



## **Obesity Policy Committee**

Stakeholders engaged in a strategic planning process to address obesity initiated in Spring 2010. Four policy priorities of high impact were felt to be strategically possible for introduction to the 125<sup>th</sup> Maine Legislature.

### **Policy priorities:**

**1. Increase the amount of physical education available to children in school.**

Despite the evidence that children experience positive health, social and academic benefits from regular exercise, Maine students do not meet evidence based exercise recommendations. To meet established national recommendations for physical education, increase the amount of time physical education classes are offered to students in school.

**2. Improve the nutrition standards for all foods available in schools.**

Students have access to foods and beverages in school that are not required to follow the federal nutrition standards in place for school meal programs. Adopting scientifically established nutrition standards for all foods available on school grounds including food and drink available in vending machines and at school sanctioned events will improve the nutrient profile provided by these items and ultimately the health of our children.

**3. Add physical activity and nutrition standards to licensure and certification standards for child care facilities.**

Starting positive health habits early in life has the potential to continue for a lifetime. Including established standards for the amount and type of physical activity and the nutritional quality of foods and beverages offered to children in child care settings will have lasting impact.

**4. Advocate for menu labeling rulemaking process.**

Per Maine's Attorney General the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention will determine rules for Maine's menu labeling law due to go into effect February 1, 2011. A concern is the issue of federal preemption regarding the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, H.R. 3590.