

Obesity Task Force Meeting  
Nov 13, 2012  
AL Power Company WaterCourse Building  
Clanton, AL



### Alabama Obesity Task Force (OTF)

#### Mission Statement:

“Working toward prevention and reduction of obesity for a healthier Alabama”

#### Purpose (Branding) Statement:

“The State Obesity Task Force works to address overweight and obesity issues through advocacy, policies, environmental changes, and programs that support healthy lifestyle changes.”

Michael Jackson welcomed members and guest to the meeting. Following introductions, Linda Knol, PhD, RD introduced students from the University of Alabama who had completed a basic obesity burden report for breastfeeding. The correlation between breastfeeding and obesity protection for the infant and weight loss for the mother is well accepted. The students, Morgan Haygood, Elizabeth Murray, Suzanna Niehoff, and Erin Marie Patenaude presented their findings, explaining the data was from the web and phone calls were not made. Alabama has a lower breast-feeding rate than the states they used as comparison. The comparison states had more peer counseling, more baby friendly hospitals, and more lactation consultants. The question of how the Obesity Task Force can be more active in supporting breast-feeding was raised, with the suggestion of contacting the Alabama Breastfeeding Committee (<http://alabamabreastfeedingcommittee.com>.) Power Point included.

Chantel Hartman and Laurie Eldridge-Auffant provided an overview of the connection between disabilities and obesity. They reported that 16% of Alabamians have a disability. The Alabama Department of Public Health is working with Lakeshore Foundation and the Governor’s ... to address emergency preparedness, access to care, and health promotion. For more information on the grant, contact Maury West ([Maury.West@adph.state.al.us](mailto:Maury.West@adph.state.al.us)) or Laurie Eldridge Auffant ([Laurie.Eldridge-Auffant@adph.state.al.us](mailto:Laurie.Eldridge-Auffant@adph.state.al.us))

A survey was emailed to each OTF member to gather input on meeting location, time, and format. Mim Gaines provided the results. The majority of responses indicate meeting in Clanton with one or two speakers followed by committee work time was the preferred method. Requested topics for future meetings included community interventions, school approaches, worksite wellness, policy changes needed, medical research, and grant writing. The power point is included.

Kathe Briggs provided the update on the wellness manual that the Community Committee has been working on. It will be posted on the web site by January 2013 to coincide with Scale Back Alabama. The Guide will be a "work in progress" with on-going updates. The last step for the manual is to have it reviewed by ADPH partners to adapt the guide to be more inclusive for those with disabilities.

Sheena Gregg, chair of the nominating committee, requested nominations from each committee for Board positions for the 2013 election. The ballot will be presented to members in February.

Debbie LaCruz briefly explained the Cities for Life initiative the YMCA is currently working on. Efforts to identify diabetes resources in the community are underway. A survey tool was given to each member to complete. To read more about the project, go to "mydiabetesconnect.com"

Committee work time followed. Reports from the committees are as follows:

**Action for Health Kids Committee-** Selecting schools for a scholarship was discussed.

**Advocacy Committee-** Breastfeeding and physical activity in schools will be the first two position papers for the committee to write.

**Community and Communications Committees** Plans for a press release to coincide with the kick-off of Scale Back Alabama for the wellness manual were discussed.

Communications will assist with a one-page overview promotional sheet for the Guide.

**The Community and Data Committees** will work on an evaluation tool to be added to the Guide. The group discussed an on-line survey posted with the guide. In addition, a statewide survey was discussed to send among Alabama worksites, especially the smaller ones, to determine the level of wellness programming being offered in the state (collect data on worksite wellness). Several committee members volunteered to revise an existing survey for use.

Additional wellness success stories can needed to be added to the Guide. The committee discussed ways to collect this information.

For future projects, a brief presentation was made by the committee co-chairs about the new committee work on the Built Environment/ Active Living Communities. A list of active living communities, initiatives and contacts will be developed.

**Data Committee-** The report given by the students will be developed into a publication.

**Health Care Provider Committee-** The project with AAP to work with pediatricians in addressing obesity is going well. The next project may include working on a prescription pad, working with nurse practitioners, or to work with hospitals to promote breastfeeding staff positions.

**Membership Committee-** The OTF membership brochure was reviewed for needed changes.

**Student Involvement Committee-** Reaching more professors as well as younger students on campus was discussed.

After the committee reports were given, Michael Jackson adjourned the meeting.