



Robert Wood Johnson  
Foundation

# Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities

## 2008 Call for Proposals

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### Proposal Deadline

July 25, 2008

## Program Overview

(Please refer to specific sections for complete detail.)

### Purpose

*Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities* is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) that focuses on systems, policies and environmental strategies to support healthy eating and active living, especially among children who are at highest risk for obesity. Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities will work with up to 100 local community partnerships across the U.S. to help them increase opportunities for physical activity and improve access to affordable healthy foods for children and families. This initiative will advance RWJF's efforts to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic by 2015.

### Eligibility Criteria (page 5)

Complete eligibility criteria can be found on page 5. Preference will be given to applicant organizations that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and are not private foundations as defined under section 509(a).

### Selection Criteria (page 6)

Complete selection criteria can be found on page 6. Successful applicants are expected to demonstrate a **commitment of cash and/or in-kind matching support equal to at least 50 percent** of the grant award.

### Total Awards

This targeted call for proposals (CFP) will award grants to approximately 10 leading sites\* under the Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities program. Under this round of funding, each leading site grantee may receive up to \$400,000 total for up to four years.

*\*A leading site is defined as a municipality, county, district or region with a minimum population of 50,000 residents and a strong existing infrastructure of partners who: 1) have demonstrated leadership and success in achieving policy and environmental changes related to active living and healthy eating; and 2) are ready to implement broader-scale changes.*

### Key Dates and Deadlines

- **June 11, 2008** (12:00 p.m. ET)—Registration deadline for applicant conference call.
- **June 16, 2008** (3:00–4:30 p.m. ET)—Applicant conference call.
- **July 25, 2008** (3:00 p.m. ET)—Deadline for receipt of full proposals.
- **September 9–12 and September 16–19, 2008**—Half-day reverse site visits in Chapel Hill, N.C.
- **October 2008**—Finalists notified.
- **January 1, 2009**—Grants begin.

### How to Apply (page 10)

All proposals must be submitted through the RWJF Grantmaking Online system.

### Inquiries

Please submit any inquiries via e-mail with "HKHC CFP" in the subject line. Direct programmatic inquiries to [info@healthykidshealthycommunities.org](mailto:info@healthykidshealthycommunities.org) and technical questions related to the RWJF Grantmaking Online system to [techinfo@healthykidshealthycommunities.org](mailto:techinfo@healthykidshealthycommunities.org).

For general information please visit the program's Web site.

[www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org](http://www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org)

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## Background

During the past four decades, obesity rates have soared across all age groups, increasing almost fivefold among children ages 6 to 11. Today, one-third of all U.S. children and adolescents are either overweight or obese, putting them at higher risk for a host of serious illnesses, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, asthma and certain types of cancer. The obesity epidemic also is a pressing threat to our nation's economy and health care system—it costs the United States \$117 billion annually in direct medical expenses and indirect costs. Childhood obesity alone is responsible for up to \$14 billion per year in direct health care costs.

According to the Institute of Medicine (IOM), the nation's epidemic of childhood obesity is the result of cumulative changes in children's environments that limit their opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating. For example, many families live in communities that have limited or no access to affordable fresh foods and safe places for children to play. Reversing the epidemic will require communities to remove barriers to and increase support for healthy eating and physical activity among children.

Success in creating healthier communities for children also will require effective partnerships among leaders, practitioners and advocates from different fields, including public health, education, parks and recreation, city planning, transportation, community development and social services. Such multidisciplinary partnerships can change systems, policies and environments to make it easier for children and their families to make healthier choices.

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## The Program

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) is committed to tackling childhood obesity and the threat it poses to the health of our nation's children and families. As part of our effort to reverse the epidemic by 2015, RWJF has launched a major national program: *Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities*. The goal is to successfully implement healthy eating and active living strategies that can create healthier communities for children and families across the United States. The program places special emphasis on reaching children who are at highest risk for obesity on the basis of income, race/ethnicity or location.

Initially, RWJF will fund approximately 10 leading sites to implement systems, policies and environmental strategies with potential to prevent childhood obesity in populations at greatest risk. For purposes of this program, we define a "leading site" as a municipality, county, district or region with a minimum population of 50,000 residents and a strong

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existing infrastructure of partners who: 1) have demonstrated leadership and success in achieving policy and environmental changes related to active living and healthy eating; and 2) are ready to implement broader-scale changes.

Policy and environmental changes are critical for reducing childhood obesity. However, isolated or unrelated changes will not result in community-wide cultural change. Through the Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities program, RWJF seeks to catalyze and support communities' efforts to address the root causes of childhood obesity through integrated changes in policies, norms and practices, social supports and the physical environment.

Leading site participants will be expected to serve as mentors and ambassadors for other communities by participating in a learning network, speaking at national meetings and hosting occasional visits so others can learn from their efforts. RWJF ultimately will fund up to 100 community partnerships working to increase opportunities for physical activity, improve access to affordable healthy foods, and enhance social environments that shape how children and their families perceive and engage in healthy eating and active living.

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities will:

- 1) provide funding, tools and assistance to help up to 100 communities sustain systems, policies and environmental changes that support healthy eating and active living, especially among children who are at highest risk for obesity;
- 2) collaborate with other RWJF-funded initiatives to help drive wide-scale change;
- 3) support experienced local leaders who will serve as ambassadors and mentors for communities that are working to prevent childhood obesity;
- 4) apply research findings and evaluation results to help communities implement the most effective strategies for increasing physical activity and improving nutrition for kids; and
- 5) inform the policy debate on childhood obesity by sharing insight about initiatives with the greatest potential for wide-scale change that will help to reverse the epidemic.

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## Nominating Process

This targeted call for proposals (CFP) is available only to a select number of communities that have been identified as being ready to address childhood obesity through systems, policies and environmental strategies. RWJF invited several grantmaking organizations and grantees to nominate communities as potential leading sites for Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities. Nominating organizations were asked to share information about a community's strengths in key areas, including: leadership in achieving systems, policy and environmental change; demonstrated collaboration with neighborhood, local and/or statewide entities to work at the municipal, county, district and/or regional level; experience working effectively with and on behalf of populations at greatest risk for childhood obesity; experience and willingness to serve as ambassadors and share knowledge with other communities; and ability to manage a multidisciplinary initiative. RWJF reviewed all nominations and selected 15 communities to receive the CFP for leading sites.

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## Grants for Leading Sites

RWJF will award approximately 10 grants for Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities leading sites, each of which will receive up to \$400,000 total for up to four years.

Each community that applies will be responsible for determining the appropriate partners for this initiative, selecting a lead agency to serve as the fiscal and administrative liaison for the grant, and identifying a highly qualified project director to provide overall leadership and coordination. *Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities will accept only one proposal per community.* Leading site grantees will represent a diverse array of communities, geographic regions and types of initiatives. Each leading site is required to focus on populations that are at greatest risk for obesity on the basis of income, race/ethnicity or location.

Leading site grantees are expected to build on their communities' achievements to date and leverage their experience to address systems, policies and environments to effect large-scale change. Strategies that aim to increase opportunities for healthy eating and active living should consider how social, institutional and cultural supports and barriers impact these behaviors. Creating large-scale change will require public health initiatives to work across various sectors and professional disciplines. For this reason, RWJF seeks to fund communities that will use a comprehensive approach. **Proposals that address only one policy or environmental change will not be considered.**

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The most effective strategies for reversing the childhood obesity epidemic go beyond changes to a single policy or practice. For example:

- A policy to provide incentives for grocery stores to locate in lower-income neighborhoods may need to be supported by any or all of the following: site-development incentives in ordinances; market analysis and targeted recruitment of stores; data mapping that shows residents' lack of access to healthy foods; street improvements; other neighborhood revitalization efforts; assessments of the demand for particular ethnic/niche foods; and/or ongoing logistical support to retain the stores over time.
- A greenway system master plan also may require new design standards for intersections of trails with roads; mandatory easements in new residential subdivisions; cooperative agreements with a utility company that controls key land; increased capital funding for underpasses or way finding signs; the establishment of a nonprofit "conservancy" or "friends" group to assist with greenway system maintenance and fundraising; striping of new bike lanes; and/or additional bike parking in a downtown area.
- A policy to open school playgrounds or gyms for public use after school hours may need to be supported by joint-use agreements for sharing costs or increasing budgets for utilities, security, maintenance and janitorial services; removing or installing fences or gates; clarifying institutional liability; expanding after-school programs or sports leagues that require additional supervision; establishing new guidelines for controlling access to school grounds; and/or working with principals to increase awareness of new policies among school personnel.

Successful grantees will work through effective partnerships to support healthy choices for children and families through systems, policies and environmental strategies. While the focus of this initiative is on community-change strategies, applicant communities may include school-based strategies that take place during non-school hours and have a clear connection to the broader community. Other school strategies may be included, but we are most interested in those that take place outside of schools.

Grantees are encouraged to coordinate changes to systems, policies and environments with existing programs that aim to educate, share information, build demand for and otherwise support healthy eating and active living. Examples may include walking school buses, cooking classes, physical activity curricula and other structured activities. Such initiatives may complement the grantee's funded work.

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## Eligibility Criteria

Successful leading site applicants will have:

- a track record of success in implementing systems, policies and environmental strategies to improve community environments for healthy eating and active living among children and their families;
- an appropriate range of partners with the necessary resources, expertise, perspective and a history of working together at the municipal, county, district and/or regional level (e.g., voluntary associations and nonprofits, recreation centers, food providers, school districts, city departments, departments of transportation, food policy councils);
- a stated commitment to collaborate with an independent research organization selected by RWJF to evaluate how grantee interventions impact the community environment and/or children's eating and physical activity behaviors;
- cash and/or in-kind matching support equal to at least 50 percent of the grant award; and
- a commitment to continue this work beyond the grant period.

In addition, applicant organizations must be either a public entity, a nonprofit organization that is tax-exempt under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or a tribal group recognized by the U.S. federal government. Only one application will be accepted from each nominated community.

## Selection Criteria

- RWJF will review and select proposals based on the degree to which they:
- focus on and address the needs of vulnerable populations and communities at greatest risk for childhood obesity on the basis of race/ethnicity, income or location;
  - demonstrate effective work with and on behalf of populations at greatest risk for childhood obesity;
  - engage dedicated and effective leadership with experience in addressing systems, policies and environmental changes to advance healthy eating and active living;
  - identify a diverse array of partner organizations or entities, such as influential stakeholders and key decision-makers, who have clearly defined roles and experience working with and on behalf of communities most at risk for childhood obesity;
  - demonstrate that the applicant community and its partners have had previous success in improving children's food and physical activity environments;
  - show evidence of capacity, readiness and available opportunities to implement broad system changes that have strong potential to increase both healthy eating and active living among children;
  - identify focused and coherent approaches to systems change that are likely to produce results during the grant period;
  - engage elected officials and/or generate broad-based political will to support this work; and
  - demonstrate willingness to serve as ambassadors to other Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities grantees, and to share information with the national program office and related initiatives.

## Evaluation

As a condition of accepting RWJF funds, grantees will be required to participate in an evaluation, which will be initiated by the Foundation in collaboration with each leading site. The evaluation is a critically important part of the Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities program, and leading site grantees will be well positioned to contribute to this work. This evaluation process will help identify promising models and initiatives that are working most effectively to increase healthy eating and physical activity for children. In addition, the assessments will help make a credible case for policy and environmental changes aimed at preventing childhood obesity. The evaluation process also will address the role of leading sites as mentors and advisors and the effectiveness of this strategy in helping to inspire and support other communities throughout the nation. The evaluation will not be used to assess grantee performance or to determine future funding decisions.

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess which systems, policies and environmental changes are most effective and feasible for the cost and effort in a given community. The evaluation will assess how the changes initiated by Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities grantees impact nutrition and physical activity among children, as well as the community environment. In order to obtain the necessary information and understand the interventions, active collaboration with the leading site grantees is essential. For this reason, each applicant community should allocate .25 FTE within the budget to support the work of an evaluation liaison. It is not necessary for this individual to have evaluation expertise. The ideal evaluation liaison would be the project director or coordinator. The purpose of the budget allocation for this liaison is to assure that grantees will:

- have substantial input to the evaluation-planning process;
- have a designated liaison to coordinate communication with and involvement from community leaders and residents during the evaluation; and
- provide feedback and interim reports to the community partnerships that can be used for their benefit, such as insight that may lead to program improvements or information regarding local outcomes that may increase support for the initiative.

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RWJF will work with grantees to develop the research questions and scope of work, and to ensure that the evaluation process adds minimal burden to the community.

As noted under Eligibility Criteria, each applicant community's proposal narrative must include a stated commitment of willingness to participate in an evaluation, which is a condition of the grant award. Details about the evaluation process will be provided on the applicant conference call and as part of frequently asked questions (FAQs) available online at [www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org](http://www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org) and during reverse site visits.

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### **Monitoring and Other Expectations**

Grantees will be expected to meet RWJF requirements for the submission of financial and narrative reports. Grantees also are required to submit periodic information needed to assess overall project performance, monitoring and management. At the close of the funding period, the lead agency will be expected to provide a written report on the project and its findings for broad dissemination.

Leading site grantees will be expected to engage in a planning period at the beginning of the grant to finalize assessments, refine and validate their workplans, and prepare their partnership for implementation.

Project leaders and paid project staff will be expected to participate in a learning network and to serve as ambassadors for Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities. Occasional activities may include public speaking, mentoring emerging leaders, hosting learning visits and/or contributing to teleconferences, Webcasts, strategy sessions, peer exchanges or professional development sessions. Senior project leaders will be expected to serve in this capacity, even if additional staff members (e.g., project coordinators) are involved in the daily management of the initiative.

## Use of Grant Funds

Grant funds may be used for project staff salaries, consultant fees, data collection and analysis, meetings, supplies, project-related travel and other direct project expenses, including a limited amount of equipment deemed essential to the project.

Applicant communities are expected to commit funding sufficient to support salary and benefits equal to at least half-time support from a project director or coordinator, as well as 25 percent time support for an evaluation liaison. RWJF funds and/or matching/in-kind support may be used for these purposes. Although RWJF will consider exceptions (e.g., two individuals each dedicating 25 percent time and/or an arrangement with a long-term contractor or consultant), a strong justification will be required. It is highly recommended that the director or coordinator is paid a competitive salary, receives benefits and has experience in leading and/or coordinating similar efforts.

Applicant communities are expected to include in their proposed budgets \$2,000 per year (\$1,000 per person) to support travel costs for two people to participate in annual meetings for Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities. In addition, applicant communities should allocate time to support occasional “ambassador” activities, including hosting learning visits and providing advice to other communities. Grantees also may be asked to participate in other forums to help present promising systems, policies and environmental strategies. In such cases, grantees will be reimbursed for their expenses. National program staff will work with leading site grantees to ensure that these efforts do not detract from their daily project responsibilities.

RWJF funds awarded under this CFP may not be used to develop or implement programs or promotional or educational initiatives. In addition, funds may not be used for construction costs and capital expenses related to the building of physical projects, such as sidewalks, playgrounds, trails, greenways, bike paths, community gardens or farmers’ markets. In keeping with RWJF policy, grant funds may not be used to subsidize individuals for the costs of their health care; support clinical trials of unapproved drugs or devices; construct or renovate facilities; support lobbying; or replace funds currently being used to support similar activities.

RWJF prohibits any portion of the award to be used for direct or grassroots lobbying as defined in federal law and tax regulations. Any lobbying activities must be supported with non-RWJF funds. Applicant communities should ensure they have made provisions for complying with this restriction.

## How to Apply

Proposals must be submitted through the RWJF Grantmaking Online system. Guidelines, information, FAQs and access to the RWJF Grantmaking Online system are available at <http://grantmaking.rwjf.org/hkbc>.

RWJF will host a conference call for potential applicants to answer questions about the program, as well as the application and selection processes (see Timetable on page 13). Participation in this call is strongly encouraged, but not required. To register for the call, please submit an e-mail with the subject line “Conference Call Registration” to: [info@healthykidshealthycommunities.org](mailto:info@healthykidshealthycommunities.org) by June 11, 2008, at 12 p.m. ET. The e-mail should contain the name and e-mail address of each conference call participant. You will receive dial-in instructions after we receive your e-mail.

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities has a national advisory committee that makes recommendations about funding decisions to RWJF staff. RWJF is responsible for all final grant decisions. RWJF does not provide individual critiques of proposals submitted.

### *Full Proposal Requirements*

Full proposals from nominated communities are due via the RWJF Grantmaking Online system by 3 p.m. ET on July 25, 2008. *Late or incomplete submissions, as well as multiple submissions from a single community, will not be reviewed.* Full proposals must include the following information:

1. Community applicant information sheet
2. Proposal summary (up to 2000 characters)
3. Full proposal narrative (up to 15 single-spaced pages in 11-point Arial font using the full proposal template), including the following information:
  - Background information, including project area, demographics, opportunities, assets, challenges and needs;
  - Organizational capacity of lead agency, including mission and previous work in improving children’s food and activity environments;
  - Summary of key partners, including experience and skills of proposed leader(s), previous work in addressing active living and healthy eating and anticipated roles in this initiative;
  - Overview of the proposed initiative, including vision, goals, and major assessment and implementation activities;
  - Level of readiness to engage in this work, including results of previous assessments regarding opportunities and barriers related to active living and healthy eating, as well as existing political will;

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- Anticipated challenges related to your initiative and proposed strategies for mitigating them; and
  - Other considerations, including a stated commitment to participating in evaluation, potential contributions to a learning network, anticipated needs for technical assistance and sustainability plans.
4. List of organizational partners (using the provided template)
  5. Budget and budget narrative (using the provided template)
  6. Matching funds information providing evidence of cash and/or in-kind matching support equal to at least 50 percent of the grant award (using the provided template)
  7. Letters of support from key partners and from organizations providing matching funds and/or in-kind support (using the provided template)
  8. Resume(s) for project director and/or coordinator (using the provided template)
  9. Scheduling form for reverse site visit (using the provided template)

#### *Reverse Site Visits*

All applicant communities submitting eligible and completed proposals will be invited to participate in a half-day reverse site visit in Chapel Hill, N.C. Dates of reverse site visits are September 9–12 and September 16–19, 2008. Each lead agency will be provided a stipend of \$2,500 to help offset the costs of travel and lodging for selected members of their partnership. Additional members may participate by telephone. Logistics regarding reverse site visits, including each community’s scheduled date and time, will be e-mailed to project directors by July 31, 2008.

Please direct inquiries regarding programmatic issues to: [info@healthykidshealthycommunities.org](mailto:info@healthykidshealthycommunities.org). Please reference “HKHC CFP” in the subject line. If you have technical questions related to the RWJF Grantmaking Online system, please send an e-mail with the subject line “HKHC tech help” to [techinfo@healthykidshealthycommunities.org](mailto:techinfo@healthykidshealthycommunities.org) or call (919) 843-3124.

## Program Direction

Direction, technical assistance and consultation for this initiative are provided by the Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities national program office (NPO) located at:

Active Living by Design  
School of Public Health  
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
400 Market Street  
Suite 205  
Chapel Hill, NC 27516  
Phone: (919) 843-2523  
E-mail: [info@healthykidshealthycommunities.org](mailto:info@healthykidshealthycommunities.org)  
[www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org](http://www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org)

Responsible staff members at the NPO are:

- Sarah Strunk, M.H.A., *director*
- Mary Beth Powell, M.P.H., *deputy director*
- Mark Dessauer, M.A., *communications officer*

Additional program direction and technical assistance are provided by NPO project officers and consultants.

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities addresses a grantmaking priority of the Childhood Obesity team at RWJF. Responsible staff members at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are:

- Jamie Bussel, M.P.H., *program officer*
- James Marks, M.D., M.P.H., *senior vice president and director, Health Group*
- Laura Leviton, Ph.D., *special advisor for evaluation*
- Kathryn Thomas, M.J., *senior communications officer*
- Vanessa Farrell, M.P.H., *program associate*
- Daniela Phayme, M.Div., *grants administrator*

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## Timetable

- **June 11, 2008 (12:00 p.m. ET)**  
Registration deadline for applicant conference call.
- **June 16, 2008 (3:00–4:30 p.m. ET)**  
Applicant conference call.
- **July 25, 2008 (3:00 p.m. ET)**  
Deadline for receipt of full proposals via the RWJF Grantmaking Online system.
- **July 31, 2008**  
Project Directors notified about reverse site visit logistics.
- **September 9–12 and September 16–19, 2008**  
Half-day reverse site visits with all eligible applicants in Chapel Hill, N.C.
- **October 2008**  
Finalists are notified of award recommendations.
- **January 1, 2009**  
Grants begin.
- **December 31, 2012**  
Grants end.

## About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, we work with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change.

For more than 35 years we've brought experience, commitment and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those we serve. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, we expect to make a difference in your lifetime.

For more information visit [www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org).

Sign up to receive e-mail alerts on upcoming calls for proposals at [www.rwjf.org/services](http://www.rwjf.org/services).



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May 2008