

# TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

TODD STAPLES  
COMMISSIONER

December 27, 2010

The Honorable Rick Perry, Governor  
The Honorable David Dewhurst, Lieutenant Governor  
The Honorable Joe Straus, Speaker of the House

Gentlemen:

During the 81<sup>st</sup> Legislative Session, SB 395 by Senator Eddie Lucio Jr. and Representative Eddie Lucio III established the Early Childhood Health and Nutrition Interagency Council. This council was charged with reviewing and making recommendations related to the health of children under six, and nutrition and physical activity practices in early childcare settings. The legislation also directed that the council present a six-year plan to the Legislature. This plan is attached.

The council met three times over the course of this year, and included representatives from eight state agencies and nine stakeholder groups. I commend the diligent work of this council in its efforts to raise the health and nutrition standards for our youngest Texans.

These recommendations represent the input of health professionals and advocates across the state. In considering any initiative impacting Texas children, I know you will work closely with all stakeholders including parents and business owners to ensure the full impact of any proposal is thoroughly evaluated. In order to be successful in our fight against childhood obesity and improve health of our children, collaboration among parents, private businesses, non-profits and lawmakers will be essential.

Thank you for your interest in addressing obesity and health of our children. Each year, obesity related illnesses cost Texas businesses \$5.8 billion. Stemming the tide at an early age will be a crucial element to address this epidemic.

Sincerely yours,



Todd Staples

TS/KGG/kgg



# Early Childhood Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan

**Senate Bill (SB) 395 Goal: Improve the health of children (under the age of 6) in the state of Texas by centralizing efforts among Texas state agencies to combat childhood obesity, address malnutrition and undernourishment involving children, parents, families, caretakers and communities.**

Objective	Strategy	Action Steps	Timeline	Financing, Staffing, & Training
<p><b>O.1.</b> State agencies will develop, promote, coordinate and implement recommendations and policies to support early childcare settings to: increase fruits and vegetables consumption; increase daily structured and unstructured physical activity; increase awareness among parents of the benefits of breastfeeding; facilitate the consumption of breast milk; educate parents on healthy eating and appropriate physical activity for children (under the age of 6); increase participation in Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAPEd).</p>	<p><b>S.1.</b> Develop a 6-year plan including evidence-based best practices for improving early childhood health through nutrition and physical activity that encourages healthy eating and active lifestyles for children (under the age of 6) that involves children, parents, families, caretakers, and communities.</p> <p><b>S.2.</b> Engage existing community and state resources and service providers to educate and increase the awareness of parents and caretakers regarding the need for proper nutrition.</p>	<p><b>A.1.</b> <i>SB 395 Early Childhood Health and Nutrition Interagency Council</i> will promote policy that addresses nutrition standards and physical activity requirements (that simultaneously reduce screen time) for infants and children (under the age of 6).</p> <p><b>A.2.</b> <i>SB 395 Early Childhood Health and Nutrition Interagency Council</i> will develop, adopt, implement and evaluate the <u>Early Childhood Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan</u> using evidence-based best practices related to nutrition and physical activity (that simultaneously reduce screen time) for infants and children (under the age of 6).</p> <p><b>A.3.</b> <i>SB 395 Early Childhood Health and Nutrition Interagency Council</i> will survey stakeholders about the opportunities for and barriers to the implementation of the <u>Early Childhood Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan</u>.</p> <p><b>A.4.</b> <i>SB 395 Early Childhood Health and Nutrition Interagency Council Act</i> will promote outreach opportunities to increase participation in existing child nutrition feeding programs in Texas.</p>	<p>11/1/10 Thru 9/1/16</p>	<p>SB 395 Interagency Council</p>

**Action A: Increase the health and well being of infants by promoting awareness among parents, families, caretakers and communities about the benefits of breastfeeding and facilitate the consumption of breast milk in early childcare settings.**

Objective	Strategy	Action Steps	Timeline	Financing, Staffing & Training
<p><b>O.1.</b> State agencies and stakeholders will provide culturally appropriate nutrition education materials and trainings for parents, families, caretakers and communities about the benefits of breastfeeding.</p>	<p><b>S.1.</b> Increase the awareness among parents of the benefits of breastfeeding and facilitate the consumption of breast milk in early childcare settings.</p>	<p><b>A.1.</b> Offer training to caretakers through a variety of methods (classroom, on-line, self paced, Web cast, and/or instructor-led) and distribute outreach materials through (CACFP, WIC, SNAP, SNAPEd, hospitals, physicians, pediatricians, web sites and early childcare settings) to promote breastfeeding.</p> <p><b>A.2.</b> Promote, create, or obtain behavioral based educational materials/resources about breastfeeding for parents, families, caretakers, and communities.</p> <p><b>A.3.</b> Offer trainings and outreach opportunities to promote the breastfeeding message.</p> <p><b>A.4.</b> Promote existing Public Service Announcements (PSA) that promotes breastfeeding.</p> <p><b>A.5.</b> Promote existing websites that have downloadable brochures, fact sheets, and other educational materials that promote breastfeeding.</p>	<p>11/1/10 Thru 9/30/16</p>	<p>SB 395 Interagency Council</p>

**Action B: Increase consumption of fruits and vegetables and moderate to vigorous physical activity by promoting educational, recreational, and hands-on opportunities that encourage healthy eating and physical activity in early childcare settings for children (under the age of 6).**

Objective	Strategy	Action Steps	Timeline	Financing, Staffing & Training
<p><b>O.1.</b> Provide developmentally and culturally appropriate nutrition education and physical activity guidelines for children (under the age of 6) to parents, families, caretakers and communities that increase fruits and vegetables consumption and daily physical activity.</p>	<p><b>S.1.</b> Offer educational, recreational, and hands-on opportunities that encourage healthy eating and physical activity in early childcare settings for children (under the age of 6) to parents, families, caretakers and communities.</p>	<p><b>A.1.</b> Offer educational resources, training, and technical assistance through a variety of media sources for infants and children (under the age of 6), parents, families, caretakers and communities which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate portion sizes</li> <li>• Feeding Infants: During the First Year</li> <li>• Planning menus and snacks to incorporate recommended modifications to the CACFP meal pattern</li> <li>• Meals consistent with current <i>Dietary Guidelines for Americans</i></li> <li>• Promote the 5-2-1-0 Wellness Initiative</li> <li>• Preschool sack lunches brought from home</li> <li>• Food handling &amp; sanitation</li> <li>• Structured and free play physical activity</li> <li>• Consistent messages related to healthy eating and physical activity based on guidelines of the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).</li> </ul> <p><b>A.2.</b> Provide the DVD <i>The Adventures of Zobey Barn Dance Party and Jungle Jive</i> (physical activity and nutrition education videos for children ages 2 through 5) and the educator DVD <i>Preventing Childhood Obesity</i> to eligible CACFP contractors and WIC participants.</p>	<p>11/1/10 Thru 9/1/16</p>	<p>SB 395 Interagency Council</p>

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Objective	Strategy	Action Steps	Timeline	Financing, Staffing & Training
<p><b>O.2.</b> Identify evidence-based programs and curricula in nutrition education and physical activity for children (under the age of 6), for parents, families, caretakers and communities.</p>	<p><b>S.1.</b> Make available evidence-based resources that encourage healthy eating and physical activity in early childcare settings for children (under the age of 6), parents, families, caretakers and communities.</p>	<p><b>A.1.</b> Conduct an assessment of current evidence-based resources and programs in nutrition education and physical activity for infants and children (under the age of 6) and make the information available to parents, families, caretakers and communities.</p> <p><b>A.2.</b> Produce a PSA with consistent messages about increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables and moderate to vigorous minutes of physical activity for infants and children (under the age of 6).</p>	<p>11/1/10 Thru 9/30/16</p>	<p>SB 395 Interagency Council</p>

**Action C: Raise nutrition standards and minutes of structured and unstructured physical activity in licensed day care facilities for children (under the age of 6) by promoting recommendations and policies to improve the childcare minimum standards guidelines.**

Objective	Strategy	Action Steps	Timeline	Financing, Staffing, & Training
<p><b>O.1.</b> <i>SB 395 Early Childhood Health and Nutrition Interagency Council</i> will promote policy that improves nutrition standards and physical activity requirements for children (under the age of 6).</p>	<p><b>S.1.</b> Promote nutrition standards, moderate to vigorous physical activity requirements, and screen time limitations in licensed early childhood settings using evidence-based best practices. Follow recommendations by the IOM, CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), current Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA), National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) and Nutrition and Physical Activity Self Assessment for Child Care (NAPSACC) for consistent messages regarding nutrition, physical activity and screen time for children (under the age of 6).</p>	<p><b>A.1.</b> Work with childcare licensing to set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meal pattern requirements;</li> <li>• Nutrition standards;</li> <li>• Minutes of structured and unstructured moderate to vigorous physical activity requirements for infants and children (under the age of 6); and</li> <li>• Limits on screen time while in care.</li> </ul> <p><b>A.2.</b> Recommend to legislature to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meal pattern requirements;</li> <li>• Nutrition standards;</li> <li>• Minutes of structured and unstructured moderate to vigorous physical activity requirements for infants and children (under the age of 6) in licensed day care facilities; and</li> <li>• Limits on screen time while in care.</li> </ul> <p><b>A.3.</b> Make available opportunities to apply for grants, resources to supplement fruits and vegetables and other financial incentives to support nutrition and physical activity standards.</p>	<p>11/1/10 Thru 1/1/16</p>	<p>SB 395 Interagency Council</p>

**Evaluation: Monitor, measure, and evaluate activities in SB 395 Early Childhood Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan.**

Objective	Strategy	Action Steps	Timeline	Financing, Staffing, & Training
<p><b>O.1.</b> Monitor outreach efforts to the community to provide prospective parents and guardians with information about the benefits and supportive practices of breastfeeding. Evaluate trainings offered in childcare settings to promote support for breastfeeding.</p> <p><b>O.2.</b> Monitor children’s (under the age of 6) offering and consumption of fruits and vegetables (servings) and observe physical activity levels to identify trends and evaluate the impact of the interventions in this plan.</p>	<p><b>S.1.</b> Select evaluation tools for monitoring, measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of SB 395 <u>Early Childhood Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan</u> for infants and children (under the age of 6).</p> <p><b>S.2.</b> Contract with a university or other agency to conduct evaluation studies.</p>	<p><b>A.1.</b> Utilize an evaluation process and methods that are appropriate for each action and objective. Evaluation methods may include pre and post surveys to assess changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviors and/or epidemiologic data to establish baseline and periodic change. Process evaluation will be collected to capture the number of outreach packets distributed, number of participants attending training, utilization of materials, etc.</p> <p><b>A.2.</b> Utilize an online survey mechanism to collect data and provide summary reports.</p> <p><b>A.3.</b> Report outcomes by statistical data, number of outreach packets distributed (agencies and stakeholders) and number of participants reached.</p> <p><b>A.4.</b> Develop and enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to establish unpaid internships with public or private universities’ nutrition or public health departments. The Department of Agriculture for the council may accept a gift, grant or donation from any source to carry out the purposes of the chapter.</p>	<p>11/1/10 Thru 12/31/16</p>	<p>SB 395 Interagency Council</p>