



Project RENEW **(Renew Environments for Nutrition, Exercise, and Wellness)**

- The obesity epidemic constitutes one of the most significant public health threats facing Los Angeles County, California, and the nation. Obesity rates are rising in the county among adults (from 14.3% in 1997 to 22.2% in 2007), school-aged children (from 18.9% in 1999 to 23.1% in 2008 among 5th, 7th, and 9th grade public school students), and younger children (from 16.7% in 2003 to 21.8% in 2008, among children 3 to 4 years of age receiving WIC services).
- Marked disparities in obesity rates are seen throughout the county. In 2008, the obesity rate among school-aged children was highest among Pacific Islanders (37.1%), followed by Latinos (27.5%), American Indian/Alaska Native (22.6%), African-American (21.9%), Whites (13.0%), and Asians (11.8%).
- In LA County, the economic costs associated with overweight, obesity, and physical inactivity were \$11.9 billion in 2006, including \$6.0 billion in medical costs and \$5.9 billion in costs associated with lost productivity of working aged adults.
- Project RENEW seeks to implement policy, systems, and environmental changes to improve nutrition, increase physical activity, and reduce obesity, especially in disadvantaged communities.
- The LA County Department of Public Health will work with a broad range of community, city, and school partners to implement a range of strategies over the course of the next two years. These strategies include:
 - Improving the nutritional content of school meals.
 - Implementing nutrition and physical activity standards among pre-school providers.
 - Expanding physical education in schools and opportunities for physical activity in after-school programs.
 - Creating more opportunities for walking and biking in communities by supporting the development of expanded bike networks and more pedestrian friendly community design
 - Establishing "joint use" agreements between schools and cities and communities to utilize school grounds and facilities for recreational programs during non-school hours, particularly in disadvantaged communities with few parks or other recreational venues.
 - Promoting healthy food and beverage policies in city and county programs serving youth and other vulnerable populations.
 - Establishing breastfeeding friendly policies in birthing hospitals and workplaces.
 - Implementing a social marketing and public education campaign to promote healthy eating and discourage consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, a major contributor to the obesity epidemic.
- More information about Project RENEW will be available as details are finalized. For more information about Public Health's Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, please visit: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/chronic/>

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