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NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES

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National League of Cities Selects Seven Cities to Participate in Collaborative on Health Disparities

New Learning Collaborative to help city officials reduce childhood obesity-related health disparities.

Washington, D.C. - The National League of Cities' (NLC) Institute for Youth, Education, and Families has selected seven cities to participate in a Learning Collaborative on Health Disparities. The purpose of the collaborative process is to develop and frame emerging city-level strategies to reduce critical childhood obesity-related health disparities, commonly defined as poor health outcomes linked to social, economic and physical barriers faced by many low-income communities and communities of color.

As a result of the Collaborative, NLC and participating cities will gain new insights on how health disparities are perceived in communities and hear ideas from local policymakers and community partners on how to increase access to affordable, healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity at the local level.

"Ensuring all children have the opportunity to grow up healthy and thrive is imperative to the future success of our cities," said NLC President Ralph Becker, mayor, Salt Lake City, Utah. "I commend these cities for their commitment and willingness to build healthier communities and to reduce critical disparities that prevent children from reaching their full potential."

The seven pilot cities were chosen to participate in the Learning Collaborative based on their documented health disparities, commitment and readiness to preventing childhood obesity-related disparities and ability to form strong and diverse partnerships. The selected cities are:

- Baton Rouge, La.
- Cleveland, Ohio
- Kansas City, Kan.
- Lincoln, Neb.
- Oklahoma City, Okla.
- Savannah, Ga.
- Virginia Beach, Va.



Residents of low-income communities and communities of color are more likely to experience poor health. The seven pilot cities will focus their health disparities work on increasing access to high-quality, affordable foods and increasing opportunities for physical activity by improving the built environment in communities with the highest disparities. Evidence suggests that effective interventions in these two areas may have significant and long-lasting impacts in preventing childhood obesity.

Over the next six months, each city will receive technical assistance from NLC to develop an early blueprint for local action, to be completed in June. They will also have numerous opportunities for peer learning and receive access to best practices and national experts in order to deepen their understanding of obesity-related health disparities.

This project is a part of the National League of Cities' work to accelerate local efforts to create healthy communities and is made possible by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

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The National League of Cities (NLC) is dedicated to helping city leaders build better communities. NLC is a resource and advocate for 19,000 cities, towns and villages, representing more than 218 million Americans.

