

## **Childhood Obesity Rates for Redondo Beach Elementary School Students Drop to Lowest Level Since 2007**

*Beach Cities Health District and Redondo Beach Unified School District Partnership to Combat Childhood Obesity brings positive results*

**Media Contact:** Dan Smith, Dan.Smith@bchd.org or 310-374-3426, ext. 8156

**REDONDO BEACH, Calif.** (August 9, 2023) – The childhood obesity rate for elementary school students in Redondo Beach has fallen to 5.9%, the lowest rate among Redondo Beach Unified School District (RBUSD) kindergarten, 1st, 3rd and 5th grade students in 16 years. Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) and RBUSD have partnered on school health programs including LiveWell Kids and annual Body Mass Index (BMI) assessments since 2007.

Even with a slight increase in the RBUSD obesity rate from 2019 to 2021 during COVID-19, overall there has been a 70.5% decline in RBUSD student obesity since 2007 when the BMI rate was 20%. The current rate of 5.9% is far below county, state and national childhood obesity rates. Data from the 2019 California Department of Education physical fitness testing show that in California, 41.3% of 5th graders are obese compared to 45.6% in Los Angeles County.

LiveWell Kids, a comprehensive school well-being program developed specifically for elementary school students in kindergarten through 5th grade, includes both garden and nutrition education. It is comprised of six interactive lessons focused on educating students about the process and benefits of growing their own food, improving nutritional knowledge and making healthy eating choices. All lessons are delivered in the school gardens by more than 250 trained volunteers. The curriculum also incorporates mindful breathing at the beginning of each lesson and mindful eating during tastings, connecting physical health to mental health.

“Through the LiveWell Kids program, students learn about planting, harvesting and nutritious foods, with an emphasis on how these foods fuel their body to be the best version of themselves, both physically and mentally,” said Tom Bakaly, Beach Cities Health District CEO. “It’s vital that we’re setting up our youth with the tools needed to live a healthy life from a young age.”

[A case study](#) on the recent trends in childhood obesity prevalence in partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health found that while there may be other factors contributing to the decline in obesity, such as policy changes in school lunch programs and increased overall awareness and education surrounding childhood obesity in the population, this decline is correlated to healthy school program implementation. Programming includes LiveWell Kids and School Wellness Councils.

“Thank you to the Beach Cities Health District, RBUSD staff, parents, volunteers and students for making the LiveWell Kids program a success,” said Dr. Nicole Wesley, RBUSD Superintendent. “LiveWell Kids, in conjunction with other physical activity, mental health and substance use prevention programs that BCHD supports, allow us to focus on the whole child, supporting their overall health and well-being.”

For more information about BCHD’s LiveWell Kids program, please visit [www.bchd.org/LiveWellKids](http://www.bchd.org/LiveWellKids).

**About Beach Cities Health District**

Beach Cities Health District (BCHD), named the 2021 “Healthcare District of the Year” by the Association of California Healthcare Districts, is focused on preventive health and serves the communities of Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach. Established in 1955 as a public agency, it offers an extensive range of dynamic health and wellness programs, with innovative services and facilities to promote health and prevent diseases across the lifespan. BCHD also operates AdventurePlex, a health and fitness facility where kids play their way to good health, and the Center for Health & Fitness, a comprehensive fitness center that is the only Medical Fitness Association-certified facility in California. Visit [www.bchd.org](http://www.bchd.org) or call (310) 374-3426 for more information.

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