



A healthy weight resource for families, communities, and health professionals

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Hello from *We Can!*® Summer 2010

Give yourselves a round of applause!

Why?

In five short years, your dedication to spreading the word about *We Can!* has helped it grow from 14 pilot sites to now more than 1,300 communities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 12 other nations.



Without your support, *We Can!*—which was launched by the National Institutes of Health in 2005—would not have taken root so quickly from coast-to-coast and overseas, winning over community leaders and 45 private- and public-sector national partners to help spread the word about the program.

Together, you have helped us touch countless American families by sharing with them the importance of eating right, moving more, and spending less time in front of the screen in order to maintain a healthy weight.

To recognize the dedication of our community sites, partners, and supporting organizations, *We Can!* is planning a series of activities, including a video contest, to highlight the efforts to promote a healthy weight in children and families across the country. You can read all about it in the news and events section of the *We Can!* Web site.

But, before you do...

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Summer's here, and community sites are ramping up their programming:

In Nogales, Arizona, the *Mix It Up* program is using *We Can!* messages and materials in new nutrition classes designed for food-stamp eligible local residents.

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In West Virginia, a *We Can!* site is reaching out to local Latinos with customized, Spanish-language *We Can!* classes that involve the whole family.

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NEW MATERIALS

We Can! has recently introduced the Community of Practice portal, a forum for community sites, partners, and other health professionals to interact and exchange knowledge and experience.

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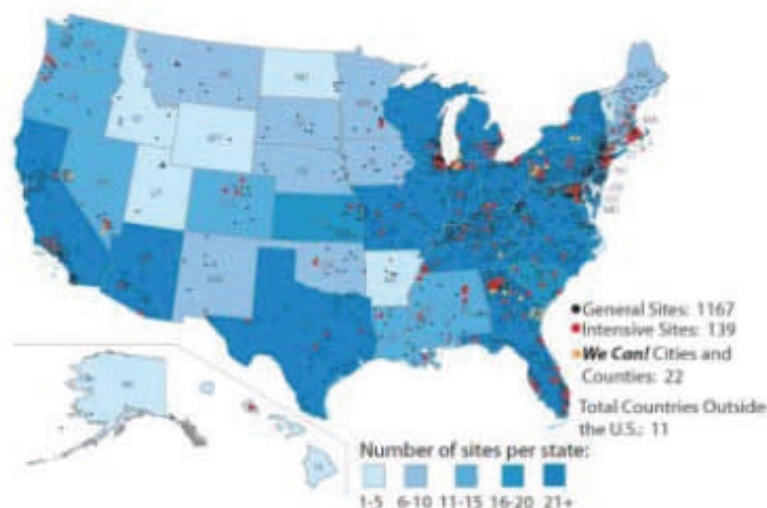
Two new *We Can!* articles about staying healthy throughout the year were recently published in media outlets across the country. One article focuses on the hidden costs of pinching pennies with fast food, while the other offers suggestions on ways to revitalize those New Year's resolutions. We have a third new matte article posted as well—all about the American Indian quest for a healthy weight. You can **download them** yourself to help spread the word!

Check out all the many interesting updates we have from community sites and partners in this edition of *We Can! in Action*.

And, as always, if you have questions or aren't finding the information you need, please e-mail us.

We Can! Across the Country and World

Five years since the launch of *We Can!*, the program now has over 1,300 registered sites, including 23 *We Can!* Cities and Counties. If you're interested in increasing your involvement in the program as we move into our next phase, consider becoming a *We Can!* City or County yourself!



All across the country, exciting *We Can!* events have been unfolding:

■ Atlanta joined the *We Can!* City program this year, and garnered some local media coverage at their kickoff event.

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■ In cities across the country, including **Pittsburgh** and **Chicago**, among others, eager participants heard creative ideas about how to implement the *We Can!* program—and got the chance to meet other, likeminded community members in the process.

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ENERGY BALANCE TIPS

Now that you're revved up about the news that *We Can!* just turned five, we want you to take that energy outdoors with the following tips for the whole family. (Just be sure to use sunscreen!)

Tip #1: If it's nice out, why not walk or bike with the kids to the playground or the pool, instead of driving them? And do the same on your way to work! And, if you can't avoid using the car, don't fret: you can always create a car-washing contest with the kids, with a prize for whoever finishes washing and buffing their section/side of the car the quickest.

Tip #2: Do you know the location of your nearest pool? Closest soccer field? Free public tennis court? Find out and give the whole family a summer jump start by trying new sports and other physical activities. And, don't forget that your local library offers a wealth of resources at no cost, including exercise DVDs and all sorts of classes. As an added bonus, try to walk to the library to check out these options!

Tip #3: Keep your eyes open for free physical activities hosted by community and other outlets over the course of the summer. Check out walking and hiking options at nearby public parks. Find out what resources local schools offer, such as a track that's open to the public for running and walking. Community centers and local Web sites are great ways to find out more about activities available in your area.

JOIN WE CAN!

- How Communities can get involved
- How Organizations can get involved
- Visit <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov>
- Call 1-866-35-WE CAN



■ In Nevada, *We Can!*'s Go, Slow, Whoa chart has a whole new sound—as a song! It even has a music video to match.

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Partner Profile

We're only halfway through the year, and already some of our *We Can!* partners have been making a splash.

SPARK

■ Brand new *We Can!* partner SPARK brings not only their expertise on elementary physical activity, but another *We Can!* curriculum, along with other resources.

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■ A strategy session in the nation's capital, and another in nearby Delaware, introduced program site leaders, partners, and would-be partners to each other and included a discussion on how to grow the program in a new environment.

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■ A SUBWAY® restaurant franchise owner in northern Georgia is supporting a local site in bringing *We Can!* programming to their community.

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National Cancer Institute

We Can! (Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition) is a national health education campaign from the National Institutes of Health that provides activities and programs to help prevent childhood obesity in children ages 8-13. The program informs parents and caregivers in home and community settings to encourage improved nutritional choices, increased physical activity, and reduced screen time in their families.

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Are you planning a **We Can!** event? *Tell us about it* so we can add it to the *calendar*.

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The "Capital of the South" Becomes 21st **We Can!**® City

Posted June 14, 2010

Atlanta, GA, added some fuel to the **We Can!** fire this spring by joining 20 other municipalities across the country that have committed to the **We Can!** City/County program.

With two **We Can!** Cities and Counties in the Atlanta metropolitan area—and eight total in Georgia—it only made sense that the Peach state's most populous city should join the movement to help keep its children at a healthy weight through **We Can!**.

By joining the **We Can!** City program, Atlanta's mayor has committed to bring the **We Can!** core messages—improving food choices, increasing physical activity, and reducing screen time—to parents, caregivers, and youth through a series of events and programs in the local community. City employees will also receive tips and information about **We Can!**'s messages.

The official announcement was made at the 5th Annual Children's Nutrition Education and Physical Activity Expo on March 27, 2010, and it was covered by multiple media outlets including the Atlanta Journal Constitution, Atlanta Daily World, Atlanta INTown, Around Town, Atlanta Parent, Enliven Atlanta, and on WSB—Channel 2 TV.

The Atlanta City Council also proclaimed March 27, 2010, as Childhood Obesity Awareness Day, to some 2,000 attendees including children.

"We had some 200 children from Atlanta public schools acting as Wellness Ambassadors, working with other children to help them with the different interactive fitness activities, exhibitions, mini-workshops, and free health screenings at the event," said Vanetta Keyes, founder and executive director of the Center for Helping Obesity in Children End Successfully, Inc. (C.H.O.I.C.E.S.), a **We Can!** community site. "When we showed families the GO, SLOW, WHOA foods chart, even some of the adults realized they were not making the best choices."

Keyes reports that this chart, the parent brochure, and the tip sheet on sugar and calories in drinks are all extremely popular **We Can!** materials when her organization attends the approximately 25 wellness fairs in the area every year.

Keyes and her team first heard about **We Can!** in 2006. C.H.O.I.C.E.S Program Director Kenya Heard brought **We Can!** program materials home with her after attending a workshop on it in September 2006, in Bethesda, MD.

"We were so impressed that we immediately took steps to become a community site," said Heard.

They report great success using **We Can!** materials, and are excited that the program and lessons learned will be shared with an even greater number of people now that Atlanta has taken on the **We Can!** banner.

We Can! News

Wild Enthusiasm for We Can! in West Virginia

Read more about grants the West Virginia Department of Education offered to schools that conducted the **We Can!** Energize Our Families: Curriculum for Parents and Caregivers.

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Community Spotlight

Hands-on We Can! Activities A Big Hit in Northern Virginia

Read how a Vietnamese organization has taken the **We Can!** message well beyond its own community by partnering with a Fairfax County multicultural center.

Did you know?

People who are overweight (BMI of 25 – 29.9) have too much body weight for their height. [Calculate your BMI.](#)

We Can! is a collaboration between the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and the National Cancer Institute.