



## **Girls Inc. Response to CDC Report Showing Decline in Early Childhood Obesity**

August 2013 – A [new CDC report](#) shows a small but significant decrease in obesity among preschoolers from low-income households in 18 states. This decline is particularly worthy of celebration because preschool-age children who are overweight or obese are five times more likely to be so as adults.

It is also a critical opportunity to examine what works and invigorate efforts across youth and family service organizations: the report also found obesity rates held steady in 20 states and increased in three.

At Girls Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to inspiring girls to be strong, smart, and bold, we recognize that the obesity problem is complex and requires a holistic approach that includes both mental and physical well-being. So we developed our Girls Inc. Mind + Body Initiative to give the girls we serve the knowledge, skills, and attitude required to form and maintain a healthy, positive sense of self. It focuses on four areas: physical activity, nutrition, body image, and stress.

We also recognize the importance of the role of parents and caregivers in supporting girls to develop healthy habits — and the incredible power that girls have to enact positive change hand-in-hand with their families.

At Girls Inc., girls and families are provided with flexible, supportive tactics and resources to set goals accommodating their schedule, lifestyle, interests, and cultural traditions. They learn healthier versions of favorite recipes, discuss where to find fresh foods in their neighborhoods, and take on the challenge of increasing the steps they take by 25 percent in six weeks. They also are guided and supported by trained staff who celebrate successes, encourage resilience in the face of setbacks, and connect healthy living to other activities and opportunities in girls' lives.

Eliminating childhood obesity requires more than a one-size-fits-all method and cannot be achieved by a single initiative or organization. We are grateful for the efforts of other movements, such as the Let's Move campaign founded by First Lady Michelle Obama, our Honorary Board Chair, in prioritizing this issue.

Girls Inc. is committed to inspiring girls to achieving their full potential in adulthood. Supporting their health is a key piece of helping girls be successful as they move forward in their lives. We are proud to take on this challenge and will continue to further the well-being of every girl we reach, her family, her community, and her future.