



**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRUST FUND COMMISSION**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Commission Announces \$9 Million in Grants to Combat Youth Obesity**

The Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission ("Commission") announces the availability of \$9 million in grant funding to expand and enhance the statewide effort to prevent and reduce youth obesity. "The rate of obesity in North Carolina is alarming. More than one fourth of North Carolina youth, 12 to 18 years of age, are overweight. These kids are at risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes as they grow older," said Lieutenant Governor Perdue, who chairs the Commission. "The Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission is committed to funding innovative programs to reduce these rates and foster healthier lifestyles. We are taking the lead in tackling this epidemic."

Overweight/Obesity is the first chronic disease that is spreading at epidemic rates. At its current rate, it will soon become the costliest disease, surpassing cardiovascular diseases. The percentage of children who are overweight in the United States doubled during the past two decades and the percentage of overweight adolescents tripled. Data collected from North Carolina public health facilities show an even greater increase among both boys and girls, and across all races and ethnicities.

Today, the Commission is issuing a Request for Grant Proposals for its Initiative on Children, Youth and Community Obesity Prevention/Reduction. Locally based organizations and agencies will be awarded grants to accomplish the following goals: raise awareness about the prevalence of obesity in their communities, encourage adoption of remedial state and local policies, ensure access to healthful food choices and physical activity both in and out of schools; and promote the use of culturally relevant messages to effect behavioral change. Under this Initiative, the Commission will award between 20 to 30 grants, at an annual level of \$75,000 to \$150,000 each for three years, to community agencies, schools, state and local agencies, and non profit organizations for programs that will address these issues. Collaboration among local organizations will be strongly encouraged. The deadline for applications is August 5, 2003. Grants will be awarded in mid-November, for implementation in January 2004.

Applicants can obtain a copy of the Request for Proposals and Application Form online by visiting the Commission website at [www.HWTFC.org](http://www.HWTFC.org), or by contacting the Commission directly.

The Health and Wellness Trust Fund was established by the General Assembly to receive and allocate 25% of North Carolina's share of the multi-billion dollar national tobacco settlement agreement reached in 1999. The Commission is comprised of 18 individuals representing a wide background of health care experience throughout North Carolina.

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