



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Alabama receives grant to combat obesity

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Alabama Department of Public Health is one of eight state health departments selected to receive grants to support the development of physical activity and nutrition programs in partnership with selected communities. Because of the BITE (Balancing InTake and Expenditure) grant, the department will provide \$15,000 directly to community groups.

Alabama has developed a competitive process to select at least five local communities to receive grants by April 2009. Successful community applicants will demonstrate that partnerships are in place to effectively plan and implement physical activity and nutrition projects to reduce community risks for obesity.

Community groups interested in this funding opportunity and who would like to obtain a request for funding application should contact Miriam Gaines, Nutrition and Physical Activity director, at (334) 206-5226 or by e-mail at mgaines@adph.state.al.us by March 16, 2009.

Community applicants will be expected to convene and coordinate a coalition of organizations that are vested in improving physical activity opportunities and improving nutritional status of their residents. These groups and their members will become part of a research project that will test various methods of project management. The planning and implementation of community projects will take place during the 13-month period from July 1, 2009, to July 31, 2010.

The local project coordinator or chair will become a member of the state's Obesity Task Force. The community groups receiving awards will be encouraged to embrace combating obesity as a continuous priority.

Eligible applicants for BITE grants were the 15 states with the highest overweight and obesity rates in the U.S. The state grants were awarded based on the strength of the state's history and current ability to build and sustain partnerships with state and community-level organizations with capacity to build community-based health initiatives in obesity prevention.

Other states selected were Delaware, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina and West Virginia. Each of these states had some of the highest obesity prevalence rates in the nation in 2007, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; from 27.4 percent in Delaware to 32 percent in Mississippi.

The National Association of Chronic Disease Directors, an Atlanta-based, national association of state health agency chronic disease prevention professionals, is pleased to award these funds as part of a collaborative research grant from Klein Buendel, Inc., a Golden, Colo., health education media research firm and the National Institute of Diabetes, Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) to assist communities in implementing programs targeting improvements in physical activity and healthy nutrition.

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