



Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan

Steering Committee:

American Cancer Society

Advocates for Healthy Weight in Children

- American Heart Association
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan
- Community Policy Action Team*
- C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems
- Education Policy Action Team*
- Health, Family, and Child Care Services Policy Action Team*
- Michigan Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, & Dance
- Michigan Chapter of the American College of Cardiology
- Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development*
- Michigan Department of Community Health*
- Michigan Department of Education*
- Michigan Department of Human Services*
- Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs*
- Michigan Department of Transportation*
- Michigan Fitness Foundation
- Michigan Health & Hospital Association
- Michigan Soft Drink Association
- Michigan State Medical Society
- University of Michigan C.S. Mott Children's Hospital
- YMCA State Alliance of Michigan

January/February 2015 Newsletter

Obesity Prevention: Where Does “Responsibility” Fall?

One frequent question fielded by advocates of policies to reduce childhood obesity is: how can government play a role in an issue of personal responsibility? An interesting case study in the multiple contributing factors to the historically alarming increase in obesity among youth is a legislative debate in Puerto Rico over a proposal to tax parents for failing to manage a child's weight. Under the bill, children would be screened at school and those needing improvement would be reevaluated at four week intervals.

After six months, parents can be fined \$500 if their child does not show significant improvement. After a year without improvement, the fines can increase to as much as \$800. While Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan has focused on positive, incentive based approaches to promoting healthy choices for healthy lifestyles, the dialogue surrounding this effort in Puerto Rico is quite thought provoking. For more on this, click [here](#) for a full article from U.S. News and World Report.



Coalition Partner Releases New Online Resource Promoting Healthy Food Access

As HKHM works to advocate for policies to make the healthy choice the easy choice for kids and families, the Michigan Healthy Food Financing Initiative has launched its web home for those looking to engage in the campaign to improve access to fresh, healthy foods for residents



across the state living in areas with limited access. Analysis of health data from Michigan confirms what we know, those living in areas across the state with less opportunity to shop for healthy food are more likely to suffer health complications from obesity, diabetes, heart disease and other conditions. The Michigan Healthy Food Financing Campaign is a partnership of retailers, health advocates, policymakers and finance leaders looking to bring the benefits of increased health and economic development to underserved communities throughout Michigan. The Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan Coalition is pleased to be a partner in this important work. Be sure to visit the campaign website at HealthyFoodMI.heart.org



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Governor Snyder Announces Major Realignment, Merges MDCH and DHS

With the signing of 2015 Executive Order 4, Governor Snyder has put in motion the process of aligning services previously delivered by either the Michigan Department of Community Health or the Department of Human Services under the auspices of a large single agency. Known as the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), the new agency will come together under the leadership of former MDCH Director



Nick Lyon. Coalition members had the opportunity to meet Director Lyon when he spoke at the HKHM Annual Meeting last fall. The goal of unprecedented collaboration to improve the health of Michiganders is, of course, something the coalition is excited to support.

Services by Agency:

MDCH services are planned and delivered through these integrated components:

- Medicaid health care coverage for people with limited incomes
- Mental health services for people who have a mental illness or a developmental disability, and services for people who need care for substance abuse
- Health needs assessment, health promotion, disease prevention, and accessibility to appropriate health care for all citizens
- Drug law enforcement, treatment, education and prevention programs
- Promoting independence and enhancing the dignity of Michigan's older persons and their families
- Administering the crime victims' rights fund, investigating and processing crime victim compensation, and administering federal Victims of Crime Act grants

DHS services include:

- Family Preservation Services
- Protective Services for Children and Adults
- Foster Care for Children and Adults
- Independent Living Services to Adolescents
- Adoption Services and Subsidies
- Help with Domestic Violence Problems
- Prevention and Treatment Services for Youthful Offenders
- Referral to Employment and Training Support
- Cash Assistance and Support to help Families become Self-Sufficient

Budget Shortfall Projected

Based on revenue estimates from the Department of Treasury, as well as, the House and Senate Fiscal Agencies, lawmakers entered 2015 with the unenviable position of needing to find over \$400 million dollars in savings in order to reach a balanced budget. The legislature has begun approving measures that will cut over \$500 million, in an effort to reduce potential shortfalls in the next budget. Included in the cuts are over \$16 million from the MDCH budget as part of an Executive Order trimming in excess of \$100 million. Many are attributing the projected deficit to an influx of old tax credits claimed by the resurgent auto industry, which led to significant debate over tax policy and economic development.