



Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Launches Provocative Awareness Campaign to Combat Childhood Obesity

Television and Outdoor Advertisements Use "Tough Love" Messaging

ATLANTA (Aug. 23, 2011)—As the largest pediatric health care provider located in the state with the second highest rate of childhood obesity in the United States, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta is leading the charge against the childhood obesity epidemic with a provocative awareness campaign. Beginning Tuesday, Aug. 23, television and outdoor advertisements seeking to raise public awareness of the childhood obesity crisis will be seen around metro Atlanta. Children's unveiled the visual elements of the campaign with a digital press conference attended by leaders from Atlanta's health-care and business communities.

Backed by research, the campaign reveals startling statistics, such as:

- Nearly 40 percent of Georgia's children are overweight or obese.
- More than half of parents do not see childhood obesity as a serious problem.
- 75 percent of parents with overweight or obese children do not see their children as overweight or obese.
- Nationally, childhood obesity has increased 300 percent in the last 30 years.

Children who are overweight are now suffering from diseases once seen only in adults, including heart disease, hypertension, sleep apnea, liver and kidney disease and Type 2 diabetes. Children in Georgia are the first generation of kids who may not live as long as their parents.

"This crisis did not happen overnight," said Dr. Stephanie Walsh, Medical Director of Child Wellness at Children's. "Childhood obesity is a problem more than 30 years in the making. Fast food companies spend more than \$4.2 billion annually on advertising, and there are now more reasons than ever to spend time on the couch. The deck is stacked against today's kids, and Children's has fully dedicated its resources to help reverse the trend."

Children's large-scale public awareness campaign is designed to break through to parents and caregivers and spark a conversation about the childhood obesity epidemic facing the state. Through billboards, television and social media, the campaign's bold messages seek to engage anyone who has a vested interest in children—parents, caregivers, schools, doctors, government officials.

The awareness part of this campaign is only the first step, and its "tough love" approach is just the beginning of addressing this issue. Children's will be introducing Strong4Life programs to the community later this year. These programs will empower families to adopt healthy habits and offer guidance in making small changes that can make a big difference.

For more information, visit $\underline{www.strong4life.com}$, join the conversation at facebook.com/S4LGA or follow @ Strong_4_Life on Twitter.

About Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, a not-for-profit organization, is committed to enhancing the lives of children through excellence in patient care, research and education. Managing more than half a million patient visits annually at three hospitals and 17 neighborhood locations, Children's is one of the largest clinical care providers for children in the country. Children's offers access to more than 30 pediatric specialties and is ranked among the top children's hospitals by *U.S.News & World Report*. With generous philanthropic and volunteer support, Children's has made an impact in the lives of children in Georgia, the United States and throughout the world. Visit www.choa.org for more information.

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