

# Exercise and healthy school lunch choices cut diabetes risk

Healthier cafeteria choices, longer and more intense periods of physical activity and a robust in-school education program can lower the risk of obesity and other risk factors for acquiring type 2 diabetes, according to a new study, HEALTHY.

The findings are published online in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) in Portland is one of eight academic medical centers nationwide chosen to participate in the study. It is funded by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive & Kidney Diseases, a branch of the National Institutes of Health, and the American Diabetes Association.

Because type 2 diabetes disproportionately affects minorities and low-income people, the study was conducted in schools with a high enrollment of minority children, 54 percent Hispanic and 18 percent Black, and youth from low-income families.

"This is the first study to show you can reduce obesity and risks for type 2 diabetes in kids and do it in schools with at-risk, high ethnic-minority populations," said Dr. Linn Goldberg, the HEALTHY principal investigator at OHSU, and professor and head of the Division of Health Promotion and Sports Medicine in the OHSU School of Medicine.

"This study emphasizes the fact that schools can have a tremendous positive effect on a child's health."

The study tracked 4,603 students in 42 middle schools

nationwide from the beginning of sixth through the completion of eighth grade. Half the schools were randomly assigned to receive an "intervention" comprising healthier food choices, longer gym classes, classroom behavioral education and other schoolwide activities that encourage healthy behaviors.

The "comparison" schools received no specific intervention, but did receive funds to use at their discretion. Comparison schools continued to provide food choices and physical education activities based on their own choice.

All parents received written feedback about student health screening results with notification from an OHSU endocrinologist and referral to a physician if student results were high risk.

At the beginning of the study, many sixth-grade students at both the intervention and comparison schools were at high risk for diabetes. Nearly half were overweight or obese, 16 percent had elevated fasting blood glucose levels, and nearly 7 percent had elevated fasting insulin levels, all risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes.

At the end of the study, the researchers found the now eighth-grade students in intervention schools who were overweight or obese in the sixth grade had 21 percent lower odds of being obese compared with students in comparison schools. Students at intervention schools also had lower average levels of fasting insulin and smaller waist circumference.

Surprisingly, the researchers also found that the number of overweight and obese students had declined in the intervention and the comparison schools. And, the study groups did not differ in mean glucose levels or the percentage of students with elevated fasting glucose in the overweight category.

"Although more research is needed to better understand why all schools showed improvement, possible explanations were that comparison schools' parents received information about their child's risk and may have made healthy changes, and comparison schools volunteering to be in the study did so out of concern for the health of their student body, and thus may have made subsequent changes in the school environment," explained Goldberg.

During the course of the three-year study, intervention schools provided students with low-fat, high-fiber foods and more fruits and vegetables, with an emphasis on water, low-fat milk and drinks with no added sugar.

Intervention school students also participated in longer, more intense periods of physical activity, defined as achieving a heart rate of at least 130 beats per minute with a target of 150 minutes or more of such activity per 10 days.

And, they were involved in classroom activities that were highly interactive in small learning groups, along with awareness campaigns that promoted long-term healthy behaviors.



Protesters (from left) Ernie Brown, Teresa Hicks, Amie Brown and others demonstrated outside of the Grants Pass office of the Dept. of Human Services on Friday afternoon, July 16. Organizers said that the protest drew around 15 people at its peak, and was aimed at drawing attention to the state agency's Child Protective Services division. A second protest has been scheduled for Aug. 6 from 3 to 5:30 p.m., on 7th Street in downtown Grants Pass. (Photo by Scott Jorgensen, I.V. News)

# Audit finds Oregon can improve child-support collection task

A new state audit said that Oregon could apply successful strategies of other states to increase child-support collections.

Among the 50 states, Oregon ranks about average according to federal standards that measure ways of collecting payments and establishing paternity. The Oregon Dept. of Justice and district attorneys share child-support collection responsibilities.

The report issued by the Secretary of State's Audits Division made several recommendations, including more ambitious goal-setting for its program and staff, tracking performance data, and taking constructive action to boost results.

"It's important that we hold parents responsible for

child support payments," said Secretary of State Kate Brown. "Oregon can learn from the successful strategies in other states. Making sure there are timely payments can keep children out of poverty and off public assistance."

State auditors analyzed the practices of top-performing states to identify strategies that would work in Oregon. For example, Pennsylvania was the most successful, collecting 79 percent of child support payments due in 2008, while Oregon collected 62 percent.

Matching Pennsylvania's collection rate would mean \$70 million more in child support payments.

"Oregon can apply the same methods used in Pennsylvania and other states to

become one of the best in the country," said Audits Director Gary Blackmer. The audit noted that variances in other states, such as economic conditions and legal authority, also affect collection rates.

The Oregon Dept. of Justice responded to the audit recommendations positively and proposed a number of actions that will be taken to improve collection efforts, Brown stated.

"We appreciate the recommendations provided, and plan to seek legislative approval for the tools we need to increase child support collection in Oregon," said Deputy Attorney General Mary Williams.

The full audit can be seen at [www.sos.state.or.us/audits](http://www.sos.state.or.us/audits).

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A	D	O	M	R	U	L	E	R	O
M	A	G	I	C	O	D	R	E	A
U	N	S	N	A	R	L	L	E	E
T	T	E	L	S	E	C	R	Y	
P	R	O	U	D	C	A	C	H	
A	L	E	S	O	F	A	O	F	
L	A	T	T	E	I	M	P	U	
L	Y	R	E	A	L	P	P	U	
U	E	N	N	U	I	V	L	E	
D	N	A	E	R	A	A	L	I	
E	T	O	T	A	L	I	T	Y	

## Sudoku Solution

1	8	5	3	7	6	4	9	2
7	4	2	5	9	1	6	8	3
9	3	6	2	4	8	1	7	5
6	9	3	1	8	7	5	2	4
2	7	4	6	3	5	8	1	9
5	1	8	9	2	4	3	6	7
3	5	1	7	6	9	2	4	8
4	6	7	8	5	2	9	3	1
8	2	9	4	1	3	7	5	6

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