



Leadership Council

Active Transportation Alliance
American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)
Illinois
American Cancer Society, Illinois Division
American Heart Association, Midwest Affiliate
American Lung Association of Illinois
American Medical Association
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois
Building a Healthier Chicago
Chicago Department of Public Health
Chicago Hispanic Health Coalition
Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago
Children (CLOCC)
Cook County Department of Public Health
DuPage County FORWARD Initiative
Heartland Human Care Services
Illinois Academy of Family Physicians
Illinois Action for Children
Illinois African American Coalition for
Prevention
Illinois Association for Health, Physical
Education, Recreation and Dance
Illinois Association of School Nurses
Illinois Association of Public Health
Administrators
Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Illinois Dietetic Association
Illinois Department of Public Health
Illinois Hospital Association
Illinois Local Food & Farm Coalition
Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition
Illinois Public Health Association
Illinois Public Health Institute
Illinois State Alliance of YMCAs
Midwest Business Group on Health
Northern Illinois Public Health Consortium
Ounce of Prevention Fund
Salud Latina/Latino Health
Southern Illinois Healthcare
University of Illinois at Chicago Health Policy
Center
University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public
Health
Voices for Illinois Children
YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago

Convened by

Illinois Public Health Institute

954 W. Washington Blvd., Ste. 405, MB 10
Chicago, IL 60607

T: (312) 850-IPHI (4744)
F: (312) 850-4040

<http://www.iphionline.org>

Illinois' Obesity Epidemic: A Big Fat Problem

Illinois' obesity epidemic threatens to overwhelm our healthcare system, cause huge increases in debilitating chronic disease and undermine our economy. For example:

- In 1995, [Illinois](#) had an obesity rate of 15.3%. Fast forward fifteen years, and the obesity rate in Illinois has nearly **doubled**.
- Ten years ago, not a single state had an obesity rate above 24%. Today, 43 states have [obesity rates](#) that surpass even the highest rate of obesity from 2000. Currently, the state with the lowest rate of obesity would have been the highest rated in 1995.
- A [2005 report](#) in the New England Journal of Medicine startled the nation with its prediction that the current generation of American children will have a shorter lifespan than their parents' generation -- due largely to obesity-related disease.
- A recent report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that found that approximately two-thirds of [U.S. adults](#) and one-fifth of [U.S. children](#) are obese or overweight.
- This is also an issue of health disparities. According to the [CDC](#), African Americans have a 51% higher prevalence of obesity, and Hispanics have 21% higher obesity prevalence compared with whites.
- A [2007 national survey](#) on children's health revealed that only three states (Mississippi, Georgia, and Kentucky) have a higher childhood obesity rate than Illinois. These alarming statistics suggest that **Illinois kids are at excessive risk** for serious lifelong health problems like diabetes, heart disease, fatty liver disease, and arthritis.
- A growing body of research indicates that obesity is largely to blame for our [ballooning health care costs](#). Nationally, [75% of all healthcare costs](#) are spent on the treatment of chronic diseases, many of which are obesity-related.
- Obesity is a rapidly escalating problem that costs the Illinois health care system and taxpayers nearly [\\$3.4 billion per year](#) -- including more than \$1 billion to Medicaid and \$800 million to Medicare annually.
- Some experts predict that the annual cost of obesity to the Illinois health care system will increase to [\\$14 billion or more a year by 2018](#).