

# Nemours<sup>®</sup> Children's Health System



## ***Driving Action and Progress in Obesity September NASEM Workshop***

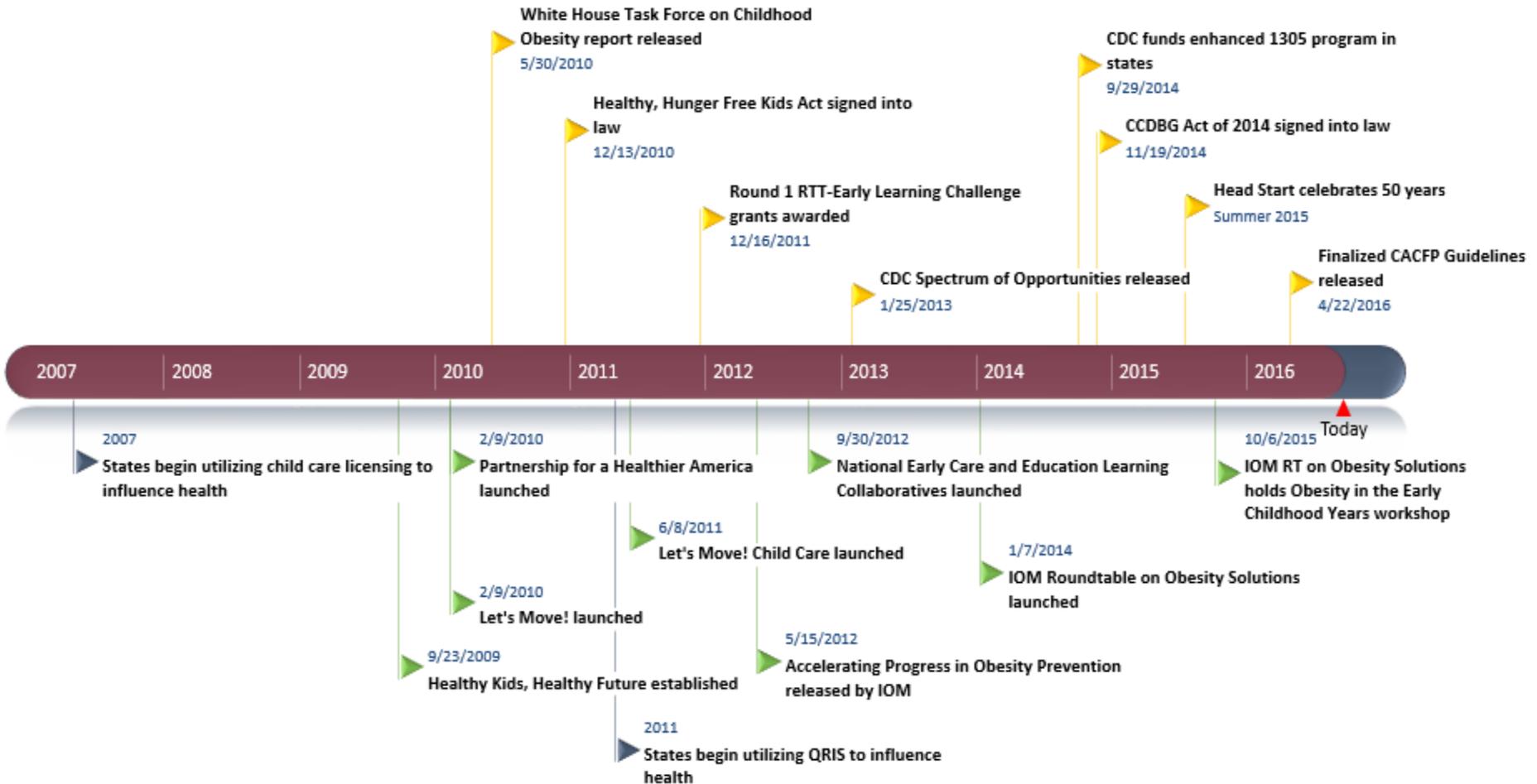
Early Care & Education Session

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**Debbie I. Chang, MPH**

Senior Vice President Policy and Prevention

# Important Milestones in ECE



# Opportunities in ECE

Spectrum of Opportunities for Obesity Prevention  
in Early Care and Education Settings



# Growing Evidence Supports Action

- For 2- to 5-year-olds, the prevalence of obesity decreased from 13.9 percent to 8.4 percent over the period 2003-2004 to 2011-2012 (NHANES)
  - Other data sources also show a drop in obesity among preschoolers
- Flavors and foods children experience beginning in utero and continuing during breastfeeding and complementary feeding establish lifetime preferences
- Insufficient sleep in infancy and early childhood and a lack of physical activity are modifiable risk factors for early childhood obesity, and these are among the many risk factors that account for higher rates of obesity in some ethnic and racial minority groups
- Family-focused interventions to promote healthy lifestyles, improve parenting skills, and target broader family life have had significant effects
- Initiatives focused on child development could take advantage of critical periods to lay a foundation for good nutrition, physical activity, sleep, and other important health behaviors
- Building trust, forging partnerships, and continually reassessing and resetting system goals can advance cross-sectoral work
  - Multi, multi, multi...

# Best Bets

- Policy bets
  - Regulations
  - Accountability for complying with regulations
- Practice bets
  - Providing turn-key (ready-to-use) curricula
  - Training and technical assistance
  - Parent engagement
- Evaluation bets
  - Self assessments
- Content area bets
  - Serving fruits and vegetables at every meal and implementing standards for healthy foods and beverages
  - Limiting screen time
  - Promoting breastfeeding
  - Promoting physical activity





# Opportunities for Action: Strengthen and Promote Regulatory Approaches

## ***EXAMPLES OF POLICY OPPORTUNITIES***

- Incorporate best practices and standards into licensing or QRIS.
- Create a consensus document with shared practices/ recommendations.

## ***EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES***

- Create and implement wellness policies.
- Examine what activities are already required in your state and use those as opportunities to integrate health messaging and behaviors.
- Engage parents as partners.
- Participate in state learning collaboratives.
- Link child and food nutrition program staff with licensing monitors.

## ***EXAMPLES OF RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES***

- Monitor and evaluate the impact of changes to licensing standards or QRIS adoption of HEPA outcomes on specific and measurable outcomes among children, facilities, and staff members.

# Opportunities for Action: Enhancing Equity

## ***EXAMPLES OF POLICY OPPORTUNITIES***

- Ensure policies do not adversely impact the ability to provide quality care, especially in at-risk communities and among vulnerable populations.
- Ensure that federal programs – like CACFP – are flexible enough in their guidelines to allow for culturally appropriate foods (that still meet basic minimums).

## ***EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES***

- Ensure that your community's social, racial, and cultural beliefs and practices are understood and represented in the policies, practices, and messages that are disseminated.
- Raise the frequency and level of equity conversations.
- Ensure that policies, recommendations, training materials, and other resources are available and distributed in multiple languages.
- Seek out and provide racial equity training and resources.

## ***EXAMPLES OF RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES***

- Identify the most pressing needs and barriers to meeting healthy eating and physical activity guidelines in underserved, minority, rural, or economically suppressed communities.

# Opportunities for Action: Family Engagement

## ***EXAMPLES OF POLICY OPPORTUNITIES***

- Embed family engagement into state Quality Rating and Improvement Systems.
- Develop breastfeeding-friendly policies.

## ***EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES***

- Invite parents to trainings that child care providers attend.
- Help families fully address their other health needs.
- Work in collaboration with health organizations to provide or expand services that support at-risk children.

## ***EXAMPLES OF RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES***

- Determine where parents have needs with respect to healthy eating and physical activity.
- Expand on the understanding of what types of support parents need and what methods for disseminating this information and support will be successful at reaching them.

# Opportunities for Action: Innovations

## *EXAMPLES OF OPPORTUNITIES*

- Explore ways that state and federal money can be used to support Child Care Health Consultants or other home-visiting program efforts.
- Create and support policies that will professionalize the ECE career.
- Advocate for funding to disseminate studies of programs that work.
- Explore opportunities for data sharing.
- Create the business case for early childhood intervention.
- Use the technical solutions, such as a cloud based management system, as a model for creating administrative resource sharing policies between facilities.



**Debbie I. Chang, MPH**

Senior Vice President Policy and Prevention  
1201 15<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Suite 520, Washington, DC 20005  
(e) [dchang@nemours.org](mailto:dchang@nemours.org)

[www.nemours.org](http://www.nemours.org)  
[www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org](http://www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org)