

# Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity (DNPAO) Sources of Evidence:



## Research-and Practice-Based Initiatives

### Levels of Evidence for DNPAO

**E**vidence can be broadly defined as a body of facts or information that provides a level of certainty that a proposition is true or valid.<sup>1</sup>

The Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity (DNPAO) has a mission to —

“Lead strategic public health efforts to prevent and control obesity, chronic disease, and other health conditions through regular physical activity and good nutrition.”

Evidence on initiatives for DNPAO-funded programs is available from a number of sources, including results of systematic reviews of research, evaluation studies, cross-sectional analysis, and information about practice-based initiatives that have been examined and found to have underlying logic, evidence-base, and ready for dissemination.

Using both research- and practice-based initiatives can allow programs to work with the best evidence available. However, to date, evidence on policy and environmental NPAO initiatives are scarce and are rarely packaged in a format that provides useful dissemination and implementation guidance for practitioners.

DNPAO will continue to develop and evaluate innovative approaches that can contribute to the mix of available initiatives facilitating a positive health impact in nutrition, physical activity, and obesity.

### IOM L.E.A.D. Framework

The 2010 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, *Bridging the Evidence Gap in Obesity Prevention: A Framework to Inform Decision Making* provides a framework and guidance on the use of evidence on environmental- and policy-based obesity prevention initiatives. The report elucidates the need to consider different concepts of evidence outside of traditional scientific terms. In response to the clear evidence gap, the report describes the L.E.A.D. framework to generate, identify, and evaluate evidence. Below is the framework linked to DNPAO actions.

#### L – Locate evidence

- DNPAO Target Area Guidance Documents
- Center of Excellence for Training and Research Translation (Center-TRT) Efforts
- Community Guide
- DNPAO Pre-Evaluation Assessment project
- DNPAO Addressing Obesity in Child Care Setting project

#### E – Evaluate it

- Ongoing DNPAO process and outcome evaluations, including Health Bucks, New York City Daycare, and New York City Water Jet

#### A – Assemble it

- Center-TRT Web site with criteria for reviewing and categorizing initiatives for dissemination

#### D – Inform Decisions

- DNPAO trainings, TA, and Webinars

## Locate Evidence: Identify and Gather the Types of Evidence That Are Potentially Relevant

### DNPAO Target Area Guidance Documents

These documents summarize peer-reviewed literature, current practice, and evidence of effectiveness on strategies to— a) reduce consumption of high-energy dense-foods, b) increase fruit and vegetable consumption, c) increase physical activity, d) increase breastfeeding, e) decrease sugar sweetened beverage consumption, and f) decrease television viewing.

### Center for Excellence and Training and Research Translation (TRT) Efforts

The Center TRT at the University of North Carolina solicits interventions developed by practitioners throughout the nation for review and potential dissemination. They conduct reviews of evidence on preventing and controlling obesity and other chronic diseases through nutrition and physical activity.

### Community Guide

*The Guide to Community Preventive Services* provides information on systematic reviews of the effectiveness of programs and policies to improve health and prevent disease. The guide includes recommendations to increase physical activity and to reduce obesity.

## Pre-evaluation Assessments of NPAO Programs and Policies

This DNPAO project employs a comprehensive and systematic approach to identify environmental and policy promising practices ready for evaluation that is more rigorous. The focus is on active transportation policy and food policy council initiatives.

## Addressing Obesity in Child Care Settings Project

DNPAO project is designed to develop, pretest, disseminate, and evaluate state-level guidance to address obesity in child care settings through policy and environmental change.

## Other Sources of Evidence

### *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*

A comprehensive resource released in 2008 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that provides guidance on the importance of being physically active and the recommended amount of physical activity for Americans.

### *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture jointly published the Dietary Guidelines in 2010. They summarize and synthesize knowledge about individual nutrients and food components into an interrelated set of recommendations for healthy eating.

### *Cochrane Reviews*

Cochrane Reviews investigate the effects of interventions through systematic reviews of primary research in human health care and health policy.

## Evaluate It: Apply Standards of Quality

### Health Bucks

DNPAO is currently conducting a process and outcome evaluation of the NY Health Bucks program that increases access to fresh fruits and vegetables in New York City through the distribution of \$2 Health Bucks coupons to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers' markets.

### New York City Daycare

DNPAO and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYC DOHMH) Regulations for Daycares. These regulations direct the amount of time children are to spend in physical activity, provide nutrition standards, and place limits on TV viewing.

### New York City Water Jet

DNPAO is currently supporting a process and outcome evaluation of the New York City water jet intervention in schools through the Health Department and the New York University Prevention Research Center. CDC funded the evaluation of the environmental intervention to increase water access through jet dispensers in fall 2010.

## Nutrition and Obesity Policy Research & Evaluation Network (NOPREN)

## Physical Activity Policy Research Network (PAPRN)

These DNPAO research networks were developed to study the effectiveness of policies to increase physical activity and prevent and reduce obesity in childcare, school, worksite, and community settings.

## Assemble It: Select and Summarize the Relevant Evidence.

The Center TRT reviews and recommends interventions for dissemination. After the interventions are reviewed, they are translated into a template that provides an evidence summary that led to the decision to disseminate, along with details on the resources and steps required to implement. Links to intervention materials and contact information for any available training and technical assistance are also provided on their Web site.<sup>2</sup>

## Inform Decisions: Use Evidence in the Decision-Making Process.

DNPAO will continue to offer trainings, technical assistance (TA), Webinars, and monthly calls to inform and facilitate decision making for programs.

Ongoing efforts will include —

- Summarizing relevant evidence as it becomes available
- Guidance on using strategies and initiatives when evidence is limited.

## References

1. Swinburn B., Gill T., Kumanyika S. Obesity prevention: a proposed framework for translating evidence into action. *Obesity Reviews* 2005;6: 23–33.
2. Leeman J, Sommers J, Leung M, Ammerman A. Disseminating evidence from research and practice: a model for selecting evidence to guide obesity prevention. *J Public Health Management Practice* 2011;17(2):133–140.

## Need more information?

Visit the following websites:

### Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity

For more information on the DNPAO Target Area Guidance Documents:

[www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/index.html)

Center TRT:

[www.center-trt.org/index.cfm](http://www.center-trt.org/index.cfm)

Nutrition and Obesity Policy Research & Evaluation Network (NOPREN):

[www.nopren.org](http://www.nopren.org)

### General Resources

Community Guide:

[www.thecommunityguide.org/index.html](http://www.thecommunityguide.org/index.html)

IOM Report:

[www.iom.edu/obesityframework](http://www.iom.edu/obesityframework)