



Parks and Recreation Programs Declining as Obesity, Health Concerns Rise

ScienceDaily (Jan. 17, 2010) — One way to help address the epidemic of obesity in the United States is improved access to pleasant hiking trails and an ambitious parks and recreation program, a recent study suggests, but programs such as this are increasingly being reduced in many states due to budget shortfalls.

The analysis, done by researchers in Oregon, found that some of the health issues that plague overweight and obese people can be aided by a stronger commitment to recreational opportunities. Cutting such programs to save money may be counterproductive to community health, scientists said.

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Mapping the Walk to School Using Accelerometry Combined with a Global Positioning System

Abstract

Background

Walking to school is associated with higher levels of physical activity, but the contribution of the journey itself to physical activity before school is unknown.

Conclusions

Our results provide evidence that the journey to school is purposeful and contributes to higher total physical activity and MVPA in children. Combining accelerometer and GPS data may aid our understanding of the environmental context of physical activity.

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RWJF Center Releases Resources Table Linked to Local Strategies to Address Childhood Obesity

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center to Prevent Childhood Obesity- The center has identified 14 action steps using the 12 priority action steps identified by the Institute of Medicine and two additional school-based ones, to focus on setting policy and technical assistance priorities. These steps will drive the center's efforts for policy changes that make the healthy choice the easy choice. This table highlights the various resources (products, tools, research briefs, and other resources) available from the center's network of RWJF allies and external organizations. The resources are intended to help policymakers implement the targeted action steps and drive policy change.

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Trends in Quality-Adjusted Life-Years Lost Contributed by Smoking and Obesity

Abstract

Background

Quality-adjusted life-years (QALYs) use preference-based measurements of health-related quality-of-life (HRQOL) to provide an assessment of the overall burden of disease using a single number.

Conclusions

This study estimated the overall burden of smoking and obesity over time and results indicate that because of the marked increase in the proportion of obese people, obesity has become an equal, if not greater, contributor to the burden of disease than smoking. Such data are essential in setting targets for reducing modifiable health risks and eliminating health disparities.

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Prevalence of High Body Mass Index Among Children and Teens Remains Steady

ScienceDaily (Jan. 17, 2010) — The prevalence of high weight for length or high body mass index (BMI) among children and teens in the U.S. (i.e., at or above the 95th percentile), ranges from approximately 10 percent for infants and toddlers, to approximately 18 percent for adolescents and teenagers, although these rates appear to have remained relatively stable over the past 10 years, except for an increase for 6- to 19-year-old boys who are at the very heaviest weight levels, according to a study appearing in the January 20 issue of JAMA.

The study is being published early online because of its public health importance.

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U.S. Adult Obesity Still High, but Recent Data Suggest Rates May Have Stabilized

ScienceDaily (Jan. 14, 2010) — The prevalence of adults in the U.S. who are obese is still high, with about one-third of adults obese in 2007-2008, although new data suggest that the rate of increase for obesity in the U.S. in recent decades may be slowing, according to a study appearing in the January 20 issue of JAMA.

The study is being published early online because of its public health importance.

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