Three to 8% of adolescents suffer from depression. A meta-analysis, published in the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, evaluated the efficacy of 30 programs aimed at preventing adolescent and child depression. The study, in

general, found low to moderate program effects with most achieving reduction, rather than prevention, of depression. However, "selective programs" which target at-risk individuals were more effective than "universal programs" such as school-based initiatives that use large group presentations or curricular modifications. These findings present important considerations; in particular, the need for greater efforts to identify and disseminate those programs that effectively prevent, rather than reduce, depression among youth.

Recognizing that most teenage cancer patients feel uncomfortable receiving care through either pediatric or adult-tailored care systems, a number of adolescent-focused initiatives are beginning to emerge. The [Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh and Oregon Health and Science University](#) have both established Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) programs to address unique adolescent cancer care needs and the National Childhood Cancer Foundation's Children's Oncology Group has established an [Adolescents and Young Adults Committee](#) which aims to find better treatments for cancer types most frequent within this age group. The [National Cancer Institute](#) and the [Lance Armstrong Foundation](#) are further investigating the issues surrounding adolescent cancer care and plan to release their findings this year.

## **Pennsylvania's Highmark Announces \$100 Million Children's Health Initiative**

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Highmark Inc announced its "[Healthy High 5](#)" initiative that provides \$100 million dollars over a five-year period to improve the health and well-being of children in Pennsylvania. Specifically, the grant will be used to address five important children's health issues: nutrition, physical activity, self-esteem, grieving, and bullying. By collaborating with various local, state, and private organizations, Highmark will draw from a wide range of experts to promote education, communication, volunteerism, and programming efforts that target children's health. To spread awareness of children's health issues, Highmark is airing a Public Service Announcement across Pennsylvania and has developed a [website](#) to help adults, children, and communities learn about children's health issues and ways in which to lead healthier lifestyles.

Highmark also hosted a [childhood obesity summit](#) last month, convening various stakeholders to showcase and discuss collaborative activities to address childhood obesity. Professional speakers included John Page of the Yankelovich Youth MONITOR and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Elizabeth Majestic. Additional presentations, which are now available for [download](#), were focused on four key areas: Designing a Healthy Community, Mobilizing Your Community, Partnering with Healthcare, and Promoting Healthy Schools. The summit also featured a large community exhibition, [Bounce](#), aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles among Pennsylvania residents.

## **Alliance for Improving Maternal and Child Health (AIM) Activities**

NIHCM Foundation is part of the Alliance for Improving Maternal and Child Health (AIM), a collaborative comprised of 17 national membership organizations representing decision makers within state and local government, maternal and child health (MCH) professions, foundations, the health insurance industry, and business, as well as advocates for families. As part of this effort, NIHCM occasionally highlights the publications and activities of the other organizations participating in the collaborative.

Today's Child Communications and The National Black Family Promotions Coalition will host a conference "Family Wellness: Eliminating Disparities & Achieving Equity," from January 12-13, 2007 in Arlington, VA. More information and a registration form can be found at [www.todays-child.com](http://www.todays-child.com).

The Maternal and Child Health Bureau hosted a webcast, "Partnering to Pay for MCH," on September 20, 2006. The second discussion, in a two-part series, featured presentations from public sector maternal and child health stakeholders including representatives from the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs, CityMatCH, and the National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices. The [webcast archive](#) is now available.

NIHCM Foundation is a non-profit, 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 newly designed web site, [www.nihcm.org](http://www.nihcm.org).

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