

## Obesity Prevention

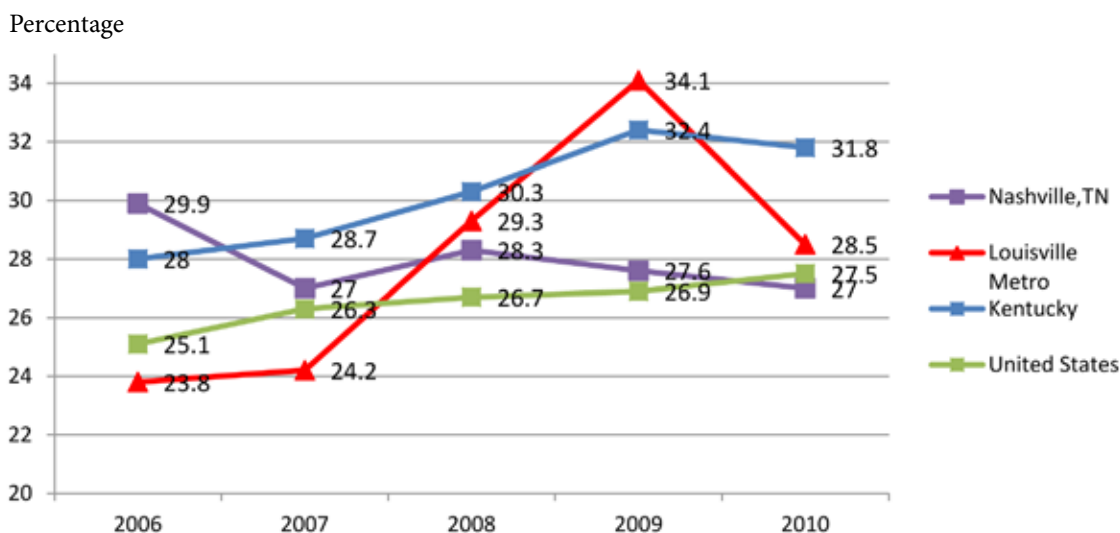
**Goal: Reduce the proportion of Louisville Metro residents that are overweight and obese**

Obesity is one of the top underlying causes of death in the U.S. due to its contribution to chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and some cancers. The rise in obesity rates during the past few decades has made it a national epidemic. However, it is a disease that is preventable.

More than 72 million U.S. adults are obese and each one incurs \$1,429 more in medical costs than a person with normal weight.<sup>47</sup> In every state, at least 15% of adults are obese, and in nine states, including Kentucky, more than 30% of adults are obese. In 2010, the obesity rate in Louisville Metro was 28.5%, which was lower compared to the state (31.8%) but higher than the nation (27.5%).<sup>48</sup>

The rate of obesity has increased among children as well. Nearly 18% of kindergartners and 24.2% of sixth graders attending JCPS were reported as obese in 2012, compared to 17.4% of the nation's children age 6-11 years.<sup>49</sup>

**Obesity Rates Trends, 2005 - 2010**



Sources: Kentucky Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey

Note: Data from Ky BRFSS might slightly differ from data from LM BRFSS due to differences in methodology

<sup>47</sup> Obesity: Halting the Epidemic by Making Health Easier, At A Glance 2011. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/AAG/obesity.htm>. Accessed December 2013.

<sup>48</sup> Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2010. Retrieved from <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/brfss-smart/MMSACTyRiskChart.asp?MMSA=51&yr2=2010&qkey=4409&CtyCode=42&cat=OB#OB>. Accessed December 2013.

<sup>49</sup> Obtained from Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS).

Obesity means having excess body fat and is defined by body mass index, or BMI, which is calculated from a person's height and weight.

BMI	Weight Status
Below 18.5	Underweight
18.5 - 24.9	Normal
25.0 - 29.9	Overweight
30.0 and Above	Obese

## Programs

The Mayor's Healthy Hometown Community Coalition identified increasing opportunities for healthy eating and active living as key components for creating a healthier Louisville. An important goal of the Mayor's Healthy Hometown Movement is to lower people's risk of chronic conditions by reducing obesity and promoting healthy body weight.

In 2013, LMPHW awarded ten Mayor's Healthy Hometown mini grants ranging from \$1,500 to \$4,250 to ten local organizations. Funds will be used to support nutritional counseling, exercise classes, instruction on how to grow fruits and vegetables, training to run races, and the planting of community fruit trees.

The Mayor's annual Healthy Hometown "Hike, Bike, and Paddle" event held every Memorial Day and Labor Day for the past nine years grows in popularity and attendance every year. The 2013 Labor Day Hike, Bike, and Paddle had an attendance of about 10,000. Attendees participated in a 3.1-mile walk/run, 15-mile bike ride, and/or 3-mile canoeing or kayaking experience in the Ohio River. Other activities included Zumba, yoga, and Tai Chi.

Built environment enhancements include road diets on Grinstead Drive and lower Brownsboro Road. Several Louisville roadways have new bike lanes. The ongoing development of the "Louisville Loop" has led to increased availability of bike paths and walkways.





Increased access to healthy and affordable foods has been aided by farmers markets that accept EBT, implementation of “Healthy in a Hurry” corner stores in areas identified as food deserts, and an increased number of school and community gardens. In 2013, the U.S. Conference of Mayors funding made possible the creation of a youth advocacy leadership program that trained more than 70 Louisville high school students in advocacy around such topics as active living, obesity prevention, urban agriculture, and injury and violence prevention. Partnerships with urban farms will enable youth trained in 2014 to move their advocacy education to action through summer jobs linking urban agriculture with the local food economy.

## HL 2020 Targets:

- Reduce the proportion of adults who are obese from 29.3% to 26.4%.
- Reduce the proportion of children who are obese from 17.9% to 16.1% for kindergartners and from 24.2% to 21.8% for sixth graders.
- Increase the number of people who consume at least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day from 26% to 28.6%.
- Increase the proportion of adults who participate in moderate to rigorous physical activity for 150 minutes or more per week from 52.2% to 57.4%.

## Recommendations

- Implement a system to monitor BMI through the required school physical exam for children entering kindergarten and sixth grade.
- Expand implementation of complete streets policies to ensure that roads are designed to accommodate everyone, including cyclists and pedestrians.
- Expand the Bike Share program beyond the downtown area.
- Implement shared-use agreements to permit community-based organizations to provide nutrition and fitness opportunities in schools and other large non-government facilities.
- Expand incentives for fitness and improved nutrition through worksites and health insurance programs.
- Enhance the implementation of evidence-based programs for physical activity and healthy eating in childcare and daycare facilities.
- Increase the number of “fresh stops” and the location of alternative food models, including mobile fresh/whole food projects in food deserts.
- Limit the density of fast food restaurants across Louisville Metro with an emphasis on zip codes identified as food deserts.
- Promote the adoption of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention “LEAN Works!” policies to employers.
- Increase the number of people who are screened for obesity and diet-related illnesses through their patient-centered medical home.
- Repurpose empty and vacant lots into community gardens, playgrounds or green spaces.
- Establish an annual Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance Survey (YRBS) to be conducted in JCPS among middle and high school students to improve data collection on nutrition and physical activity.
- Increase number of local farmers markets that accept WIC and SNAP EBT.
- Encourage primary care providers to prescribe structured physical activity regimens that include specific recommendations for the frequency, intensity, and type of exercise to patients who are at risk for overweight or obesity.