

NEWS – August 12, 2008, Webpage content reprinted with permission from Generations United, <http://www.gu.org/State12281712.asp>

“Healthy Grandfamilies Initiative

The obesity rate is more than four times higher among children ages 6 to 11 than it was a generation ago. During the same time period, the rate has more than tripled among teens ages 12 to 19, and more than doubled among children ages 2 to 5. Today, nearly one-third of all children and adolescents in our country (more than 23 million youth) remain overweight or obese, placing them at heightened risk for heart disease, type 2 diabetes and a host of other serious diseases. See source and link below.

Factors contributing to excessive weight gain in children and teenagers include increased consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks, high-fat fast foods, large portion sizes, and sedentary TV and video game screen time. This is coupled with decreased physical activity and reduced consumption of fruits and vegetables. This basic information was incorporated into six workshops for grandparents.

Grandparents as primary or part-time caregivers of children are the primary focus of the Healthy Grandfamilies Initiative developed originally at the Strang Cancer Prevention Center. In the past, very few programs taught grandparents about the importance of healthy foods, how to access and prepare them, and how to encourage physical activity for the healthy growth and development of their grandchildren.

Workshop materials developed by Dr. Lisa Hark, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, provide the basis for the Healthy Grandfamilies workshops. These workshops were conducted in New York, Chicago, and Houston in 2007 and 2008.

In 2008 MetLife Foundation provided funds to enable Generations United to conduct the Healthy Grandfamilies Initiative, "Giving Grandparents a Hand," in Dallas. Texas Pediatric Society and the Community Council of Greater Dallas provided support for the Initiative. The workshops were conducted by Dr. LeAnn Kridelbaugh and other Dallas pediatricians. Rapturea Better Way Christian Ministry hosted the workshops during the months of April-July 2008.

Source of paragraph in italics above: [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Statement Regarding Estimates of Obesity Prevalence among U.S. Children and Teens](#)

[More information about childhood obesity on the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation website](#)



The picture at the left shows Rapturea's Pastor Lee receiving an "Oscar" pin from Ken Bryson, Director of the National Center on Grandfamilies, Generations United. The picture on the right shows a few of the 25 grandparents and 100 grandchildren who received benefits from the Healthy Grandfamilies workshops in Dallas.

[A Parent's Guide to Healthy Eating and Physical Activity](#)

[MyPyramid.gov](#) is the U.S. Department of Agriculture website offering you personalized eating plans, interactive tools to help you plan and assess your food choices, and advice to help you.”

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