

Issue #8

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### **FOCUS on the Alliance for a Healthier Generation**

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation is a joint initiative between the American Heart Association and the William J. Clinton Foundation. They have come together to fight one of our nation's leading health problems – childhood obesity. The goal of the Alliance is to stop the nationwide increase in childhood obesity by 2015 by taking bold, innovative steps to help all children live longer and healthier lives.

The Alliance believes that helping schools create healthy learning environments is one of the most efficient and effective ways to shape the lifelong health and well-being of children and adolescents. The Alliance's **Healthy Schools Program** provides tools, resources, and support to schools in the areas of nutrition, physical activity, and staff wellness.

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation will be the Partner Agency responsible for the development of the Knowledge Café to:

1. Develop a distance learning structure that facilitates peer-to-peer communications and delivers tools and one-on-one support to the school district stakeholders of School Food FOCUS in conjunction with the other helpful resources the Alliance Healthy Schools Program currently offers.
2. Work with the Core Team and participating school districts to develop, manage and deliver a technical assistance program that provides content on school meals reform, via distance education strategies for all stakeholders.
3. Link large, urban school districts with resources to create school district and state-level policies which support practices that shift their food procurement to the purchase of healthier, more local foods, grown under more sustainable practices.

In addition to the Knowledge Café, the Alliance will:

1. Facilitate relationships with food manufacturers, industry representatives, commodity and federal agency staff – all necessary to impact change in the food supply chains of the large, urban school districts.
2. Work with the School Food Learning Lab to integrate information about the commodities used in the School Lunch Program, and the supply chains related to those commodities, as this relates to the work of redirecting the food purchasing in the large, urban school districts.

## ***Bios***

**Ginny Ehrlich**, Executive Director, was formerly the Director of the Alliance's Healthy Schools Program, which is currently active in more than 3,600 schools nationwide. Prior to joining the Alliance, Ms. Ehrlich served as a Project Director to the Rocky Mountain Center for Health Promotion & Education (RMC) where directed a national training project and provided technical assistance and training to multiple national organizations and state departments of health and education. Ms. Ehrlich also served as the Coordinated School Health Director at the Oregon Department of Education where she founded the Healthy Kids Learn Better Partnership, a public-private partnership comprised of five state agencies and over forty non-governmental organizations working together to address the physical, social and emotional health needs of students.

**Kimberly Perry** is the Kids Movement Director with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation. Ms Perry has more than 15 years experience mobilizing communities to pressure lawmakers to improve the quality of life for low-income children and families. She has worked in the advocacy community focusing on child health policy issues such as access to health care, and childhood hunger and obesity. As founding director of D.C. Hunger Solutions, a project of the Food Research and Action Center, Ms. Perry led effective campaigns to get rid of junk food in DC public schools, to provide free school breakfast to all public school students, and to improve access to nutritious summer meals for low-income children and youth in the nation's capital. Ms. Perry is past chair of D.C. Action for Healthy Kids, part of a national initiative to prevent childhood obesity, and current chair of the mayor's Commission on Food and Nutrition. She is based in the Washington, D.C. area.

**Terry Charles**, National Schools Nutrition Manager for the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, is a registered dietitian whose primary focus is to offer technical assistance to various child nutrition programs in schools around the country. She holds a bachelor's degree in Foods & Nutrition from Southern University in Louisiana, and a master's degree in Nutritional Science from the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Her work as a registered dietitian has covered a wide range of positions and responsibilities including; Administrative Dietitian, St. Charles Parish Hospital, Nutrition Supervisor, Jefferson Council on Aging, Headstart Nutritionist, Harris County Department of Education, Child Nutrition Director, St. John Parish Schools, and Child Nutrition Assistant Director, Aldine Independent School District. She has over 18 years experience as a Child Nutrition Director.