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National Institute for Health Care Management Foundation
Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health Update
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NIHCM Foundation Activities

NIHCM Foundation will host a webinar, *"Filling in the Cracks: Public and Private Strategies to Extend Health Insurance to Children and Families,"* on **October 31, 2007 from 1:00-2:30pm (EDT)**. The webinar will feature the following presentations: "The State of SCHIP," Susan Dentzer, PBS's NewsHour with Jim Lehrer; "State Health Reforms and the Implications for Children & Families," Gabriela Garcia, National Governors Association; "A Health Plan's Commitment to Expand Coverage for the Uninsured," Keith Evans, WellPoint, Inc.; and "Business and Philanthropy Efforts to Increase Access for Children & Families," David Pizzi, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Florida and Dr. Michael Hutton, The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida. Additional information and [electronic registration](#) are now available on [NIHCM's website](#).

NIHCM Foundation will release a paper later this Fall entitled *"Prevention of Adult Cardiovascular Disease Among Adolescents: Focusing on Risk Factor Reduction."* NIHCM Foundation is currently working with Arik Marcell, MD, MPH, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health; Marc Jacobson, MD, FAAP, Schneider Children's Hospital in New York; and Jonathan Klein, MD, MPH, University of Rochester Medical Center, on a paper that will describe the incidence of hyperlipidemia, obesity and overweight, and tobacco use among adolescents, and how these factors contribute to early onset of cardiovascular and other chronic diseases. The paper will also outline practical strategies health care professionals, especially health plans, can employ during adolescence to prevent future chronic disease.

An [archive](#) of NIHCM Foundation's August 2007 webinar, "*Preventing Adult Chronic Disease During Adolescence: The Role of Health Plans*," is now available by clicking [here](#).

New Guidelines and Assessment Tools

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On August 31, 2007, the [National Asthma Education and Prevention Program \(NAEPP\)](#) released [updated clinical guidelines for the diagnosis and management of asthma](#), which include an expanded section on childhood asthma. The guidelines focus on four components of asthma care: measures to assess and monitor asthma, patient education, control of environmental factors and other conditions that can worsen asthma, and medications. Also included are updated stepwise asthma management charts for three age groups (< 5 years, 5-11 years, 12+ years).

The [MCH Library](#) released its latest electronic resource guide, [Knowledge Path: Children and Adolescents with Emotional, Behavioral, and Mental Health Challenges](#). This edition, produced to complement [Knowledge Path: Healthy Social and Emotional Development in Children and Adolescents](#), identifies tools for staying abreast of new mental health care developments and for conducting further research. Information about specific conditions and resources for schools and families are included in separate sections.

Between 2001 and 2005, approximately 60% of sports-related emergency department visits were made by children and adolescents aged 5-18 years. Of these, almost 6% were categorized as traumatic brain injuries (TBI). Given that 38 million children and adolescents participate in organized sports each year, the [CDC](#) has developed a series of toolkits for a variety of audiences. [Heads Up: Brain Injury in Your Practice](#) is intended to help physicians improve diagnosis and management of TBIs while [Heads Up: Concussions in High School Sports](#) and the most recent, [Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports](#), provide information and tools such as a quiz, posters, and magnets to coaches, administrators, parents and athletes themselves. All of the toolkits as well as additional information and resources are available at [http:// www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/tbi.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/tbi.htm).

### **News in Maternal and Infant Health Care**

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New research published in the August 2007 issue of [Obstetrics and Gynecology](#) demonstrates an [association between birth defects and preterm birth and low birthweight](#). While the effects of preterm birth and low birthweight on birth defects are well established, the reverse relationship has not been well studied. Recent research using data from a large, prospective multi-center population-based database provided evidence that birth defects increase the likelihood of preterm birth and low birthweight. Specifically, liveborns with a birth defect were 2.7 times more likely to deliver preterm at < 37 weeks, 7.0 times more likely at < 34 weeks, and 11.5 times more likely at < 32 weeks. Liveborns with a birth defect were 3.6 times more likely to be low birthweight at <2500g and 11.3 times at less than 1500g. The research emphasizes the importance of preconception care and birth defect prevention to improve birth outcomes.

That [National Center for Children in Poverty's Project THRIVE](#) released a new brief, "[Reducing Disparities Beginning in Early Childhood](#)." This Brief provides information on the patterns of disparities in risk, access, and outcomes in early childhood. In addition the Brief offers recommendations and interventions for reducing disparities in the earliest stages of life.

Efforts to Better Understand the State of Children's Health

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The [Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics](#) released, "[America's Children: Key](#)

National Indicators of Well-Being, 2007." The annual report is a compendium of federal statistics from critical areas of child well-being including family and social environment, economic circumstances, behavior, education, and health. This 10th anniversary edition contains two additional sections, physical environment and safety and health care, and includes nine new indicators. Selected findings include: 17% of children lived in 'food insecure' households; 60% of children lived in counties with air pollutant concentrations above allowable levels; 10% of children accessed community water systems that did not meet health related drinking water standards; 37% of births were to unmarried women; the percentage of low birthweight infants was 8.2%; the rates of the two most common childhood health conditions, asthma and obesity, did not change significantly however both remained at high levels. The full report as well as data updates and detailed statistical information are available at <http://www.childstats.gov/>.

"Child Health USA 2006" is the Health Resource and Services Administration's latest report on infants, children, adolescents, children with special health care needs, and women of childbearing age (Title V funding target population). Divided into four sections, Population Characteristics, Health Status, Health Services Financing and Utilization, and State Data and City Data, the report compiles secondary data for more than 50 health status and health care indicators, provides both graphical and textual summaries of relevant data, and addresses long-term trends. The report is available at [http://www.mchb.hrsa.gov/chusa\\_06/page/pdf/c06.pdf](http://www.mchb.hrsa.gov/chusa_06/page/pdf/c06.pdf).

A new report, "Protecting America's Future: A State-by-State Look at SCHIP & Uninsured Kids," provides a state-by-state analysis of children's and adolescents' access to health insurance including changes observed after the implementation of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). Prepared by the State Health Access Data Assistance Center (SHADAC) for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the report analyzes data from 1998, 1999, 2005 and 2006. A series of six tables report data on the total number of enrollees in SCHIP, the percentage of children and adolescents without health insurance, the percentage of children and adolescents not receiving any medical care, the percentage of children and adolescents who visited a doctor's office within the past 12 months, the percentage of children and adolescents who received a well-child check-up within the past 12 months, and the percentage of children and adolescents without health insurance by race and ethnicity. The report also includes information about methods and resources.

**New Research and Resources on Adolescent Health**

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An article published in the September 2007 issue of the Journal of the American Dietetic Association reports an association between family meals during adolescence and improved diet quality during young adulthood. Researchers evaluated data from the longitudinal, population-based study, Project EAT, and found that young adult *females* who had frequent family meals during adolescence consumed more vegetables, magnesium, potassium, and fiber and consumed fewer soft drinks, and young adult *males* who had frequent family meals during adolescence consumed more fruits, vegetables, dark-green and orange vegetables and potassium, and held a higher priority for social eating and meal structure. These findings confirm the importance of family meals and call on health professionals to encourage this practice among the families with whom they work.

Recent research demonstrates that school based interventions can decrease disorderly weight-control behaviors among young adolescents. Disordered weight control behaviors such as induced vomiting, use of laxatives or use of diet pills have been positively associated with overweight in adolescents and can lead to other significant health consequences. Researchers compared the incidence of disorderly weight control behaviors between students in schools implementing Planet Health (an evidence-based obesity prevention curriculum) and control schools and made the following observations: 3.6% of girls in control schools reported new disorderly

weight control behaviors compared to 1.2% in intervention schools, and the odds of developing disordered weight control behavior were two thirds less among girls in intervention schools. This study demonstrates that school-based interventions can integrate obesity and eating disorder prevention however further research is needed to determine protective strategies for boys.

The [National Adolescent Health Information Center](#) (NAHIC) released an [updated Reproductive Health Fact Sheet](#) on adolescents and young adults. The new publication provides the latest trends and data on sexual behavior, contraception, pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections broken down by age, gender, and race/ethnicity.

Health Plan Initiatives

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[Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation](#) awarded a \$300,000 grant to expand the [Fit 4 Me](#) program to 10,000 young girls and their families. Fit 4 Me, a voluntary, interactive, after-school program targeted to middle school girls, was established in 2005 and has since helped 266 female students. The program comprises twelve sessions during which girls learn about health and nutrition and participate in physical fitness activities led by female student athletes who serve as role models. Given that women make 60% to 80% of healthcare decisions in the United States, empowering young girls with information to establish healthy habits is key to improving the health of the nation as a whole. Various partners including the University of Louisville Athletic Department, Bellarmine University's Lansing School of Nursing & Health Science, and Jefferson County Public Schools organized the program.

[Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation](#) awarded more than \$560,000 in grants to fund various programs promoting healthy and physically active communities including several projects targeted to youth. Select projects include: Pines of Carolina Girl Scout Council (\$62,000) to establish "[Make Every Step Count](#)," a program focusing on health, nutrition, and fitness education/activities to develop girls' personal health choices; [Lincoln County Schools](#) (\$60,000) for a nutrition education and physical activity program; [Communities In Schools \(CIS\) of Moore County](#) (\$56,800) to build a fitness trail and a community garden; North Carolina State University - [Natural Learning Initiative](#) (\$49,625) to support Project POD (Preventing Obesity by Design) to increase physical activity and access to healthy food by improving the outdoor learning environments of childcare centers; and [George Watts School](#) PTA (\$5,000) to purchase and install age-appropriate playground equipment for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students.

[Independence Blue Cross](#) (IBC) was awarded the Immunization Champion Award by the [Pennsylvania Immunizations Coalition](#) (PAIC) to recognize their efforts to improve education and outreach about an important vaccine for newborns. IBC worked collaboratively with the Philadelphia Department of Health to reduce the rising incidence of pertussis, or whooping cough, currently on the rise among adolescents. Included in IBC's educational efforts to providers and members were: telephone outreach and targeted mailings to pregnant mothers, information on IBC's website, specialized training for perinatal nurse case managers, additional vaccine information on member childhood immunization reminders, clinical information to providers through IBC's Clinical Update Magazine, and encouragement to providers to participate in the city health department's KIDS Immunization Registry.

### AIM and PIPPAH Collaborative Activities

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[NIHCM Foundation](#) is part of two alliances aimed at improving the health of Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health: the Alliance for Improving Maternal and Child Health (AIM) and the Partners in Program Planning for Adolescent Health (PIPPAH) Collaborative. Both alliances are

comprised of national membership organizations representing decision makers within state and local government, maternal, child and adolescent health (MCAH) professions, foundations, the health insurance industry, and business, as well as advocates for families. As part of these efforts, NIHCM occasionally highlights the publications and activities of the other organizations participating in the collaboratives.

Betsy Anderson and Nora Wells of the [Federation for Children with Special Health Care Needs](#) published a paper in the July/August 2007 issue of [Health Affairs](#). "[Benefits For Employees with Children with Special Needs: Findings from the Collaborative Employee Benefit Study.](#)" describes various employer efforts to support employees with special health care needs. Specifically, the study concludes that while none of the employers surveyed have formal benefits for employees with children with special health needs, most do provide other programs to support them. More information is available at www.massgeneral.org/ebs.

The [Health Resources and Services Administration](#) (HRSA) and the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (AAP) jointly created the [Child Health Day website](#) to compile resources, tools and materials for clinicians, public health professionals, families and communities. The website is divided into the top ten areas of child development: family support, child development, mental health, oral health, healthy sexual development & sexuality, healthy weight, healthy nutrition, physical activity, safety & injury prevention, and community relationships & resources.

As part of NIHCM Foundation's continuous quality improvement we ask that you take a minute to complete a [brief evaluation](#) of the Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health Update. We thank you in advance for your feedback!

NIHCM Foundation is a non-profit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to improving the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of America's health care system. The Foundation conducts research, policy analysis and educational activities on a range of health care issues. It fosters dialogue between the private health care industry and the public sector to find workable solutions to health system problems. Detailed information about the Foundation's projects and publications is available on our web site, www.nihcm.org.

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