



Press Release

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November 6, 2008

Childhood obesity targeted with new funding

Galveston County and Cities – In an effort to prevent childhood obesity the Galveston County Health District has secured funding from the Texas Department of State Health Services to implement a comprehensive childhood obesity services program.

The free program is designed to help families develop a healthier lifestyle by creating better eating habits and increasing physical activity.

"Preventing obesity is key to preventing chronic disease, particularly diabetes and cardiovascular illness," said Dr. Mark Guidry, Galveston County Health Authority. "Parents, caregivers and others have a responsibility to help children reach and maintain a healthy weight, and this program will assist them in their efforts."

Overweight children and adolescents are at risk for health problems during their youth and as adults. For example, during their youth, overweight children are more likely to have risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease than are other children.

Children aged 2 to 12 years who are at or above the 85th percentile for BMI or who have increased their BMI more than two points in a year will be eligible for the program. BMI is a person's body weight, adjusted for height.

According to Guidry, "Improving the health and well being of Galveston County residents is a common challenge for the Health District. Childhood obesity was

included in our Strategic Health Plan when it was adopted in 2004 by the United Board of Health which is why we are excited to have secured funding to address the issue.”

Participants in the program will engage in quarterly counseling and goal setting, education on healthier eating patterns and changing lifestyles to increase physical activity. Free fitness incentives will also be provided for participation.

The District’s Childhood Obesity Services will be provided out of the 4C’s Clinic in Texas City at 2000 Texas Avenue. Referrals for the program will be accepted from private physicians, WIC offices, schools or a family may also self-refer.

For more information contact Dr. Cassandra Arceneaux, Director of Community Health Programs, (409) 938- 2456.