



# Getting Research Into Policy: Reflecting on Lessons Learned from Peer-Reviewed Literature

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# You Had Peas Today?



- Pilot study comparing a Head Start childcare center's menu with the actual food served
  - 269 meals and snacks compared
  - Only 4 complete meals matched
- Results may provide direction for the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) policy and programmatic activities

# Fast Food Proximity and Policy



- Evaluated if and how researchers address policy in their publications
- 38 articles met criteria – fast food proximity focus
- 82% mentioned policy
- 42% stated policy change was needed
- None reported on specific and applicable zoning codes, development assessment procedures, or fees
- Policy was a part of the literature reviewed but was discussed broadly and with limited practical direction for policymakers

# Does This Study Inform Policy?

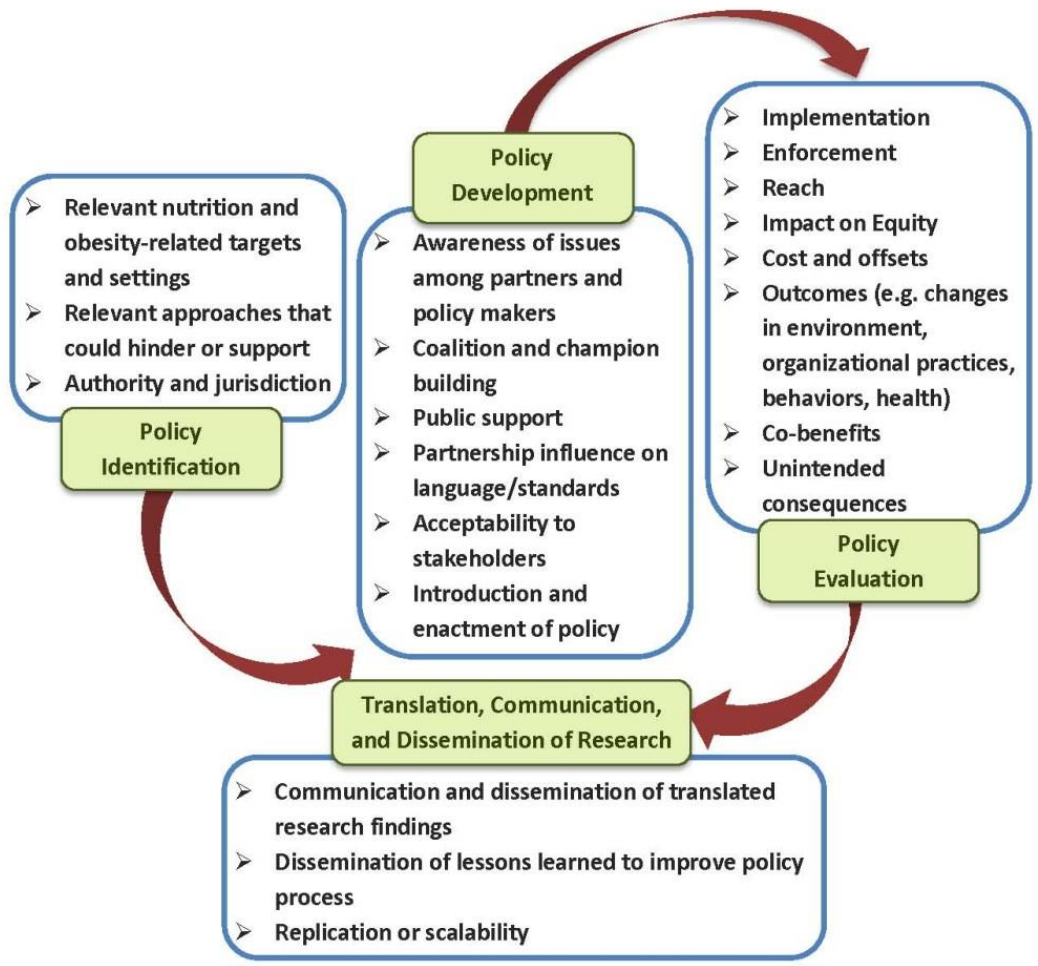
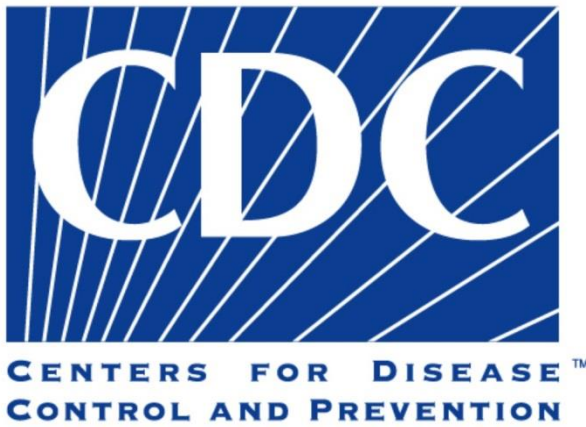
- Examined 50 leading childhood obesity journal's instructions
- 15 (30%) included policy in their aims and scope
- 18 (36%) explicitly instructed authors on a type of article where policy-related information could be published
- Only 3 explicitly indicated a potential policy outlet within their research article format
- Opportunity exists for the development of more explicit editorial policies and best practices on how researchers incorporate policy components in their study design and article policy implications in their publications

Fleischhacker, et al. as printed in *Childhood Obesity: Risk Factors, Health Effects, and Prevention*. Segal CM, ed. Nova Science Publisher; 2011



**NOPREN**  
 Nutrition & Obesity Network  
 POLICY RESEARCH & EVALUATION

**PRC**  
 Prevention Research Centers



[www.hsph.harvard.edu/nopren](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nopren)

Blanck, H & Kim, SA. *Am J Prev Med.* 2012;43(3S2):S85-S90

Fleischhacker, et al. *Prev Chronic Dis.* NOPREN Supplement. Expected Spring 2015



# Review Aims

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- **Advance our understanding of the bidirectional researcher-policymaker relationship**
- **Identify research gaps and opportunities – specific to nutrition and obesity policy research and evaluation**
- **Suggest promising strategies for getting relevant, high quality nutrition and obesity policy research and evaluation into the policy pathway**

# Review Methods

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**A keyword guided search in PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, and Science Direct is being used to identify peer-reviewed articles that provide insights on:**

- **How public health policy research and evaluation gets into the policy pathway; and**
- **Specifically, conduct a deeper dive on the identified articles that provide insights on how nutrition and obesity policy research gets used by elected officials in the US**

# Preliminary Findings

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- **More than 200 articles identified and coded at this point**
- **Difficulty finalizing most efficient and effective search strategy and categorizing, where possible, by end user**
- **Relatively few researchers tackling this area**
- **Publications generally NOT reporting original research**



# Common Themes Emerging

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- **Limited understanding of factors facilitating or hindering bridging the gap between researchers and policymakers**
- **More attention is needed on how best to address deficiencies in researchers, policymakers, and other stakeholders' understanding of how to ensure the evidence on an issue makes meaningful contributions to the policy process**

# Common Themes Emerging

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- **Maintaining objectivity**
- **Creating concise policy relevant materials and messages that are:**
  - **Tailored, targeted, timely and responsive**
  - **Specific, actionable and feasible**
  - **Sensitive to context, constituent needs and concerns**
  - **Factors in targeted official's authority**
  - **Recognizes opposing viewpoints**
  - **Acknowledges costs, benefits and risks**
  - **Provides contact information**

# Who Shapes Food, Nutrition and Obesity Policy?

Food Science

Medical Community

Public Health Nutrition

Agriculture

Consumer Advocacy Groups

Consumers

Food & Drug Law Attorneys

Advertising

Food Manufacturers

Nutrition Science

Horticultural

Restaurant Industry

Researchers

Microbiology

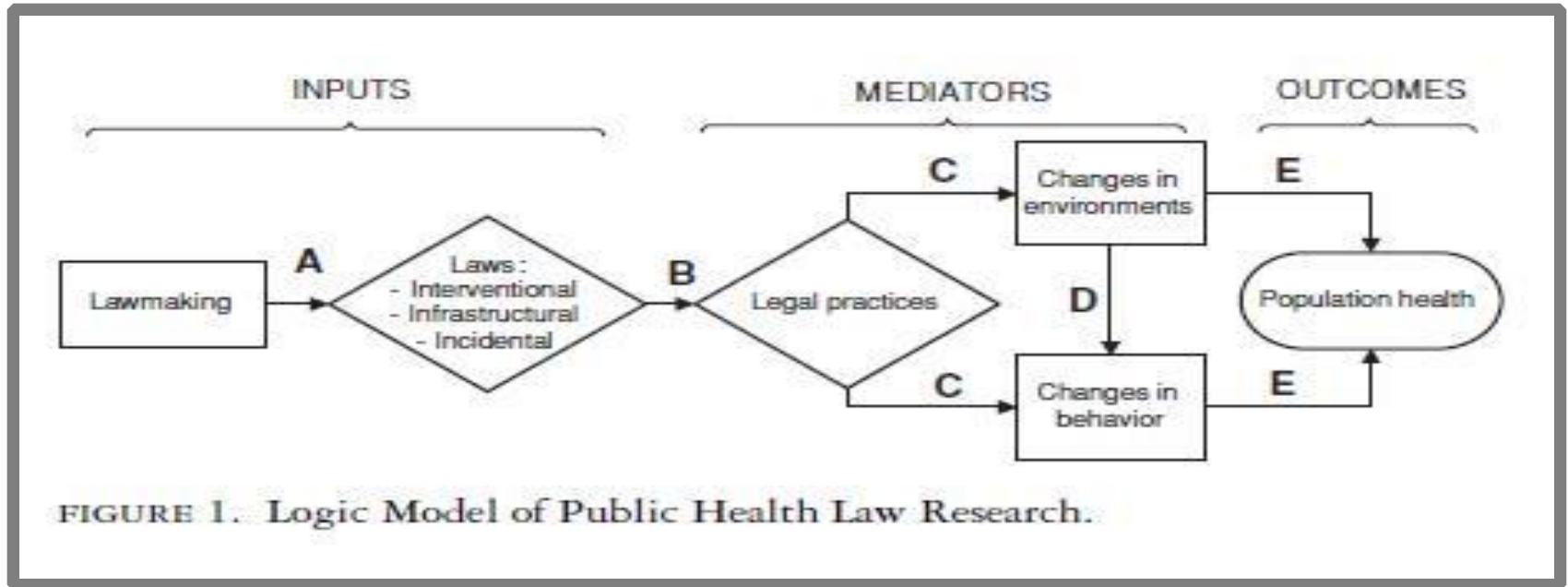
Food Retailers

Pharmacy Industry

Packaging

Local, State, Tribal, Federal & Global Policymaking Processes

# Public Health Law Research



## Greater Need For:

- Policymaking studies
- Mapping studies
- Implementation studies
- Intervention studies
- Mechanism studies





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# The NIH's Contributions to Advancing Health



- Identifies factors influencing health and health disparities in the US population
- Evaluates promising strategies for prevention and treatment in real-world settings and diverse populations
- Harnesses technology and tools to advance prevention and treatment
- Seeks expert input on research gaps
- Trains the next generation of scientists
- Fosters collaborations to maximize translation and dissemination

# Translating Research into Practice

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**Goal:** Investigate the practicality and generalizability of approaches to prevention and treatment with proven efficacy into practice

**Such approaches should have:**

- Dissemination potential
- Sustainability
- Cost-effectiveness
- Reach & effectiveness in diverse populations
- Applicability to real-world settings (e.g., worksites)



# Obesity Policy Research

## Potential NIH Funding Mechanisms

### **Time-Sensitive Obesity Policy and Program Evaluation (R01)**

- <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-12-257.html> (for time-sensitive policy and program evaluation; no resubmission, goal is for 3-4 months from application receipt to receipt of funding; special emphasis panel review)

### **Obesity Policy Evaluation Research (R01)**

- <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-13-110.html>

### **School Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies, Obesogenic Behaviors and Weight Outcomes (R01)**

- <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-13-100.html>

### **School Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies, Obesogenic Behaviors and Weight Outcomes (R21)**

- <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-13-098.html>

### **School Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies, Obesogenic Behaviors and Weight Outcomes (R03)**

- <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-13-099.html>

### **Improving Diet and Physical Activity Assessment (R01)**

- <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-12-198.html>

### **Improving Diet and Physical Activity Assessment (R21)**

- <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-12-197.html>

### **All NIH obesity-related funding opportunities**

- <http://obesityresearch.nih.gov/funding/funding.aspx>

# Dissemination & Implementation Research

## Potential NIH Funding Mechanisms

### **Dissemination and Implementation Research in Health (R03)**

- <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-HD-14-018.html>

### **Dissemination and Implementation Research in Health (R01)**

- <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-HD-14-017.html>

### **Dissemination and Implementation Research in Health**

- <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-HD-14-019.html>

### **Dissemination and Implementation Research in Health (R21) to Support the Global Alliance for Chronic Disease (GACD) Initiative**

- <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-TW-14-003.html>

### **Dissemination and Implementation Research in Health (R01) to Support the GACD Initiative**

- <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-TW-14-005.html>

### **Dissemination and Implementation Research in Health (R03) to Support the GACD Initiative**

- <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-TW-14-004.html>

### **Translational Research to Improve Diabetes and Obesity Outcomes (R01)**

- <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-13-352.html>