

Preventing Childhood Obesity

A Healthy Imperative for Connecticut's Next Generation

A forum sponsored by the Connecticut Childhood Obesity Council,
the Connecticut Department of Public Health, & the Connecticut Commission on Children

9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Friday, November 7, 2008
Room 2-C, Legislative Office Building, 300 Capitol Avenue, Hartford

Speaker Biographies – Morning Addresses

Kelly Brownell, Ph.D.



Kelly Brownell is professor in the Department of Psychology at Yale University, where he also serves as professor of epidemiology and public health and as director of the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity. In 2006 Time magazine listed Kelly Brownell among “The World’s 100 Most Influential People” in its special Time 100 issue featuring those “whose power, talent or moral example is transforming the world.”

Dr. Brownell was elected to membership in the Institute of Medicine in 2006 and served as president of several national organizations, including the Society of Behavioral Medicine, Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy, and the Division of Health Psychology of the American Psychological Association. He has received numerous awards and honors for his work, including the James McKeen Cattell Award from the New York Academy of Sciences, the award for Outstanding Contribution to Health Psychology from the American Psychological Association, the Distinguished Alumni Award from Purdue University, and the Lifetime Achievement Award from Rutgers University. He has served in a number of leadership roles at Yale including Master of Silliman College and Chair of the Department of Psychology from 2003-2006.

He has published 14 books and more than 300 scientific articles and chapters. One book received the Choice Award for Outstanding Academic Book from the American Library Association, and his paper on "Understanding and Preventing Relapse" published in the American Psychologist was listed as one of the most frequently cited papers in psychology.

Dr. Brownell has advised members of Congress, governors, world health and nutrition organizations, and media leaders on issues of nutrition, obesity, and public policy.

U.S. Senator Christopher J. Dodd



Senator Christopher J. Dodd is perhaps best known for bringing much-needed attention to children's issues. He formed the first children's caucus in the Senate and spent eight years fighting to enact the Family and Medical Leave Act, which has helped ensure that 50 million Americans don't have to choose between the job they need and the family they love. He recently authored legislation—signed into law this year—to provide additional family and medical leave for those caring for wounded soldiers. Understanding that for many families, taking unpaid time off to care for their loved ones is impossible, Senator Dodd is currently working to ensure that more Americans can take advantage of this program and continue receiving pay. He also authored and enacted landmark legislation to ensure that our nation provides better access to safe and affordable childcare.

Senator Dodd's commitment to public service and human rights was instilled at an early age by his parents, the late Senator Thomas J. Dodd and Grace Murphy Dodd. Following his graduation from Providence College, Dodd, who is fluent in Spanish, spent two years in the Peace Corps working in a rural village in the Dominican Republic. Upon returning to the United States, Dodd enlisted in the Army National Guard and later served in the U.S. Army Reserves. In 1972, he earned a law degree from the University of Louisville School of Law. He practiced law in New London before his election in 1974 to the House of Representatives, where he served three terms on behalf of the state's 2nd District. He was elected to the Senate in 1980.

Senator Dodd lives in East Haddam with his wife, Jackie Clegg Dodd, and their daughters Grace and Christina.

Commissioner Gina McCarthy



Gina McCarthy heads the Department of Environmental Protection, the state agency with primary responsibility for protecting Connecticut's environment, natural resources, and wildlife, along with its parks and forests. Governor M. Jodi Rell appointed Commissioner McCarthy to this position in December 2004. In 2006, Governor Rell and Commissioner McCarthy announced the launch of No Child Left Inside, a major state initiative designed to reconnect youngsters with the outdoors, build the next generation of environmental stewards, and showcase the state's parks and forests.

Commissioner McCarthy came to the DEP from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, where she worked on environmental issues at the state and local level for 25 years in a variety of high-ranking positions, including deputy secretary of operations for the Massachusetts Office of Commonwealth Development, a "super Secretariat" that

coordinates policies and programs of that state's environmental, transportation, energy and housing agencies.

In Connecticut, Commissioner McCarthy is working on important environmental priorities, such as continuing to improve the health of Long Island Sound and the state's air quality; reinvigorating the state park system; implementing strategies and recommendations included in Connecticut's innovative Climate Change Action Plan; completing a new solid waste master plan; and developing new strategies to protect the state's natural resources.

Commissioner McCarthy received a Bachelor of Arts in Social Anthropology from the University of Massachusetts, Boston and a joint Master of Science in Environmental Health Engineering and Planning and Policy from Tufts University. She is married with three children.

Thomas G. Merrill, J.D.



Thomas G. Merrill, general counsel for the New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, is a graduate of Trinity College and the University of Connecticut School of Law, with honors. From 1986 to 1990, Mr. Merrill was a prosecutor in the Kings County District Attorney's Office, where he was assigned as a trial attorney to the narcotics and homicide bureaus. From 1990 to 1995, he practiced general litigation at a private firm. He returned to the public sector in 1995, joining the New York City Law

Department to run a new unit to defend toxic tort suits against the city. Subsequently, he headed the Law Department's Special Litigation Unit. He left the Law Department in December 2006 to become general counsel to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Jeanne P. Goldberg, PhD, RD



Jeanne P. Goldberg, PhD, RD, is the director of the Center on Nutrition Communication and the Graduate Program in Nutrition Communication at the Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University.

Goldberg is co-investigator on two major intervention projects that focus on children. The BONES Project is a five-year, NIH-funded intervention to promote bone health in early elementary school children in diverse communities. Shape Up Somerville is an obesity-prevention program for elementary school children and their families funded by U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. She served as principal investigator on the study that led to the selection of the Food Guide Pyramid. She served as co-principal investigator on Sisters Together: Move More, Eat Better, a five-year, NIH-funded communications project that focused on

promoting healthy lifestyles in minority women. She was also principal investigator on a project to develop and evaluate a nutrition curriculum for pediatric nurse practitioners.

Goldberg served as national co-chairwoman of the Summit on Healthy Eating and Active Living in 2001. That conference brought together for the first time a diverse group of nutrition, physical activity, and behavior experts from the public and private sectors with a shared interest in stemming the rising tide of obesity and other chronic diseases that result from poor food choices and sedentary lifestyles. That conference was the first activity of the Partnership to Promote Healthy Eating and Active Living, a nonprofit organization on whose board she continues to serve.

The Center on Nutrition Communication, which she directs, maintains the Tufts University Nutrition Navigator web site, a resource to guide the public to the best nutrition and fitness information on the Internet.

Goldberg is a consultant to the food industry and government on consumer issues. She served as a member of the FDA Food Advisory Committee from 1992-1996. She is a member of the National Institute of Medicine Committee on Use of Dietary Reference Intakes in Nutrition Labeling, a trustee of the International Food Information Council Foundation, and a member of the subcommittee on communication of the American Heart Association Council on Nutrition and Physical Activity. She has authored numerous articles in scientific journals. For more than 20 years, she co-authored a biweekly newspaper column on nutrition, nationally syndicated by the Washington Post Writer's Group. She also co-authored Dr. Jean Mayer's Diet and Nutrition Guide.