

## **INCREASE FUNDING FOR CHRONIC DISEASE & INJURY PREVENTION**

Adopted by the Statewide Annual Meeting Delegates June 2020

- WHEREAS,** the California PTA supports improving the health and well-being of children and their families by ensuring equitable access to the essentials of a healthy life such as healthy community and school environments; and
- WHEREAS,** California is in a health crisis, with unacceptably high rates of childhood obesity, prediabetes, and asthma attacks, causing increased rates of illness and future risk for chronic disease among children and a financial burden for families, schools and the State; and
- WHEREAS,** illness and injury disproportionately impact underserved communities. Race, income, historical injustices, and community conditions—including limited access to healthy food, physical activity, safe neighborhoods, and clean water— can determine the quality and length of one’s life; and
- WHEREAS,** public health chronic disease and injury prevention programs have insufficient funding, with just 2% of California’s 2019/2020 health and human services spending going to public health, and national funding for public health suffering from significant reductions; and
- WHEREAS,** Oklahoma, Minnesota and Massachusetts have created statewide mechanisms to provide sustained, dedicated funding for the prevention of chronic disease, and have seen significant results in reducing chronic disease and key risk factors from their investments; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** the California PTA recognizes that high rates of preventable childhood illnesses and health inequities are harming California children and families and will work to educate school districts, parents, and residents of the State about the importance of sustained for funding chronic disease and injury prevention; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the California PTA urges the California Governor and Legislature to provide a source of sustained, dedicated funding for chronic disease and injury prevention inspired by the state wellness trusts and funds in Oklahoma, Minnesota and Massachusetts; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the California PTA, and its units, councils and districts, partner with organizations such as the California Alliance for Prevention Funding and other public health agencies, nonprofits and community organizations to advocate for creating a sustained source of prevention funding in the State of California.

###

## **BACKGROUND SUMMARY**

While good quality health care is essential for all Californians, investing in building healthier communities can prevent illness, injury and inequitable health conditions. Preventable diseases such as obesity, pre-diabetes and asthma are at epidemic levels with an estimated 39% of Californians suffering from at least one chronic condition, yet investment in prevention is inadequate.

As health care spending continues to increase in California, funding for chronic disease and injury prevention continues to be inadequate. Just 2% of the Governor's 2019/2020 budget is allocated for public health. Furthermore, the federal Prevention and Public Health Fund, created by the Affordable Care Act in 2010 with an intention to provide communities across the nation funding to combat chronic disease, has suffered from significant reductions, with California losing \$146 million between 2010 and 2016. As a result, many public health programs are supported by one-time grants, resulting in stop and go funding that leaves public health departments, nonprofits and community partners in the lurch after launching projects that have demonstrated success in battling risk factors for chronic disease.

Furthermore, the ability to live a healthy life is not fairly distributed. California African American, Latino and Native American children, and all children who grow up in poverty, are more likely to suffer from chronic diseases and to have increased risk for chronic diseases into adulthood. Research as early as 2001 shows the increased risk for coronary events (heart attack and death from cardiovascular disease) for those living in disadvantaged neighborhoods. These disparities continue today.

Communities across the state are mobilizing, building assets and developing leadership to change these unjust outcomes. Increased funding for chronic disease and injury prevention can help nurture that capacity and provide opportunity for a healthier future for children. The California PTA has long advocated for the health and well-being of California's children and has adopted many positions and resolutions stating their belief in "the importance of preventing and eliminating factors that may be detrimental to the health, safety and well-being of all children, families and youth". However, the very programs that promote children's health have grossly inadequate funding to meet the need. A source of sustained, dedicated funding for chronic disease and injury prevention can improve the health and well-being of all children in California.