



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES

## DEPARTMENT COLLABORATION OF AGRICULTURE AND EDUCATION MAY PREVENT DIMINISHED HEALTH AND DISABILITY

A forum was held by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation entitled “Beyond Health Care: New Directions to a Healthier America”. There were panels on early childhood interventions, accessing healthy food and creating healthy communities. Presenters at the forum were CEOs of philanthropic organizations, public policy experts on social health determinants, business and labor leaders.

### Summary

It was recommended, at the forum, that governments at all levels should identify approaches that can improve the nation’s health. Of particular concern was better functioning of governments at Federal, State and Local levels to provide effective nutrition which is a part of prevention of eating disorders and healthy conditions for growth and development of children. There are 30% of students eligible for school nutrition programs who do not participate in the program and 40% of people eligible for the Food Stamp program who do not participate, many due to policy barriers. In addition, there is evidence that federal policy to distribute excessive food has failed because of expense of packaging and distribution. A barrier to access of adequate nutrition for low income people is the cultural stigma associated with government programs.

### Disability Prevention Issue

There are several collaborative community based researched models and demonstration projects related to nutrition and physical activity associated with obesity prevention. These demonstration projects and models are efficacy studies to prevent diminished health through changing unhealthy lifestyles that may prevent disability. Research and demonstration protocols should develop public health and education evidence based interventions that target adequate nutrition and development of physically active leisure lifestyles. Research efficacy, needs to be translated into evidence based protocols that are reproducible and widely disseminated in a variety of settings. The evidence based model indicates that if you use these *protocols* with *personnel trained* in these ways, under these *conditions*, you will get these *results* with these *people*. There is need for collaboration between Departments of Agriculture and Education through the school wellness provision of the Child Nutrition Act to assist in prevention of diminished health and facilitate optimum child growth and development of impoverished children.

**Activity**

A letter was written to a Commission member who raised the issue to improved nutrition for children through collaboration of services with Departments of Agriculture and Education that could improve nutrition and prevent diminished health and disability.

**Principle**

There should be efforts to coordinate Federal Departments of Agriculture and Education through the Child Nutrition Act to develop healthy children and youth.