

## Talking Points for Hill Day 2012: Coordinated School Health Funding and *Let's Move*

### Getting There (walking)

Leaving the Tennessee Municipal League Room you will head northwest on Capitol Boulevard (toward Union Street). Take a right onto Union Street and then a left onto 6<sup>th</sup> street. Then head into the War Memorial Building (Legislative Plaza) to the office of your legislator.

### Introduction: Who You Are

The Tennessee Dietetic Association, an affiliate of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics has 1,375 members whose profession supports the improved health of all Tennesseans .

### What

Our purpose today is two-fold. One, we would like to ask for your support to pass the 2012-2013 fiscal budget proposed by Governor Haslam that includes \$15 million for Coordinated School Health (CSH). This funding amount has not changed from the previous year. Two we urge you to make a commitment for your city, town or county to become a *Let's Move* City, *Let's Move* town or *Let's Move* County. As an elected official you can impact the health of children in Tennessee by supporting CSH and making a commitment to the *Let's Move* Initiative.

### Why

CSH and the *Let's Move* Initiative are important because in Tennessee 20.6% of children are classified as overweight or obese, ranking Tennessee has the 6<sup>th</sup> highest childhood obesity rates in the United States. Overweight and obese children are more likely to suffer from poor medical and psychosocial conditions as compared to children of a healthy weight.

I'd like to mention some key aspects of CSH. In 2006 Tennessee became the only state in the nation with a legislative mandate and \$15 million in state funding per year to implement CSH in all Tennessee School Districts. CSH is an evidenced-based model developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a strategy for improving students' health and learning in school. An annual report is published each year by the Tennessee Department of Education to show the positive impact CSH has had on the health and well-being of students, families and communities. As RDs we support CSH particularly due to positive nutrition-related outcomes assisting with the fight against childhood obesity.

With particular regard to nutrition CSH provides evidence-based strategies to not only promote overall health, but focuses on a healthy weight in children. CSH supports assessments of body mass index (BMI) with referrals for further treatment for children classified as overweight or obese and the development and implementation of programs and policies to support a healthy school environment. These key components of CSH can help the 20.6% of children who are currently overweight and obese in addition preventing more children from reaching an unhealthy weight. CSH is enhancing the well-being of our children for a small annual investment of \$16.00 per student.

The second piece of business we would like to discuss with you is the *Let's Move* Initiative. First Lady Michelle Obama started the *Let's Move* Initiative and in January 2010 called all elected officials to make a commitment to becoming a *Let's Move* City, *Let's Move* Town or *Let's Move* County. We are calling on you to help every City, Town and County in Tennessee be recognized as a *Let's Move* City, Town or

County. As of July 13, 2011 only 6 places (Chattanooga, Jackson, Memphis, Morristown, Nashville, Oak Ridge, Sweetwater) in Tennessee were recognized by this initiative.

To become a *Let's Move City*, *Let's Move Town* or *Let's Move County* you, as an elected official, need to make a commitment by selecting a significant action to reduce the rate of obesity in early childhood obesity, make healthy foods affordable, provide healthy foods in schools and increase physical activity. Once you have decided on an action step in each of the four pillars you must make a public commitment and inform the federal government so they can provide further support as needed. We want to point out that CSH is currently working toward many of the same outcomes, thus supporting both efforts can allow for collaborative efforts between each school district, city, town and county to together promote the health of children in the battle against childhood obesity in Tennessee.

### **Conclusion**

Thank the legislator for their time, encourage them to pass the Coordinated School Health budget and become a *Let's Move City*, *Let's Move Town* or *Let's Move County*. Provide them with the handout noting there is the web address for further information about making a commitment to the *Let's Move* Initiative. Also, invite the legislator and their staff to the Tennessee Dietetic Association reception at 4:30 located in the Tennessee Municipal League Room, 226 Municipal Capitol Boulevard.

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For more information about:

Tennessee Coordinated School Health visit: <http://www.tn.gov/education/schoolhealth/>

Coordinated School Health visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/CSHP/>

*Let's Move*: <http://www.letsmove.gov/>