

**How much do you know about the childhood obesity epidemic in ALASKA?**

**KEY POINTS:**

- Approximately 26,000 of 84,000 Alaska children ages 10-17 years (30.7%) are considered overweight or obese according to BMI-for-age standards.
- Alaska publicly insured children have the fourth lowest prevalence of overweight and obesity in the country at 30.8%, only two percentage points above the rate for privately insured kids. The state's insurance disparity ratio is second best in the nation.
- The overweight/obese prevalence rate for white non-Hispanic children is 28.9%, which places Alaska in the bottom tier of states, with a rank of 42<sup>nd</sup> for white non-Hispanic kids.
- Alaska children are more likely than their counterparts nationwide to exercise for at least 4 days per week, and less likely to spend 2 hours or more in front of a television or computer screen.

| OVERALL PREVALENCE  | ALASKA % | NATIONAL % |
|---|----------|------------|
| Percentage of children ages 10-17 years who are overweight or obese   | 30.7%    | 30.6%      |
| State Rank for overweight or obese children (1 is best)   | 32       |            |
| Percentage of children ages 6-17 years who participate in 4 or more days of rigorous physical activity per week                         | 65.3%    | 59.0%      |
| Percentage of children ages 6-17 years who engage in 2 or more hours of screen time per day (includes TV, videos, computer games, etc.) | 41.8%    | 44.9%      |
|   |          |            |
| DISPARITIES – ACROSS AND WITHIN STATES  | ALASKA % | NATIONAL % |
| <b>% Overweight or Obese by Family Income</b>   |          |            |
| <100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL)   | 39.8%    | 39.8%      |
| >400 % FPL  | 21.5%    | 22.9%      |
| Income Disparity Ratio  | 1.85     | 1.74       |
| State Rank on Income Disparity Ratio (1 is best, 39 is worst)   | 18       |            |
| <b>% Overweight or Obese by Type of Insurance</b>   |          |            |
| Public Insurance  | 30.8%    | 39.6%      |
| Private Insurance   | 28.8%    | 26.7%      |
| Insurance Disparity Ratio   | 1.07     | 1.48       |
| State Rank on Insurance Disparity Ratio (1 is best, 49 is worst)  | 2        |            |
| <b>% Overweight or Obese by Race</b>  |          |            |
| Black, non-Hispanic   | NA       | 41.2%      |
| White, non-Hispanic   | 28.9%    | 26.6%      |
| Race Disparity Ratio  | NA       | 1.55       |
| State Rank on Race Disparity Ratio (1 is best, 23 is worst)   | NA       |            |
| <b>% Overweight or Obese by Hispanic Origin</b>   |          |            |
| Hispanic  | NA       | 37.7%      |
| Non-Hispanic  | 30.1%    | 29.5%      |
| Hispanic Origin Disparity Ratio   | NA       | 1.28       |
| State Rank on Hispanic Origin Disparity Ratio (1 is best, 21 is worst)  | NA       |            |

\* Difference between state and national overall prevalence is statistically significant at the .05 level of significance.  
 NA – Not Available. Estimates with a relative standard error greater than 30%, or based on an unweighted sample of fewer than 25 children, are considered unreliable and are not reported.  
 State rankings on disparity ratios include only those states with reliable estimates for both groups.

Data Source: CAHMI/Data Resource Center analysis of the 2003 National Survey of Children's Health. Developed by the Child Policy Research Center and the Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative/Data Resource Center ([www.childhealthdata.org](http://www.childhealthdata.org)) on behalf of the NICHQ Childhood Obesity Action Network.

**TECHNICAL NOTES:**

The 2003 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) provides parent-reported information on the health and well-being of children in each state and nationwide. Two important aspects of children's health measured in the survey are physical activity and overweight, which is calculated from the child's height and weight as reported by the parent or guardian. Using survey results and sex-specific BMI-for-age growth charts developed by CDC, the prevalence of children with BMI scores in two separate percentile ranges (85<sup>th</sup> to 95<sup>th</sup> and above the 95<sup>th</sup>) can be estimated. Children with BMI between the 85<sup>th</sup> and 95<sup>th</sup> percentiles are classified as overweight; those with a BMI above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile are classified as obese. Childhood and adolescent obesity measures based on parental report may not accurately reflect the true prevalence of overweight and obesity. However, previous research and comparisons of NSCH with data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (NHANES) have shown that parental reports are reliable and provide a fairly close correspondence for children 10-17 years (Ogden et al., *Advance Data From Vital and Health Statistics*, 2004).

## What is ALASKA doing about obesity?

The table below is derived from the 2007 edition of *F as in Fat*, published by Trust for America's Health ([www.healthyamericans.org](http://www.healthyamericans.org)). The effectiveness of any one state approach is not known; the summary below is intended only for comparing a state's activities as of 2006 with others.

| OBESITY-RELATED STATE INITIATIVES – 2007  | ALASKA | NATIONAL             |
|---|--------|----------------------|
| Snack and/or soda tax   | No     | 17 states + D.C.     |
| CDC state-based nutrition and physical activity program   | No     | 28 states            |
| Federal STEPS grant recipient   | No     | 7 states             |
| Laws that limit liability for obesity and obesity-related health problems   | No     | 24 states            |
| OBESITY-RELATED SCHOOL STANDARDS – 2007   | ALASKA | NATIONAL             |
| Physical education requirement <i>(Note: There is variation in whether states enforce these standards)</i>  | Yes    | 50 states + D.C.     |
| Health education requirement <i>(Note: There is variation in whether states enforce these standards)</i>  | Yes    | 48 states + D.C.     |
| Nutritional standards for school meals and snacks that go beyond existing USDA requirements   | No     | 17 states            |
| Nutritional standards for competitive food products sold a la carte, in vending machines, school stores or at bake sales  | No     | 22 states            |
| Limitation (beyond federal requirements) on when and where competitive food products may be sold  | No     | 26 states            |
| BMI or health information collected <i>(Note: There is variation in whether states enforce these standards)</i>   | No     | 16 states            |
| 2006 OBESITY-RELATED POLICY OPTIONS   | ALASKA | NATIONAL             |
| Provision for strengthening of private insurance coverage for obesity prevention or treatment, especially for the morbidly obese (BMI of 40 or higher). Children may or may not be covered. | No     | 8 states introduced  |
| Legislation or resolutions to create obesity-related task forces, commissions, studies or other special programs  | No     | 19 states introduced |

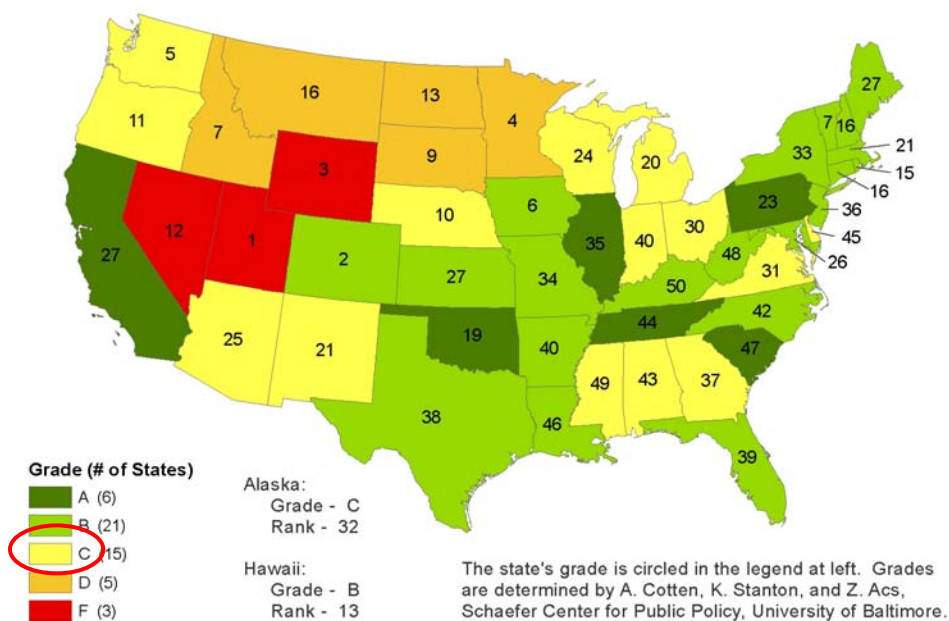
### NOTES:

The federal Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108 – 265) required each local school district participating in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program to establish a local wellness policy by the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year. To view model school wellness policies, see [www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/](http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/).

One credit (two semesters) of health or physical education is required for high school graduation (4 AAC 06.075).

Legislation established the Alaska Schools Physical Activity Task Force to develop recommendations for maximizing physical activity and education within the state's schools (HB 128).

### STATE OBESITY PREVALENCE RANKING AND REPORT CARD GRADE FOR CHILDHOOD OBESITY-RELATED ACTIVITIES



Note: The numbers shown in the map above represent the state's ranking on the prevalence of overweight and obesity among children ages 10-17. Utah ranks first with the lowest overweight/obese prevalence, while Kentucky ranks 50<sup>th</sup>. The child obesity report card grade developed for each state is a composite of the state score on five types of childhood obesity-related legislation: (1) Nutrition standards in schools, (2) Vending machine prohibitions in schools, (3) Body mass index measured in school, (4) Recess and physical education requirements, and (5) Obesity programs and education. For more information, see [www.ubalt.edu/experts/obesity/index.html](http://www.ubalt.edu/experts/obesity/index.html).