The Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living at The University of Texas School of Public Health is 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.
Healthy children in a healthy world. That’s our vision. Giggles and shouts are just pleasant side effects.

At the Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living, we’re building a brighter future by inspiring healthier lives.

Based at the Austin Regional Campus of The University of Texas School of Public Health, we work with educators, community groups, policy makers, and all those who shape a child’s world.

Our research generates international attention, yet we don’t stop there. We’re a leader because we put that research into action.

Our programs are changing lives, impacting communities from the middle of Texas to the heart of Uruguay.

Our successes are growing. And already growing up.

Why We’re Here

Right now, children’s health is declining. The childhood obesity rate has tripled since the 1980s. Kids receive less physical and health education at school, choose sedentary activities at home, and face heavier marketing of unhealthy foods and lifestyles everywhere else.

The growing cost of medical care resulting from health problems that begin in childhood and track into adulthood is unsustainable. The childhood obesity epidemic could lead to the first decline in life expectancy in the past 200 years.

How We Help

From the outset, the Center adopted a unique integrated approach to improving children’s health. It starts with important, innovative research. What sets us apart is how we apply that learning to education and service.

Our diverse faculty combines experts on such factors as nutrition, physical activity, and tobacco and alcohol use with acclaimed researchers in strategic development, implementation and testing.

Our research takes place in real-life situations and inspires real change. We educate teachers, healthcare providers, and government leaders as well as students at the UT School of Public Health.

We also work with community groups to design and implement new programs. We track outcomes and behaviors. We share our findings. When an idea works, we make sure it spreads. Let us share some of those successes with you.

What’s Working

The Center and the Austin Regional Campus are jointly involved in a growing number of research projects. Some examples:

**CATCH**

CATCH (Coordinated Approach To Child Health) is an evidence-based coordinated school health program designed to promote physical activity and healthy food choices to kids. In our research trial in Texas, CATCH produced lasting changes in diet and physical activity, documenting behavioral changes maintained at least three years following intervention.

**GAVA**

GO! Austin / VAMOS! Austin (GAVA) is a coalition of residents, community leaders and nonprofits that share a common interest in improving the health of the Dove Springs and 78745 communities through increased access to and participation in physical activity and improved nutrition.

**SPAN**

The School Physical Activity and Nutrition (SPAN) Project was established to track the prevalence of overweight and obese school-aged children in Texas.

**TCORS**

The Tobacco Center of Regulatory Science (TCORS) on Youth and Young Adults will provide professional training and scientific research on youth and young adult use of nicotine & tobacco products, and marketing methods targeted to this population, in order to inform and support effective, evidence-based regulation of nicotine & tobacco products.
PROJECT ¡ACTIVATE!
Project ¡Activate! is a multiple-component intervention to prevent tobacco use and promote physical activity among 12-14-year-olds in Uruguay. The project is a collaborative research study with the Tobacco Epidemic Research Center (CIET) in Uruguay.

TEXAS CORD
The goal of the Texas Childhood Obesity Research Demonstration (TX CORD) project is to connect the dots between families, pediatricians, schools and local youth organizations to develop community capacity for early detection and effective management of obesity using evidence-based programs like CATCH and MEND (Mind, Energy, Nutrition, Do it!).

TEXAS GROW! EAT! GO!
This project will test the impact of several different programs on behaviors related to childhood obesity including, a hands-on family-focused gardening program and a fun school-based walking program for kids.

HOUSTON TRAIN STUDY
The Houston TRAIN (Transportation Related Activity in Neighborhoods) Study is a collaborative effort with the Texas A&M Transportation Institute. This study will examine the short and long-term effect of a new light rail transit (LRT) system on adults’ physical activity in Houston, Texas.

HEALTHY EATING AND ACTIVE LIVING FOR PREGNANT WOMEN, MOTHERS AND INFANTS
This is a collaborative project with the UT Physicians clinics in Houston to implement evidence-based strategies promoting healthy nutrition and physical activity among pregnant women, mothers and infants participating in Medicaid, and evaluate their impact on improving obesity-related outcomes during pregnancy, birth and infancy.

Working Close to Home
While the Center is known worldwide and has influenced kids worldwide, we’re also very active in our own neighborhood. Indeed, that’s a great opportunity to see the joyful, grinning results of our work.

TEXAS OBESITY AWARENESS WEEK
Every September, the Center sponsors Texas Obesity Awareness Week to raise awareness of the health risks associated with obesity and encourage Texans to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

MICHAEL & SUSAN DELL LECTURESHIP IN CHILD HEALTH
The annual Lectureship is a coveted award and honor for researchers in child health, bringing world-class speakers to the Austin area each spring.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE IN CHILD HEALTH
The Collaborative serves as a community advisory group to inform and guide research and child health promotion activities at the Center as well as a forum for sharing research and generating action around efforts to promote physical activity and healthy eating in children by fostering family-school-community partnerships.

LIVE SMART TEXAS
Live Smart Texas is a consortium of researchers, practitioners, prevention advocates, and government employees concerned with improving the lives of Texans at all ages, but with a specific focus on children.

Who We Are
The Center grows. News of our successes spreads. Our faculty grows as well. Researchers from many places and backgrounds have come to Austin, eager to be part of the momentum in changing lives. Their vast interests, such as social epidemiology, the role of spirituality, and the relationship between genetics and environment provide new places to find answers. Our faculty also use new ways to harvest data and measure outcomes. We’re not just studying society's health problems. We’re solving them.

Our Leadership
Our leaders are well known as global experts in the study of childhood obesity and health behaviors. Not only are they dedicated to their research, they’re equally devoted to the kids they serve.

Deanna M. Hoelscher, PhD, RD, LD, CNS
Director
Steven H. Kelder, PhD, MPH
Co-Director, Associate Regional Dean

CENTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Harold (Bill) W. Kohl, PhD
Cheryl L. Perry, PhD, Regional Dean

Deanna Hoelscher
PhD, RD, LD, CNS
Director

Steven Kelder, PhD, MPH
Co-Director
Associate Regional Dean,
UT School of Public Health
Austin Regional Campus

Cheryl Perry, PhD
Executive Committee
Regional Dean,
UT School of Public Health
Austin Regional Campus

Harold (Bill) W. Kohl, III, PhD
Executive Committee

Our Home
Austin is home to an internationally known faculty exploring such topics as obesity prevention, international tobacco control, physical activity promotion, and public health economics. The UT School of Public Health, Austin Regional Campus (ARC) is fully accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health and offers the following certificate and degree programs.

ARC Degree Programs

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN PUBLIC HEALTH
Intended for public health practitioners and others to increase their basic public health knowledge or those considering a graduate degree in the field. Five courses cover core content and can be completed in one year.

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEGREE (MPH)
The basic professional degree in the field of public health is required for many supervisory and managerial positions, and is recommended for many others. Most full-time students need 18 to 24 months to complete the degree. With interactive television, students can participate in UTSPH classes on any of the campuses.

MASTER OF EPIDEMIOLOGY (MS)
A research degree designed to provide an understanding of epidemiological concepts, theories and methodology. The MS program offers students the opportunity to prepare themselves for intermediate of higher positions in government, private health agencies, or in research projects with an epidemiological orientation.

DOCTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH IN HEALTH PROMOTION
Signifies distinguished scholarly accomplishment in the field of public health and trains students for leadership roles in governmental and non-governmental agencies, health departments, or research. Studies focus on the social and behavioral aspects of public health and the development and evaluation of health promotion interventions.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD) IN EPIDEMIOLOGY
Primarily a research and teaching degree representing outstanding scholarly achievement. Candidates must display mastery of epidemiologic concepts, theories and methodology, and a significant capacity for independent study.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD) IN BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
Focuses on the aspects of public health and the development and evaluation of health promotion interventions. The PhD program provides training in social and behavioral science theory and methods as applied to public health, and is designed to provide students with the skills necessary to succeed in academic and research positions.

Dual Degree Programs with UT Austin:

The College of Natural Sciences
Bachelor of Science in Public Health – Master of Public Health Degree (BSPH / MPH)

The School of Social Work
Master of Science in Social Work – Master of Public Health Degree (MSSW / MPH)

The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs
Master of Public Affairs – Master of Public Health Degree (MPAf / MPH)
Master of Global Policy Studies – Master of Public Health Degree (MGPS / MPH)

Stay Connected
Join our network by emailing dellhealthyliving@uth.tmc.edu
You will receive information on our evidence-based programs, community events for healthy living, and annual events.

GET CONNECTED THROUGH OUR SOCIAL MEDIA SITES
msdcenter.blogspot.com
twitter & instagram: @msdcenter
facebook.com/msdcenter
youtube.com/msdcenter
pinterest.com/msdcenter

USE OUR RESOURCES
www.msdcenter.org
- Supporting healthy living in your community and workplace
- Follow child health-related legislation in the Texas Legislature
- Use the CATCH program in your school: www.catchusa.org

ATTEND OUR EVENTS
Michael & Susan Dell Lectureship in Child Health (Spring)
www.childhealthlectureship.org
Texas Obesity Awareness Week (2nd full week in September)
www.texasobesityweek.org

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