

Onward

Posted by Debra Eschmeyer, Executive Director of Let's Move! and Senior Policy Advisor for Nutrition on January 04, 2017

At the launch of *Let's Move!* in 2010, President Obama established a **Task Force on Childhood Obesity** clearly stating his goal to solve the problem of childhood obesity within a generation and announcing the First Lady's role in leading a national public awareness effort to improve the health of our children.

He stated: "To meet our goal, we must accelerate implementation of successful strategies that will prevent and combat obesity. Such strategies include updating child nutrition policies in a way that addresses the best available scientific information, ensuring access to healthy, affordable food in schools and communities, as well as increasing physical activity and empowering parents and caregivers with the information and tools they need to make good choices for themselves and their families. They will help our children develop lifelong healthy habits, ensuring they reach their greatest potential toward building a healthier and more prosperous America."

This was our north star. And after nearly seven years, with your help, we have made incredible **progress** on behalf of the health of future generations. Together, we secured healthier school meals and snacks for 50 million kids. We modernized the Nutrition Facts label on 800,000 products. And we leveraged the power of marketing to encourage all Americans to eat more fruits and vegetables and drink more water.

Due to our collective efforts, we have momentum like never before and have seen a cultural shift in the way we live and eat. Many fast food chains now serve apples and skim milk in their kids' meals. Hundreds of convenience stores added fresh fruit to their shelves. And taken together, these changes are having a lasting impact. Childhood obesity rates have stopped rising, and have fallen among our youngest children.

We are enthusiastic about the progress across the country, but we continue to face a challenge that threatens the health of our families. That's why we hope you all continue to find innovative ways to get moving and create new programs and policies that support healthy eating.

We must keep working together to put this generation of kids on a healthier, more prosperous path. As the First Lady said at the dedication ceremony of the White House Kitchen Garden, "I didn't just take this issue on as First Lady, I took it on because I'm a mother who cares deeply about the health and well-being of my daughters. I took it on because I'm a citizen who loves this country and cares deeply about the future of all of our kids. So I intend to keep working on this issue for the rest of my life."

For your steadfast dedication to building a brighter future for our Nation's children; for your partnership; and for being an integral part of America's move to raise a healthier generation: we thank you.