

# District of Columbia 2010 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) Nutrition and Weight

**WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?** Obesity during adolescence is associated with many health problems, including type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and psychological stress. Further, obese adolescents are more likely to become obese adults. Evidence suggests that higher intakes of fruits and vegetables decreases the risk for some types of cancer, cardiovascular disease, stroke, and, possibly obesity. In addition, consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks, including soft drinks, has been associated with children being at increased risk for obesity.<sup>1</sup>



## The National Picture

National results from the 2009 YRBS<sup>2</sup> indicate:

- 12.0% of high school students were obese
- 77.7% of high school students had not eaten fruits and vegetables five or more times per day in the week before the survey
- 29.2% of high school students had drunk soda or pop at least one time per day in the week before the survey

Key Indicators for DC YRBS Percentage of DC students who	2007 High School	2010 High School*	2007 Middle School	2010 Middle School*
Described themselves as slightly or very overweight	25.5	23.6	19.9	20.1
Were overweight (i.e., at or above the 95 <sup>th</sup> percentile for body mass index, by age and sex)	17.1	14.5	-	-
Ate fruits or vegetables five or more times per day in the last week	20.1	24.6	-	-
Drank a can, bottle, or glass of soda or pop one or more times per day in the last week	29.7	23.9	-	-

\*2010 DC YRBS results are population estimates derived using only DCPS student data. The 2007 data includes both DCPS and Public Charter Schools.

## Effective Strategies and Best Practices in DC

- The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) outlines learning standards for nutrition education for K-12 students. <http://osse.dc.gov/service/dc-educational-standards>
- The Healthy School Act of 2010 takes steps to improve nutrition education and school meals. <http://dchealthyschools.org/>
- All DC schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program have adopted Local Wellness Policies that play a critical role in promoting student health and preventing childhood obesity. <http://osse.dc.gov/service/nutrition-program>
- The Department of Health's overweight and obesity action plan outlines strategies to increase physical activity of youth in school and outside of school. <http://newsroom.dc.gov/show.aspx/agency/doh/section/2/release/19808/year/2010>

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of Agriculture. (2010). *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

<sup>2</sup>CDC. (2010). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance-United States, 2009. *MMWR*, 59 (5), 1-148.

