

# **Juntas Podemos (Together We Can): Empowering Latinas to Shape Policy to Prevent Childhood Obesity**

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# Latinos in South Carolina

- South Carolina's Latino population is one of the fastest growing in the nation.
  - 342% increase between 1990 and 2005
- The national growth rate is 90%.



# Obesity in South Carolina

- Approximately 60% of all adults in SC are overweight or obese.
- 25% of high school students are overweight or at risk of becoming overweight.
- 25% of low-income 2 to 5 year olds are overweight or at risk of becoming overweight.

# Rates of Obesity in SC

Age Group	White (Non-Hispanic)	Black (Non-Hispanic)	Hispanic
2 to 5	11.1%	12.3%	17.9%
6 to 12	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
High School	9.1%	15.1%	17.3%
Adults	55.8%	72.3%	62.9%

# Obesity Among Latino High School Students in South Carolina

- 17.3% of SC Latino high school students are overweight.
- Only 60.9% meet federal recommendations for regular physical activity.
  - The rate for insufficient physical activity is 10% higher than the national average.

# Juntas Podemos: Research and Implementation Plan



# Step 1: Establish a study advisory group

Comprised of:

- Latina mothers
- The City of West Columbia Community Liaison
- Representatives from the City's Parks and Recreation Division
- Public health researchers



## Step 2:

# Documentation using Photovoice

- Women will be trained on the Photovoice technique, will receive a camera, and will be instructed on how to use it to collect data.
- They will use Photovoice to:
  - Document their experiences and observations regarding the availability of physical activity opportunities for their children
  - Describe the barriers that impede their ability to exercise

## Step 3: Key informant Interviews

The interviews will collect data regarding behaviors of Latino children during the physical education classes and/or recess from:

- Teachers
- Coaches
- Other stakeholders in the community

## **Step 4:**

# **Analysis of the data in focus groups**

The data collected by the Latina mothers and the key informant interviews will be analyzed by three different focus groups of Latina mothers

## Step 5: Schedule meetings to present findings

During meetings with the Community Liaison of the City of West Columbia and representatives of Lexington School District Two, the Latina mothers will present their findings and recommendations to policy makers.

# Step 6: Dissemination

Disseminate the findings among the community and other interested groups

# Goals and Objectives: #1

To equip Latina mothers to generate policy recommendations regarding opportunities for physical activity for Latino children in West Columbia, South Carolina.

# Goals and Objectives: #2 & 3

- We believe that data collection led by the women will provide a true picture of the realities associated with the barriers and opportunities for their children.
- We expect that women who are completely involved in collecting and analyzing the data will become empowered during the process.

# Goals and Objectives: #4

- The final product of this research will be the presentation of recommendations to policy makers in the City of West Columbia regarding physical activity opportunities and the barriers Latino children are facing.





# Where are we?



Questions?  
Gracias!

