

Salud America!

The RWJF Research Network to
Prevent Obesity Among Latino Children

Fact Sheet

Childhood Obesity is a National Epidemic

- Today, nearly one-third of American children and adolescents, or about 23 million youth, are overweight or obese.¹
- Over the past four decades, the obesity rate among children ages 6 to 11 has more than quadrupled and more than tripled among teens ages 12 to 19. It has doubled among children ages 2 to 5 over the past three decades.^{1,2}
- Obesity increases the risk for type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, arthritis, stroke, heart disease, certain kinds of cancer, and other diseases.^{3,4}

Childhood Obesity's Impact on Latinos

- Mexican-American children are more likely to be obese or overweight than white or African-American children.¹
- Mexican-American children ages 6 to 11 are at a higher risk for obesity than any other group of children.¹

Salud America! Will Help Reverse the Epidemic

The *Salud America!* mission is to increase the number of scientists engaged in research on environmental and policy solutions to prevent obesity among Latino children, and unite them in an effective network. The network has these goals:

- Develop a network of researchers and community leaders and groups interested in preventing obesity among Latino children.
- Conduct a series of national summit meetings.
- Develop a research priority agenda on obesity among Latino children.
- Fund 20 pilot research projects to further this agenda.
- Train and mentor pilot researchers throughout their projects.

Salud America! Program Background

The network is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation national program directed by the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. Program leaders are:

- Amelie G. Ramirez, Dr.P.H., Director
- Kipling J. Gallion, M.A., Deputy Director
- Patricia Chalela, Dr.P.H., and Emma Mancha, M.P.A., Program Coordinators



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¹Ogden CL, Carroll MD, Flegal LR. "High Body Mass Index for Age Among U.S. Children & Adolescents, 2003-2006." *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 299(20): 2401-2405, 2008.

²Ogden CL, Flegal KM, Carroll MD, et al. "Prevalence and Trends in Overweight Among US Children and Adolescents, 1999-2000." *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 288(14):1728-1732, 2002.

³CDC. "Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1988-94." Analysis by the Lewin Group [Falls Church, VA], 1999.

⁴Calle E, Rodriguez C, Walker-Thurmond K, et al. "Overweight, Obesity and Mortality in a Prospectively Studied Cohort of U.S. Adults." *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 2003 (April 24),348:1625-1638.