

Nutrition

Goal

Promote healthy eating habits to decrease risk of chronic disease.

Objectives

1. By 2010, reduce the proportion of adolescents and adults who are overweight or obese from 29% to 11% for adolescents and from 32% to 22.9% for adults. [Relates to Healthy People 2010 objective 19-3 (adolescents) and 19-2 (adults)]
2. (Developmental) By 2010, increase the proportion of employer worksites that have healthy nutrition promotion policies, sponsor nutrition education programs, and offer food options that are consistent with the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans to 100%. [Relates to Healthy People 2010 objective 19-16]
3. (Developmental) By 2010, increase the proportion of restaurants that identify on their menus healthy food selections that meet Step 1 of the American Heart Association Guidelines to 100%.
4. (Developmental) By 2010, increase the proportion of school cafeterias and vending machines that serve foods that are consistent with the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans to 100%. [Relates to Healthy People 2010 objective 19-15]
5. By 2010, increase the proportion of Delaware adults who eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily from 26.7% to 50%. [Relates to Healthy People 2010 objectives 19-5, 19-6]

Notes:

The numeral assignment of each objective does not indicate priority, simply enumeration.

“Developmental” objectives are those that currently do not have state baseline data and, therefore, have no operational definitions. The purpose of developmental objectives is to identify areas of emerging importance and to drive the development of data systems to measure them.

Important roles for each sector*

Business

- Provide resources for statewide efforts, offer healthy food options at work, provide nutritional information about foods served, and offer or host healthy eating programs.

Community

- Promote healthy eating and healthy food options through educational programs, peer mentors, advocacy with local merchants, and community gardening programs.

Health Care

- Provide health insurance incentives and coverage to support healthy eating habits, and offer patients professional nutrition and weight education, assessment, and counseling.

Education

- Adopt policies to ensure healthy, culturally relevant foods in school cafeterias and vending machines, and provide education as part of coordinated school health programs.

Government

- Provide statewide leadership, assistance, and policies to ensure the nutritional quality of school, day care, and government food programs, and promote food labeling in restaurants.



Healthy Delaware Hero



American Cancer Society

To address the high cancer death rate in the African American Community, the American Cancer Society started “Body and Soul,” an initiative in four cities around the country. The program uses the church to promote healthier lifestyles in the African American community. Mother A.U.F.C.M.P. Church in Wilmington is taking part in this program. The goal of this 16-week pilot program is to make it a policy to include fruits and vegetables whenever food is served in the church. Designed by Constance Green-Johnson, this culturally sensitive program incorporates several elements to help church members make lifestyle changes around food. The Delaware State University dietetics department has provided a student to give presentations and an African American registered dietitian is on board for workshops. Body and Soul also includes an exercise component. Church Pastor Rev. Lawrence Livingston sings the praises of the program stating, “Body and Soul has had a positive impact on the church by teaching members to cultivate a healthy body to house the spirit.”

Resources (General)

- American Dietetic Association, (312) 899-0040, fax (312) 899-4899, www.eatright.org - brochures, prevention programs, weight loss programs
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (770) 488-4751, fax (770) 488-4760, www.cdc.gov/health/nutrition.htm - statistics, weight loss programs, prevention programs
- Delaware Dietetic Association, (302) 651-4752, fax (302) 651-4737, www.dedietassn.org - prevention programs, counseling referrals, educational information

Closing the Gap

The numbers of overweight children, adolescents, and adults are on the rise in Delaware, with disparities based on gender, race, ethnicity, and income. The prevalence of obesity is higher in Minority (non-white) populations, especially African American females, and in adolescents from lower income families (where the rate of overweight is almost twice that of middle- and high-income families).

To counter this trend, behaviors to promote healthy nutrition must start early with breastfeeding, be developed during adolescence, and be maintained as an adult.

Reducing disparities requires a unified approach to involve minority communities in health communications campaigns to change norms, eating habits, and physical activity. School-based education and nutrition programs must be appropriate for the culture, age, and gender of students.

It is crucial for Delaware to make school-aged youth a priority population, because overweight adolescents are likely to remain overweight during adulthood. Promoting healthy eating, food shopping, and even social behaviors at this early age reduces the risk of becoming overweight as an adult.

The mentioning of specific programs does not connote endorsement and was not meant to be exclusionary. We apologize for any unintentional omissions; please bring these to our attention.

