



The New Mexico

Plan to Promote Healthier Weight

*A Comprehensive Plan to Reduce Obesity,
Overweight, and Related Chronic Diseases*

2006-2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Tool to Combat Obesity and Overweight in New Mexico Communities

Purpose

The purpose of the plan is to build on the strengths of New Mexico communities and their diverse cultures to reverse the trend of increasing rates of overweight and obesity over the next ten years.

Outcomes of the Plan

Increase regular lifelong **physical activity** among adults and youth of all abilities.

Improve lifelong **healthful nutrition** for all New Mexicans.

Recognize and reverse when possible, the effects of **complex contributors to unhealthy weight gain** in individuals.

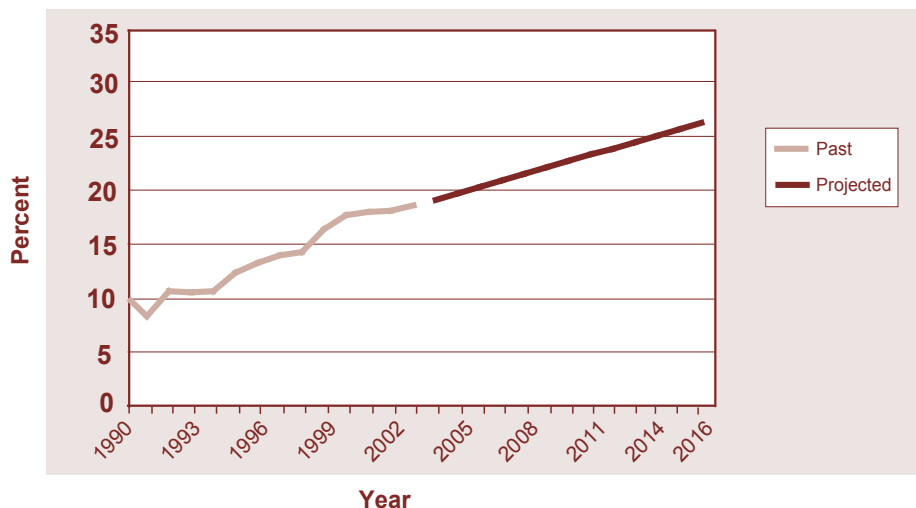
Identify and **decrease** obesity and overweight-related **disparities**.

New Mexicans are largely aware that regular physical activity and healthful eating can reduce the risk of developing chronic health conditions, manage weight, and improve quality of life. Yet just half of all New Mexico adults get the minimum recommended amount of exercise, and one quarter are not active at all. Less than a quarter eat five or more fruit and vegetable servings daily.

Education on individual behavior change is important, but by itself is not effective enough to reduce the obesity epidemic. Changes to the environment and to policies that reduce barriers to being physically active and choosing healthful foods and beverages, combined with other successful strategies, must be put into place.

New Mexico communities are ready to work together with their policy makers, planners, educators, healthcare providers and businesses to create healthy environments that will support children and adults to make healthful choices in all settings.

Figure 1. Adult Obesity in NM: Past Rate and Projected Trend through 2016 if nothing is done, based on BRFSS Data (Baum, 2005)



Recommendations

Focus activities in key areas

- Increase physical activity
- Reduce TV and other screen time
- Increase fruit and vegetable intake
- Educate on portion control
- Increase breastfeeding rates
- Reduce sweetened beverage consumption



Initiate activities in multiple levels of influence:

- Individual
- Interpersonal
- Organizational
- Community
- Public policy

Initiate activities in a variety of settings:

- Community and regional planning
- Education systems
- Families and communities
- Healthcare systems
- Food systems
- Worksites

Target efforts towards population shown to be at greatest risk:

- Children and adolescents and their families, and adults
- Residents of the Southeast and Northwest regions of the state
- People of Hispanic and Native American ethnicities
- People who earn less than \$10,000 per year

Policy makers, voluntary organizations and advocacy groups should seek opportunities to create and enhance policies and environments that support individuals to be more physically active and make healthful food and beverage choices.

Healthcare providers, administrators and payors need to develop consistent policies and practices to support promotion of healthier weight in clinical settings.

Strategies to Activate the Plan

Partnerships and Resource Development

No one organization can accomplish such broad objectives, and no single source of funds currently exists to support needed activities. Partnerships need to be developed and strengthened, and significant financial resources must be dedicated to this important health issue.



The New Mexico Healthier Weight Council

To coordinate strategies and monitor progress toward these recommendations, the New Mexico Healthier Weight Council is being created. This Council will focus the efforts of diverse partners, creating a single, more powerful entity to mobilize around important issues. Most importantly, the Council represents the first ever statewide collaboration of partners organized specifically to address overweight and obesity in New Mexico.

Policy

Policies support healthful behaviors and environments that encourage healthy lifestyles. They can be enacted at many levels, such as in families, workplaces, healthcare settings and schools as well as all levels of government.

Behavioral Management Skills and Social Support

These specialized skills help individuals make lasting changes in nutrition and physical activity behaviors. They include goal setting, monitoring progress, and structured problem solving. Building, strengthening and maintaining social networks helps provide the supportive relationships that facilitate change.

Information

Media and educational activities can inform, motivate and enable individuals and policymakers to make decisions that influence their health and the health of others. Counter marketing with media literacy can be used to address advertising and marketing that promotes unhealthy weight.

Evaluation, Surveillance and Research

Partners will contribute to building the evidence base of effective strategies to increase physical activity, improve healthful nutrition, and prevent and control obesity. Evaluation, surveillance and research results will be shared among local and national partners. New Mexico partners will help develop data collection and management tools for the state plan.

VISION

The vision for *The New Mexico Plan to Promote Healthier Weight* is that

New Mexicans value and enjoy optimal health in communities where it's easy to be active and make good nutritional choices. Families, communities, organizations, businesses and government work effectively together to create a vibrant, healthy society where health disparities no longer exist and obesity, overweight and related chronic disease rates are low.

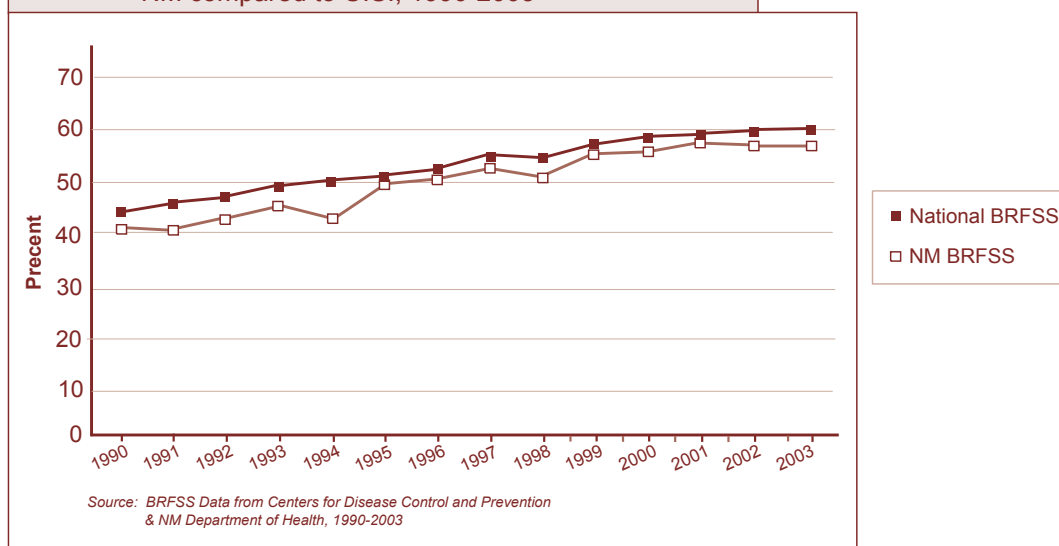
Today over half of New Mexico adults are overweight or obese, double the number since 1990. Nearly one quarter of NM high school students and one fifth of 2-5 year olds who participate in the WIC Program are at risk for overweight or overweight. These rates show no signs of slowing down.

Overweight and obesity contribute to developing chronic conditions like heart disease, diabetes, cancer and arthritis, diminish quality of life, and create a significant economic burden on employers, the healthcare system and society as a whole. More children than ever before are overweight, and are likely to be overweight adults.



The New Mexico Department of Health Physical Activity & Nutrition Program for Healthier Weight with over 150 partners recently concluded an extensive, inclusive process to examine the problem of overweight and obesity in New Mexico and what organizations can do to address it. Those partners helped develop key recommendations and are committed to putting them into action.

Figure 2. Adult combined overweight and obesity prevalence, NM compared to U.S., 1990-2003



The New Mexico Plan to Promote Healthier Weight: 2006-2015

A Comprehensive Plan to Reduce Obesity, Overweight, and Related Chronic Diseases

was created by a statewide collaborative of over 150 partners, and was coordinated by:

Physical Activity & Nutrition Program for
Healthier Weight



University of New Mexico
Prevention Research Center



For a copy of the full plan or information contact:

New Mexico Department of Health
Physical Activity & Nutrition Program for Healthier Weight
5301 Central Avenue NE, Suite 800
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87108
505. 222.8613
www.health.state.nm.us

The plan may also be downloaded electronically by visiting either of the following websites:

NM Department of Health, Physical Activity & Nutrition Program for Healthier Weight:
<http://www.health.state.nm.us/obesity.html>

University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center:
<http://hsc.unm.edu/chpdp>

With funding provided through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,
Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity - Cooperative Agreement U58/CCU622800-03