



# News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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**CONTACT:** Al Lundeen  
(916) 440-7259

## CALIFORNIA DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH LAUDS NATIONAL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PLAN

SACRAMENTO – Public health leaders in California and across the country on Monday called attention to a new national blueprint to motivate people to become and stay physically active, as well as promote the removal of barriers that keep people from being active.

“The National Physical Activity Plan is a long awaited milestone on the path to promote physical activity as a public health priority,” said California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Director Dr. Mark Horton. “This plan guides public health professionals and key physical activity stakeholders to build upon [Governor Schwarzenegger's initiatives](#) aimed at encouraging physical activity in schools and communities throughout California.”

The U.S. National Physical Activity Plan was released Monday by an expert panel representing influential health organizations including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American College of Sports Medicine, the American Heart Association and the American Cancer Society. The effort is a collaboration of public and private sector leaders who want to encourage a new way of thinking about lifestyle, activity, mobility and general physical fitness that addresses everything from the education of health care professionals to zoning laws, from school policies to workplace wellness programs.

“This effort reinforces the terrific work California has spearheaded to promote activity-friendly communities where walking and biking to school, work or other neighborhood destinations becomes more common,” said Dr. Linda Rudolph, deputy director of the Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion at CDPH. “The Plan’s strategies highlight the California practices and policies already in place to guarantee access to safe places and spaces to play and be physically active.”

The Physical Activity Plan is, in part, an answer to America’s alarming rates of adult and childhood obesity and decreasing levels of physical activity. It has been estimated that obesity costs California more than \$40 billion each year. Research has shown that physical activity and exercise can help prevent and treat obesity, diabetes, coronary heart disease, depression, bone disease, cancer and other diseases.

The Plan could significantly improve public health, cut health care costs, and reduce health disparities. It targets specific strategies for eight sector areas, including:

- Education: Develop and implement policies requiring school accountability for quality and quantity of physical education and physical activity.
- Health Care: Make physical activity a patient “vital sign” that all health care providers assess and discuss with patients.
- Transportation/Planning: Local, state, and federal agencies will use routine performance measures and set benchmarks for active travel (walking, biking, public transit).
- Recreation: Enhance the existing parks and recreation infrastructure with effective policy and environmental changes to promote physical activity.
- Business/Industry: Identify and disseminate best practice models for physical activity in the work place.
- Public Health: Create and maintain cross-sector partnerships and coalitions that implement effective strategies to promote physical activity.
- Volunteers & Non-governmental organizations: engage organizations committed to issues that impact or are impacted by physical activity
- Mass Media: Web, television, and media campaigns.

Earlier this year, Governor Schwarzenegger hosted the Governor’s 2010 Summit on Health, Nutrition and Obesity with President Bill Clinton which brought together leaders and experts from both the public and private sectors and a diverse group of stakeholders to discuss the best policies and practices to combat the state’s obesity crisis. Since taking office, the Governor has pledged to fight childhood obesity and encourage all Californians to live a healthy, active lifestyle. Following the 2010 Summit, the Governor [announced](#) specific actions he would pursue to help fight obesity and promote healthy living in California through promoting healthy beverages, increasing physical activity and incorporating the idea of “health in all policies.”

Governor Schwarzenegger is supporting [three current legislative initiatives](#) to combat obesity by banning sugar laden sports drinks in schools, ensuring student access to free and fresh drinking water, and requiring at least 30 minutes of rigorous exercise in physical education classes.

Information about the Physical Activity Plan is available online at [www.physicalactivityplan.org](http://www.physicalactivityplan.org).

[www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)

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