

## **Colorado Early Childhood Obesity Prevention Impact Evaluation Project**

**Presented by: Tracy Miller, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Early Childhood Obesity Prevention Specialist**

### **Introduction:**

In Colorado, obesity is priority and “Winnable Battle” for the Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and the Governor’s Office. Early childhood obesity prevention (ECOP) is also one of nine Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Priorities. In 2012, the implementation of state and local early ECOP strategies began. Eleven strategies target at-risk populations during the preconception, prenatal, and early childhood periods, within three major sectors: early care and education, public health programs, and health care systems.

### **Project Goals:**

In recent months, CDPHE designed a significant evaluation project, intended to understand the collective impact of the ECOP strategies within and across settings. The multi-level evaluation aims to answer five evaluations questions desired by involved stakeholders and decision makers:

1. As a whole, how effective were the ECOP initiatives? Which is the best combination of strategies to prevent early childhood obesity?
2. Did the initiatives impact local government, professionals, and organizations as expected, with respect to knowledge, competency, barriers reduction, and improvement of policy and practice?
3. Did ECOP strategies impact parents, caregivers, and other adults as expected?
4. Did ECOP strategies impact children and the prevalence of overweight and obesity?
5. What were the barriers and challenges to implementation, success, and durability of the strategies?

### **Methods:**

This evaluation project is a collaboration of numerous stakeholders representing components of the ECOP initiatives, including the Colorado Child and Adult Care Food Program, WIC , MCH, breastfeeding promotion, healthy living and chronic disease, maternal wellness, local public health agencies, epidemiology and evaluation, and health communications. The team thoroughly reviewed ECOP action plans and logic models to identify indicators from the individual initiatives most meaningful and likely to contribute to the impact evaluation questions.

### **Results:**

The evaluation plan is complete and implementation will begin in July 2013. A broader group of ECOP partners will contribute data collection and analysis throughout the project.