Child Health in the 83rd Texas Legislative Session: A Recap
Today’s Moderator

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We are an international leader in conducting research and providing programs that promote healthy living for children, their families and communities.

Our work fosters improved health behaviors among youth, influences policy and environmental change to support healthy living, and advances professional education and community service.

Our vision: Healthy children in a healthy world

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Our guest Speaker

Joel Romo
Senior Director of Governmental Relations
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SouthWest Affiliate

American Heart Association®
Learn and Live
Child Health in the 83rd Texas Legislative Session: Successes
• **SB 1 (Sen. Tommy Williams)**
  – Allocates $5 million to fund the FitnessGram Program for the 2014-2015 biennium for physical fitness assessments and related analysis.

• **HB 1018 (Rep. Diane Patrick)**
  – Requires Campus Improvement Plans to include goals to increase physical activity and improve fitness among students.
Food in public schools

• SB 376 (Sen. Eddie Lucio)
  – Schools in which 80% or more students qualify for a free or reduced-price breakfast must provide breakfast to each student during school hours

• HB 217 (Rep. Alvarado) vetoed by Gov. Perry
  – Restricts the types of beverages that can be sold to students (grades K-8) during the school day.
“I support reasonable measures to sustainably improve the health and wellness of Texas students through nutrition. To that end, current Texas Public School Nutrition Policy already responsibly limits unnecessary, unhealthy access to high-sugar, high-calorie beverages. House Bill 217 takes this effort to an unreasonable and unnecessary extreme, and would limit access to such innocuous beverages as two percent milk.”
CPR IN SCHOOLS

WHY NOW?

• Less than half (31%) of out-of-hospital cardiac arrest victims receive bystander CPR.
• Effective bystander CPR, provided immediately after sudden cardiac arrest, can double or triple a victim’s chance of survival.
• Schools present an opportunity to teach young people how to respond to cardiac arrest and begin to introduce such efforts as part of a normal bystander response.

DID YOU KNOW?
Several studies have demonstrated that trainees, including schoolchildren, can achieve acceptable levels of skills proficiency in adult CPR in 30 minutes or less through a self-directed video-based program.

In order to assure the necessary competencies are developed, the trainings must include **hands-on skills practice**.
HB 897

- It allows for CPR training to be included in any curriculum, so everyone will know basic CPR, health, PE, etc. A school could even have all 9th graders meet for an assembly in the gym for 30 min. and receive the training, very flexible and provides local input.

- The bill allows for school districts to offer the training anytime between 7-12 grades – schools would have 6 years to fit in a 30 minute training that will save lives.

- The bill will ensure students practice “hands-on” training with a manikin to learn the psycho-motor skills necessary to perform CPR and how to use an AED.

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83rd Texas Legislative Attempts to Weaken Previous Child Health Policies
School health

• SB 684
  – Proposed reduced frequency of FitnessGram

• HB 1156
  – Proposed elimination of FitnessGram
Why the pushback?

• Significant need to raise awareness regarding impact of physical education, healthy students, and need for obesity champions at the Texas Legislature.
What “Failed” During the 83rd Texas Legislative Session?
School health

- Health & PE credits not restored in High School
- No changes to frequency of FitnessGram testing
- No increase in physical activity requirements for middle school students
- No higher nutrition standards on “competitive foods” sold in schools
• No action on soda tax bills
• Promoting healthier food choices to SNAP recipients / restricting unhealthy choices
  – several bills, but no traction
• Several bills related to accessibility of healthy foods filed, but none passed
• No new Complete Streets legislation
• Texas DSHS grant program to support programs related to childhood health, fitness & obesity prevention; not passed
• **SB 924** (Lucio) would have required multiple state agencies to develop strategic plans to address hunger, food, nutrition, and obesity in Texas.
Tobacco

• No action taken on legislation to make Texas a smoke-free state
• No increase in age to purchase tobacco products
• No increases in tobacco tax
Summary

• Some gains, especially in physical activity
• Continual efforts needed to maintain legislative accomplishments from previous sessions
• Need more health champions in Texas Legislature
• Need to raise awareness about these issues
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Thank You!

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