



# Embrace a Healthy Florida

An Initiative Addressing the Causes of Childhood Obesity



**ROCK Conference**  
October 30, 2009

**The Blue Foundation**  
FOR A HEALTHY FLORIDA



The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida and its Parent, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, are Independent Licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.



## Overview

- **The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida is the philanthropic affiliate of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Florida**
- **Founded in 2001, with a mission to increase access to quality health-related services for all Floridians, with an emphasis on the uninsured and underserved**
- **Over 200 grants and awards given over 8 years.**
- **In 2007 the Board of Directors created an initiative to address the causes of childhood obesity, Embrace a Healthy Florida**
- **Planning for implementation began in the Fall of 2007**





## Why Address Childhood Obesity?

- **In the last 30 years, the percentage of children considered overweight has doubled and is now nearly 30 percent.**
- **The percentage of children considered obese has tripled.**
- **Obesity-related health conditions such as Type-2 diabetes and high blood pressure – once seen almost exclusively in adults – now being diagnosed in children.**
- **Obese children have higher rates of depression, more difficulty in peer relationships and poorer quality of life indicators.**
- **A positive correlation between weight problems and poor academic achievement.**



# Obesity: Areas of Potential Intervention

- Getting people to eat right
- Getting people to exercise more
- Addressing poverty and other disparities
- Correcting environmental factors
- Increasing access to healthful foods
- Increasing access to safe and regular exercise facilities
- Addressing depression and other mental health factors



# Overview

- **Three areas of intervention:**
  - **Statewide community grants to non-profit organizations**
  - **Applied research grants**
  - **Fostering community collaboration and engagement**
  
- **Five Florida cities for community engagement:**
  - **Jacksonville**
  - **Miami**
  - **East Central Florida**
  - **Tallahassee**
  - **Tampa**





# Obesity: Who Needs to Be Involved

- **Funders *and* both public and private sector support**
- **Parents, children and families**
- **Schools, Pre-school programs, and After-school programs**
- **Sports, park and rec, and physical activity groups**
- **Educators, administrators, and policy makers**
- **Faith-based and other community groups**
- **Medical, oral health and mental health professionals**
- **The whole community**



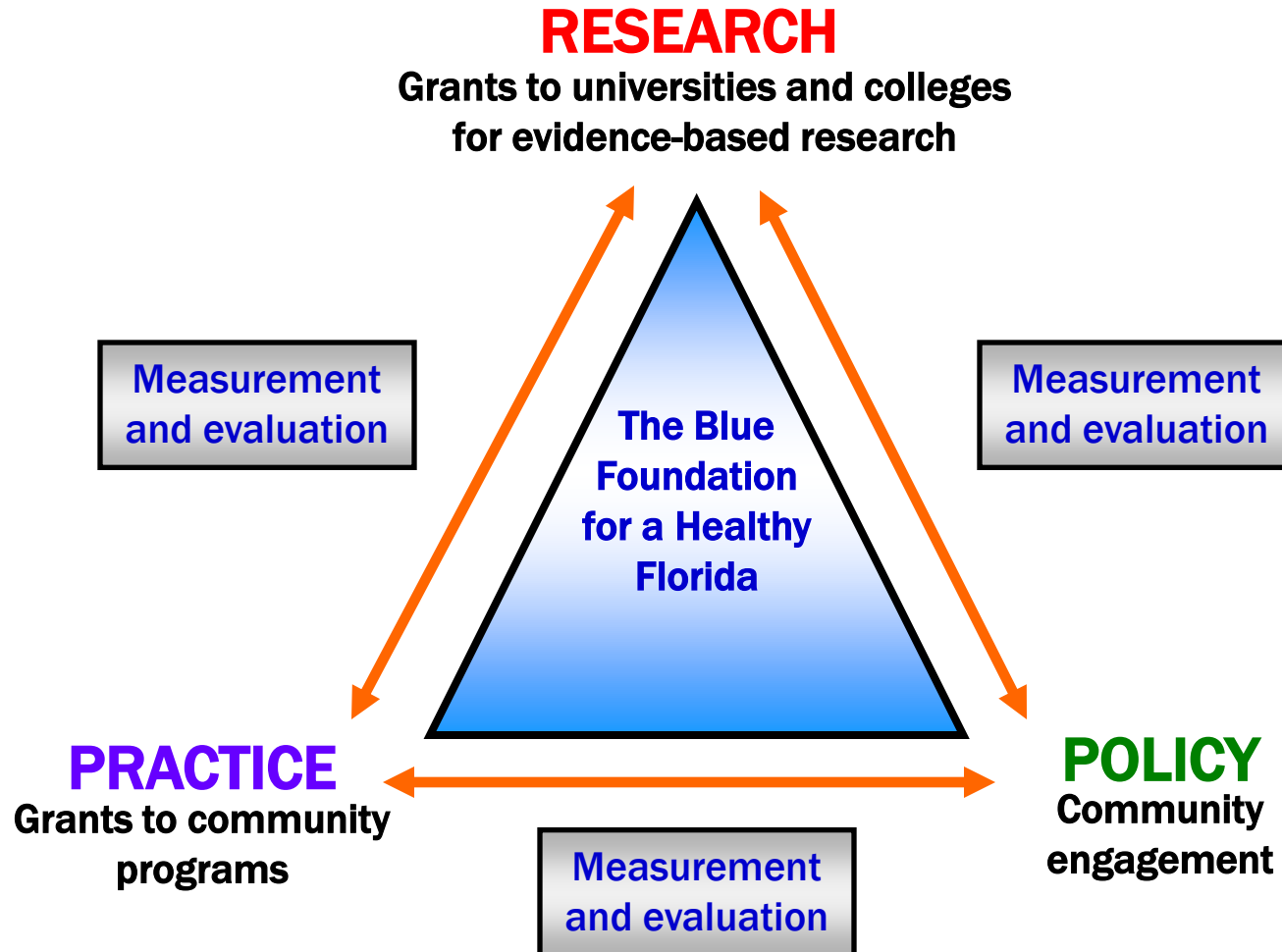
# What is the Role of The Blue Foundation?

- **Reviewing evidence-based practices**
- **Understanding what is already being done**
- **Listening to the community**
- **Identifying gaps in services**
- **Building partnerships**
- **Awarding grants in communities**
- **Evaluating our success**





# Strategic Framework





# Community Engagement: East Central Florida area

- **Partnership with Winter Park Health Foundation and other interested funders to address the causes of childhood obesity**
- **Funders Meeting held October 2008 in Orlando – 24 funders in attendance**
  - **Connection to Nemours Health and Prevention Services**
- **Awarded grant to the Health Council of East Central Florida to support the development of a consortium to address childhood obesity, healthy eating and active lifestyles through the use of a best practice model from Chicago**
- **Follow-up meetings with consortium resulted in new Coalition: ROCK – Reducing Obesity in Central Florida’s Kids**
- **Central Florida Childhood Obesity Conference October 30**



# Contact

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