

Genesee County Health Department
 Genesee Health System
 Michigan State University Extension
 Health Plan of Michigan
 Michigan Department of Community Health
 Prevention Research Center of Michigan
 Crim Fitness Foundation
 Safe and Active Genesee for Everyone
 Genesee Intermediate School District
 Hurley Medical Center
 YMCA of Greater Flint
 HealthPlus of Michigan
 McLaren Health Plan
 Mott Children's Health Center
 Hamilton Community Health Network
 Total Health Care
 Priority Children
 University of Michigan-Flint
 Michigan State University
 Genesee County Parks
 Flint River Watershed Coalition
 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan
 Genesee County Community Action Resource Department
 Flint Community Schools
 National Kidney Foundation of Michigan
 Universal Kidney Foundation
 Genesee County Community Members



Growing Healthy Children and Families in Genesee County through

SPROUT

STEERING PREVENTION-REDUCING OBESITY- UTILIZING TEAMWORK

Mission:

To improve the health and well-being of Genesee County children by addressing ways to reduce and prevent childhood obesity.

Vision:

Creating a community that fosters and supports healthy lifestyles for children and families.

MEDIA RELEASE

Date: September 17, 2015
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 RE: **September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month**

In recognition of National Childhood Obesity Month, the SPROUT Coalition reminds Genesee County residents to eat right and move more! During the past four decades, obesity rates have soared among all age groups, increasing more than fourfold among children ages six to 11. More than 23 million children and teenagers or 31.8 % of children ages two to 19 are obese or overweight.

The growing rate of childhood obesity in our country is alarming, and the SPROUT Coalition is actively engaged in changing those statistics in Genesee County. National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month is an opportunity to remind residents of the serious threat obesity poses to the health of America's children and the importance of decreasing its prevalence not only in Genesee County, but across the entire United States.

Childhood obesity is a complex public health problem and the product of unhealthy behaviors undertaken in the context of unhealthy environments and systems. Evidence suggests obesity, poor nutrition and inadequate physical activity lead to reduced academic performance, diminished self-esteem and quality of life and lower workforce productivity. Addressing childhood obesity requires a multi-prong approach involving coordinated efforts across multiple disciplines.

Obese young people have an 80% chance of becoming obese adults. As a result, they are more at risk for associated adult health problems such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, sleep apnea, stroke, several types of cancer and osteoarthritis.

The financial implications add up to a sobering \$14 billion per year in direct health care costs alone. Americans spend approximately 9% percent of their total medical costs on obesity related illnesses. These adverse consequences underscore the critical importance of children and teens participating in physical activity and engaging in healthy eating habits.

The SPROUT Coalition is a group of community organizations, institutions and community members that have come together to address the issue of childhood obesity in Genesee County. Together we will improve the health and well-being of Genesee County children and families by raising awareness of this issue in our community. We are working to change the environments in which individuals make decisions about their health. By changing policies, we can provide access to healthy foods, provide safe places for children to play, promote community gardens, improve access to health care and promote healthy eating and active living.

Childhood obesity is entirely preventable. The SPROUT Coalition has launched a 5210 campaign to remind everyone of four simple steps that can help prevent childhood obesity. Every day:



5 - Eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables.

2 - Spend 2 hours or less on the computer or playing video games (“Screen Time”).

1 - Be physically activity for at least one hour.

- and-

0 - Avoid sugary drinks. Drink more water & low-fat milk instead.

Children need information and guidance to make informed decisions about food and exercise. Childhood Obesity Awareness Month supports the goals of families, schools, and communities who are working to ensure we raise a healthier generation. If we keep our kids healthy now, it will alleviate a major burden on our health care system while giving millions of young people the opportunity to live longer, healthier lives. The SPROUT Coalition’s vision is a community that fosters and supports healthy lifestyles for children and families. Visit the SPROUT website for more information about preventing childhood obesity www.sproutgc.org. For more information regarding National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, visit www.COAM-Month.org.

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