



CENTER FOR COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS

Unleashing the Power of People Working Together

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Healthy Behaviors Initiative Expands in the Central Valley *Opportunity for Afterschool Programs*

Sacramento, CA --The Center for Collaborative Solutions (CCS) is pleased to announce that it has received a grant from the Kaiser Permanente National Community Benefit Fund at the East Bay Community Foundation to establish five Healthy Behaviors Learning Centers in San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties over the next year. Healthy Behaviors Learning Centers are publicly funded, low-income afterschool sites that implement CCS-developed Exemplary Practices at an exemplary level and commit to helping other afterschool sites in their communities implement those practices. The goal is for all students at these sites (and their families) to learn how to make healthy food choices and be physically active while addressing hunger issues by increasing student and family access to healthy food through locally available resources.

These Learning Centers will join 31 Healthy Behaviors Learning Centers across the state in promoting healthy eating and physical activity through changes in policy, practice, and environments. Centers start with staff as role models and change policies so that all aspects of their programs support their goals. They partner with schools, families and community to increase positive influences on students and to increase the impact of their work. Centers start (or expand) school or community gardens, provide healthy cooking classes, incorporate physical activity for all throughout the program time, and inform families of food resources such as SNAP (formerly food stamps), food banks and the WIC program.

In addition, these afterschool sites implement the federally-funded afterschool meal program that brings healthy meals to students each day. It's an important resource for families struggling to make ends meet.

Obesity has reached epidemic proportions in the U.S. According to the Trust for America's Health, childhood obesity rates have more than tripled while adult obesity rates have doubled from 15 to 30 percent since 1980. Children's poor nutrition and sedentary lifestyles lead to obesity and related health problems, and adversely affect academic achievement. The Centers for Disease Control estimates that unless something is done, one-third of children born in the year 2000 will develop type 2 diabetes in their lifetimes.

"Afterschool programs are a key part of the urgently needed solution to California's obesity epidemic," said Kathy Lewis, vice president of the Center for Collaborative Solutions, a Sacramento-based nonprofit organization. "By capitalizing on the benefits that afterschool programs provide in partnership with schools, families and communities, we have an opportunity to create a better and healthier future for our children and their families."

In addition to its role as the donor of the Kaiser Permanente National Community Benefit Fund at the East Bay Community Foundation, Kaiser Permanente is also an active leader in improving policies, systems and environmental factors in the health field.

Founded in 1991, the Center for Collaborative Solutions is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. CCS works statewide to bring people and organizations together to solve problems and achieve mutual goals. CCS has expertise in health, and strong connections and relationships with public education (school day and afterschool). CCS's major initiatives are the Healthy Behaviors Initiative and the California Education Coalition for Health Care Reform.

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