



# MAINE OBESITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

## Recommendations

to help guide local, district, and statewide programs, policies, and partnerships in reducing obesity and the medical conditions associated with obesity, with emphasis on populations experiencing race, health and social inequities, that result in poor health, higher medical costs, and negative impacts on quality of life in Maine



### GOAL: INCREASE THE CONSUMPTION OF HEALTHIER FOOD & BEVERAGES

Recommendations	Strategies for policy and environmental changes
<i>Increase access to, and the affordability of, healthier food and beverages that also address barriers in underresourced communities</i>	1. Increase the availability of healthier food and beverage choices in all places where food and beverages are sold or served
	2. Improve the affordability of healthier food and beverage choices in all places where food and beverages are sold or served
	3. Increase the availability of food from local farms
<i>Increase public communications that support the consumption of healthier food and beverages and are culturally relevant</i>	1. Increase the marketing, advertising, and promotion of healthier food and beverages



### GOAL: DECREASE THE CONSUMPTION OF LESS HEALTHY FOOD & BEVERAGES

Recommendations	Strategies for policy and environmental changes
<i>Decrease access to, and the affordability of, less healthy food and beverages that also address challenges in underresourced communities</i>	1. Restrict the availability of less healthy food and beverage choices in all places where food and beverages are sold or served
	2. Decrease the affordability of less healthy food and beverage choices in all places where food and beverages are sold or served
<i>Decrease public communications that support the consumption of less healthy food and beverages including those aimed at underresourced communities</i>	1. Restrict the marketing, advertising, and promotion of less healthy food and beverages



### GOAL: INCREASE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Recommendations	Strategies for policy and environmental changes
<i>Increase safe and accessible opportunities for physical education and physical activity</i>	1. Require physical education and physical activity in all public schools
	2. Increase opportunities for physical activity outside of the school setting
	3. Limit recreational screen time
<i>Increase public communications that support physical activity and are culturally relevant</i>	1. Increase the advertising and promotion of physical activity
<i>Improve the built environment to create or support physical activity that is safe and accessible</i>	1. Improve access to outdoor recreational facilities
	2. Enhance infrastructure supporting bicycling
	3. Enhance infrastructure supporting walking
	4. Increase the amount of zoned land that is designated for mixed use
	5. Enhance safety in areas where people are or could be physically active



## GOAL: INCREASE THE INITIATION AND DURATION OF BREASTFEEDING AND/OR CONSUMPTION OF BREAST MILK

Recommendations	Strategies for policy and environmental changes
<i>Increase the awareness and understanding of the benefits of breastfeeding and breast milk in ways that are culturally relevant</i>	1. Educate pregnant women and extended families about the benefits of breastfeeding and breast milk
	2. Train healthcare professionals to assist mothers and babies to breastfeed
	3. Increase the marketing, advertising, and promotion of the benefits of breast feeding and breast milk
<i>Improve environments for breastfeeding and expressing breast milk that address barriers in underresourced communities</i>	1. Increase opportunities and support for breastfeeding and expressing breast milk in the workplace
	2. Increase opportunities and support for breastfeeding and expressing breast milk in public spaces



## GOAL: INCREASE CROSS-SECTOR COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

Recommendations	Strategies for policy and environmental changes
<i>Increase understanding of the health and economic benefits of preventing obesity and promoting healthy weight in ways that are culturally relevant</i>	1. Educate the public, patients, and providers about the health and economic impacts of obesity, as well as the roles that individuals and organizations can have in its prevention
	2. Collaborate with local, state, and federal partners to implement surveillance and evaluation of obesity related community engagement and programming outcomes
	3. Produce and disseminate annual reports of community engagement and outcomes to partners, stakeholders, decision-makers, and the public
<i>Enhance public-private partnerships that are engaging in efforts to prevent obesity and promote healthy weight in ways that address equity</i>	1. Improve the systems, skills, and capacity of local, regional, and community led partnerships
	2. Engage local governments and stakeholders as active members of community partnerships

**Obesity poses a serious threat to public health and productivity in Maine.** Adult obesity rates have nearly tripled since 1990. Almost 30% of adults and 14% of high school students have obesity today. Obesity increases the risk for many serious health conditions, including high blood pressure, type II diabetes, and depression. A majority of adults and adolescents in America do not get enough physical activity or eat enough fruits and vegetables, impacting their overall health and their ability to learn and be productive. Here in Maine, the disease of obesity is a tremendous economic burden on families and businesses, with direct medical costs alone totaling \$450 million every year. Today's generation may be the first to live shorter, less healthy lives than their parents.

**Taking action together to reduce obesity and the medical conditions associated with obesity is essential for securing Maine's health and economic future.**



### Contact Us

Send us your questions, feedback, or intentions to implement these recommendations:  
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