



MEDIA KIT

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Fact Sheet

- One out of every six children in the U.S. ages two to 19 is overweight. That's 16.9 percent, or an estimated 12 million youth. An additional 14.8 percent are at risk of becoming overweight. Extra pounds can add up to life-long health problems. Overweight and obese adults increase their risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, certain cancers and other chronic conditions.
- **We Can!**® (**W**ays to **E**nhance **C**hildren's **A**ctivity & **N**utrition), a fast-growing, national program from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), helps encourage healthy weight maintenance in youth, ages eight through 13, by providing their parents, caregivers and communities with curricula and other science-based educational materials to help them make more nutritious food choices, increase their physical activity, and reduce their screen time.
- **We Can!**'s science-based educational programs, support materials, training opportunities and other resources are based on the results of clinical and community studies supported by the NIH, the nation's medical research agency. These resources help health professionals, community groups and others to implement programs for youth, parents and families in their community.
- Communities can tailor **We Can!** to fit their specific needs. The flexible, three-tiered program (involving community outreach, partnership development and media outreach) can be adapted to a variety of settings—rural to urban—and for populations with diverse ethnic (African Americans, Hispanics, etc.) and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Cities and communities interested in establishing a **We Can!** site can register for one of three program levels—general site, intensive site or city/county site—at <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov>. The levels dictate the intensity of involvement. Since the program's launch in 2005, it has grown from 14 intensive community sites to more than 1,200 registered sites in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 11 other countries, some five years later.
- Of these more than 1,200 sites in early 2010, more than 1,080 have registered as general sites, 127 have registered as intensive sites, and 18 cities and counties hold the distinction of serving as a **We Can!** City or County (including Boston, Las Vegas and Caguas, Puerto Rico). New sites are signing up every week, at a broad array of locations, including parks and recreation departments, YMCAs, faith-based organizations, medical/health systems, fitness centers, schools, universities and work sites. Check the Web site for the latest site numbers and locations.
- **We Can!** is a collaboration of four Institutes of the National Institutes of Health: the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

Spokespeople

Karen Donato, S.M.
Coordinator of Overweight and Obesity Research Applications
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
National Institutes of Health

As the coordinator of overweight and obesity research applications for the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, Karen Donato works to educate health professionals and high-risk individuals about obesity. She serves as the Coordinator of the **We Can!** national education program to help prevent overweight and obesity in children and youth. She also works to develop educational activities on overweight and obesity issues for minority populations.



Previously, she served as Executive Director of the Expert Panel on the Clinical Guidelines to the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults, the first Federal evidence-based report on overweight and obesity treatment issues.

She has spent her career in a number of positions for the National Institutes of Health, serving as the Coordinator of Nutrition Education and Special Initiatives, Coordinator for Patient and Professional Nutrition Education and the Acting Chief of the Health Education Branch.

She holds a master's in nutrition from the Harvard School of Public Health.

Spokespeople: Spanish Speaker

Cristina Rabadán-Diehl, Ph.D., M.P.H.
Director, NHLBI Global Health Initiative Program
Program Director, Division of Cardiovascular Sciences
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI)
National Institutes of Health

As a Program Director in the Division of Cardiovascular Sciences at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), and the Director of the NHLBI Global Health Initiative Program, Dr. Cristina Rabadán-Diehl is an expert on cardiovascular health. In addition to running Global Health activities and programs, she also manages programs related to the cardiovascular complications of diabetes and the metabolic syndrome, as well as atherosclerosis and hypertension.



Dr. Rabadán-Diehl has a degree in pharmacy from the Universidad Complutense of Madrid (Spain); a Ph.D. from the University of Miami (FL); and an M.P.H. and Health Communications Certificate from the Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health (Baltimore, MD).

Dr. Rabadán-Diehl is a member of several professional associations; an external advisor for the CIHR Canadian Cardiovascular Complications of Diabetes Initiative; and an editorial board member for the *World Journal of Diabetes* and *The Journal of Developmental Origins of Health and Disease*.

As a native Spanish speaker, Dr. Rabadán-Diehl is active in Hispanic cardiovascular disease and prevention outreach activities. In addition to being a spokesperson for the **We Can!** program, Dr. Rabadán-Diehl speaks on behalf of “The Heart Truth,” a national awareness campaign for women about heart disease. In addition to English and Spanish, she speaks German and some Portuguese.



Case Study

Boston, MA: Boston Public Health Commission

"Little bitty changes have really made a big difference in all of our lives," said Ivonne Borrero, a parent who participated in the Boston Public Health Commission's (BPHC) **We Can!** Parent Program. "I was surprised and thrilled to

see my son ask for a wrap sandwich, instead of a burger, during a visit to the mall. He also voluntarily gave up some of the candy from his Halloween bag."

A member of Boston's Latino community, Borrero signed up so that she could learn to help her overweight 11-year-old son, but was astounded by the program's impact on *both* of them.

Boston, a source of great change since the revolutionary Tea Party in 1773, continues to be a trailblazer more than 200 years later by first becoming the location of one of the nation's only 14 **We Can!** Founding Intensive Sites (2005) and then signing on as a **We Can!** City (2007).

It's all thanks to the success of the BPHC's **We Can!**-based programs, including the translation of **We Can!** curricula and materials into Spanish to meet the needs of the city's extensive Latino community.

The BPHC has also cultivated strong and lasting partnerships with the following partners to help roll out the **We Can!** Energize our Families: Parent Program, and other related efforts, at multiple locations city-wide:

- Children's Hospital-Boston
- Northeastern University
- Body by Brandy (a local gym)
- YMCA of Greater Boston
- Head Start of Boston
- Boston Public Schools
- Community health centers

The BPHC's multi-pronged approach also includes creating a strong cadre of trainers from a broad and representative array of community organizations that speak to at-risk audiences, including those of African American, Caribbean and Latino heritage. Along these lines, in the fall of 2008 the site offered a free **We Can!** train-the-trainer workshop for area dietitians, nutritionists and health educators.



Case Study

Carson City, NV: Nevada State Health Division, Ron Wood Family Resource Center

"As Nevada's first **We Can!** City, Carson City has embraced the **We Can!** program and we are finding that every year there is more and more awareness," said Joyce Buckingham, executive director of the Ron

Wood Family Resource Center, the primary **We Can!** lead in Carson City.

The can-do frontier spirit lives on in Nevada's capital, with the community coming together to implement the **We Can!** program in May 2007, becoming a **We Can!** City, and subsequently hosting a **We Can!** regional training, all within a mere six months of signing up.

And the rush didn't stop there. In 2008, the city held a record 13 **We Can!** courses. **We Can!**-based nutrition classes were offered at Fremont Elementary School; the Boys and Girls Club—Western Nevada; and the Carson City Juvenile Probation Center.

A testament to the versatility of the **We Can!** curricula is how Carson City weds it to other nutrition and physical activity programs, such as its Junior Master Gardener series. The series provides youth who attend **We Can!** nutrition classes with the bonus of learning from master gardeners how to prepare soil, plant vegetables and harvest them. A nutritionist then guides them on using their harvest in nutritious recipes.



Some of Carson City's diverse **We Can!** partners include:

- Boys and Girls Club—Western Nevada
- Carson City Juvenile Probation
- Carson City Park and Recreation Department
- Fremont Elementary School
- Jenny Craig
- Muscle Powered
- Nevada Bicycle and Pedestrian
- Parks For Paws
- Washoe Tribal Health Center



Carson City is also working hard to reach its American Indian community, an at-risk population. In October 2008, the Park and Recreation Department and the Washoe Tribal Health Center hosted a well-attended regional training, which served as the backdrop for a city-wide launch of Carson City as a **We Can!** City. The city's pioneer spirit continues to shine in other events such as **We Can!** Family Nights Out, during which the city provides families with light, nutritious dinners and physical activities at a local park.



Case Study

Roswell, GA: Roswell Recreation, Parks, Historic and Cultural Affairs Department

“**We Can!** is definitely a positive addition. People recognize **We Can!** through our efforts, seeing how it is making changes and directly impacting our kids and our community,” said Kiran Fatania, **We Can!** leader with the Roswell Recreation, Parks, Historic and Cultural Affairs Department, and Media-Smart Youth® trainer.

Like many sites, Roswell’s success with **We Can!**-based programs has spurred the community to jump to the next level of involvement. Two years after joining the movement as a **We Can!** Founding Intensive Site, city leaders agreed to make Roswell one of the first **We Can!** Cities (2007). This is due in part to the growth of its Media-Smart Youth program—one of three youth curricula offered by the **We Can!** program. As of 2009, Roswell’s program had more than *doubled* in size.

Media-Smart Youth provides participants with the tools to decipher media messages about food and health. Since 2005, the 12-week, afterschool program has been offered at Crabapple Middle School every fall thanks to a partnership with the Roswell Recreation, Parks, Historic and Cultural Affairs Department.

The school’s Parent Teacher Association and its physical education instructor, Susan Polk, have been particularly supportive. Ms. Polk coordinates with local **We Can!** leader Kiran Fatania to teach the curriculum to middle-schoolers once a week. To date, the curriculum’s final project—a Public Service Announcement (PSA) about nutrition created by students—has received community-wide support. Local video and audio experts have helped edit the so-called “Big Production,” and a member of the community has run the final product on his 100-foot movie screen during a special screening for parents, students’ classmates and school officials. Program participants have also created and performed a jingle, which radio talk-jock Moby Carney has run on his “Moby in the Morning” show, syndicated in 14 states.



Roswell also has offered *other* city-wide **We Can!**-oriented activities, including a Health & Wellness Program that provided once-a-week **We Can!** Parent Program classes for city employees and a unique annual, fall scavenger hunt sponsored by Publix supermarket during which students scoured the store to find designated items. This search forced them to read food labels and learn about healthier food choices. In addition to its partnership with Publix, Roswell forged bonds with an array of other partners (including the Alpharetta YMCA, Athens-Clarke County School District, Kroger Supermarkets and North Fulton Regional Hospital) that support a range of activities and provide in-kind donations.

Statistics

Because communities around the country are joining **We Can!** *weekly*, we encourage you to check out the latest numbers and locations of our community sites; the number and names of partners from both private and public sectors; important obesity statistics; and more at the following links and *elsewhere* on our Web site:

We Can! Community Site Locations:

<http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov/community/find-a-program.htm>

We Can! Partners:

<http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov/partner-with-us/national-corporate-partners.htm>

Obesity Rates and Statistics:

<http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov/healthy-weight-basics/obesity.htm>