



805 15th Street, NW, Suite 650, Washington, DC 20005
202-466-8100 • www.obesitycampaign.org

*****For Immediate Release*****

May 11, 2010

*****Media Contact*****

Rebecca Dreilinger: (202) 466-8700

Childhood Obesity Task Force Report Reflects Top Priorities of Campaign to End Obesity

Many Action Items Reflected in Newly Proposed "Healthy CHOICES Act"

(Washington DC) Echoing long-held priorities of the Campaign to End Obesity, First Lady Michelle Obama today released the findings of the interagency [Childhood Obesity Task Force report](#). The Campaign to End Obesity immediately hailed the study as both a thorough outline for combating the obesity epidemic among children, as well as further evidence of the need for comprehensive obesity legislation in Congress.

The report's 70 specific recommendations to help parents, children, business and government get America on track to a healthier weight, reflect many of the Campaign's top priorities. Among them are: giving health care professionals the tools to treat obesity as a disease; preventing and treating obesity by screening BMI and body composition in adults and children; aligning federal food programs with nutritional guidelines and making healthy foods affordable and accessible to those most at risk; and making it easier for Americans to be active and fit, including as a means of transportation.

"From empowering parents and caregivers to increasing nutritional standards in our schools; from expanding the accessibility of fresh fruits and vegetables, to increasing physical activity from our young ones' early years, the Task Force has hit upon central and urgent action items for both our society and our Congress," said Penny Lee, Executive Director of the Campaign to End Obesity. "Fortunately, much of what the First Lady has prescribed was introduced to the House of Representatives just a week ago, and is poised to move. These concrete recommendations should be a call to Congress to take up Rep. Ron Kind's Healthy CHOICES Act, immediately."

The Task Force is comprised of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Health and Human Services and Education, along with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff to the First Lady, and the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy. Their work comes not a moment too soon. Hospitalizations of obese children and adolescents aged two to 19 nearly doubled between 1999 and 2005 for obesity-related conditions such as asthma, diabetes, gallbladder disease, pneumonia, skin infections, depression, and other disorders. And Childhood obesity rates have more than tripled since 1980, with current data showing that nearly one in three children are overweight or obese.

“The Campaign to End Obesity has long advocated for the coordinated Federal response to the obesity epidemic,” continued Lee. “We commend the Task Force for working diligently these last few months with the goal of reversing this crisis among children within a generation. By realizing these steps through tangible legislation, perhaps this generation will not have to suffer its predicted diagnosis of being the first to live shorter lives than its parents.”

###