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**Obesity Among Low-Income Preschoolers Declines in Michigan**  
*Overall data show trends in obesity can be reversed*

LANSING – Michigan is among 19 states and U.S. territories showing small declines in obesity among low-income preschoolers from 2008 to 2011. Following decades of rising rates nationally, Michigan decreased from 13.9 percent in 2008 to 13.2 percent in 2011. The data come from the latest [Vital Signs](#) report released August 6 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

“Over the past several years, we have been implementing evidence-based strategies to reduce obesity rates in Michigan through collaborative efforts with statewide partners,” said James K. Haveman, Director of the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH). “We are seeing a modest, but significant decrease in rates for some of our youngest citizens, and that is encouraging. Our work will continue in an effort to encourage and support healthier lifestyles which will influence healthier weight.”

In Michigan, steps continue to be taken to decrease barriers to healthy eating and physical activity for low-income families with children in an effort to decrease obesity rates, including the release and implementation of the Michigan Health and Wellness 4 x 4 Plan. Examples include efforts to improve nutrition and increase physical activity in child care centers through the implementation of the Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care; improvements and upgrades in farmers markets across the state to increase access in affordable, healthy food; increased access to opportunities for physical activity such as community park renovations; and strategies to improve access to resources and support for postpartum breastfeeding mothers.

Previous research shows that, nationally, about one in eight preschoolers is obese in the U.S., and children are five times more likely to be overweight or obese as an adult if they are overweight or obese between the ages of 3 and 5. The CDC report also revealed that these rates of early childhood obesity were either stable or improving in most of the states and territories included in the analysis. Obesity rates remain too high, though, and sustained efforts and additional work is needed to continue the downward trend.

For the *Vital Signs* report, CDC researchers analyzed measured weight and height for nearly 12 million children ages 2 to 4 who participate in federally-funded maternal and child nutrition programs. Forty states and the District of Columbia and two U.S. territories (U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico) were included in the report. The data comes from the [Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance System](#). The full *Vital Signs* report is available at [www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/childhoodobesity](http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/childhoodobesity).

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