

Registry of Measures

Creating a Matrix of Common Measures and Methods to Enhance the Capacity to Understand and Synthesize Evidence from Diverse Childhood Obesity Research

The National Collaborative on Childhood Obesity Research (NCCOR) aims to develop, compile, test and promote the consistent use of common measures and methods across childhood obesity prevention and research at the individual, community and population levels. Standard measures are needed to describe and evaluate interventions, particularly policy and environmental interventions, and factors and outcomes at all levels of the socio-ecological model.

NCCOR will develop a web-based (front-engine) registry of valid and reliable measures to assess independent, dependent and key moderating variables in childhood obesity prevention research. This will improve and accelerate researchers' ability to learn what works within and across individual studies. Measures will be evaluated based on the degree to which they are valid, culturally sensitive and feasible for administration and use by a variety of end-users (i.e., researchers, community advocates, teachers, public health and health care practitioners), and in a variety of settings (e.g., schools, retail outlets, neighborhoods, community organizations).

The NCCOR Measures Registry Workgroup awarded a contract to Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., to research, collect and abstract measures for inclusion in the registry. Also, a smaller contract was awarded to Transtria to provide relevant background materials.

Scheduled to go live in January 2011, Mathematica's work focuses on four measures domains:

- (1) Physical activity environments and policies;
- (2) Food environments and policies;
- (3) Individual dietary behaviors; and
- (4) Individual physical activity behaviors (including sedentary behaviors).

The reviewed measures will address most levels of the socio-ecological model, including the individual, community, organizational, and local/state/national policy levels. The team is working collaboratively with the NCCOR Measures Registry Workgroup to develop tools and protocols for assessing published and emerging research.

NCCOR members hope that the registry will help identify gaps in measures and fuel new measurement development (i.e., measures for specific age groups, such as BMI across age groups, in puberty, etc.) for childhood obesity prevention and control research at the individual, community and population levels.

The purpose of this registry is to provide information about existing measures and their operational characteristics that are relevant to research, rather than promote or reach consensus on the use of specific measures for specific research settings or designs.

NCCOR is a collaboration among the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to accelerate progress on reversing the epidemic of childhood obesity in the United States.