



Junior Leagues of New York State:

Junior League of Binghamton
31 Front Street - Binghamton 13905

Junior League of Bronxville
P.O. Box 430 - Bronxville 10708

Junior League of Brooklyn
55 Pierrepont Street - Brooklyn 11201

Junior League of Buffalo
45 Elmwood Avenue - Buffalo 14201

Junior League of Central Westchester
1039 Post Road - Scarsdale 10583

Junior League of Elmira-Corning
P.O. Box 3150 - Elmira 14905

Junior League of Kingston
P.O. Box 1214 - Kingston 12402

Junior League of Long Island
1395 Old Northern Blvd - Roslyn 11576

Junior League of the City of New York
130 East 80th Street - New York 10021

Junior League of Northern Westchester
222 East Main Street - Mt. Kisco 10549

Junior League of Orange County
P.O. Box 515 - Middletown 10940

Junior League of Pelham
901 Pelhamdale Avenue - Pelham Manor 10803

Junior League of Poughkeepsie
794 Main Street - Poughkeepsie 12603

Junior League of Rochester
110 Linden Oaks, Suite A - Rochester 14625

Junior League of Schenectady
P.O. Box 857 - Schenectady 12301

Junior League of Syracuse
930 James Street - Syracuse 13203

Junior League of Troy
P.O. Box 1161 - Troy 12180

Junior League of Westchester on Hudson
35 South Broadway - Tarrytown 10591

Junior League of Westchester on the Sound
149 Larchmont Avenue - Larchmont 10538

For more information, contact
the Junior League nearest you.

SUPPORTING THE NUTRITIONAL WELL-BEING OF NEW YORK'S CHILDREN

*Bill: A.9807/S.6807 (Executive Budget Bills)
A.3826 (Sponsor: Assemblyman Ortiz)*

NYSPAC Position: SUPPORT

The New York State Public Affairs Committee (NYSPAC) of the Junior League supports the enactment of legislation to improve the nutritional well-being of New York's children. Examples of such bills being considered by the New York State legislature include The Healthy Schools Act as proposed in Part C of the Executive Budget Bills (A.9807/S.6807), establishing healthy nutritional standards for the food and beverages served in schools, and A.3826, adding diabetes screening to existing school physicals. NYSPAC urges members of the New York State Senate and Assembly to support the passage of these important pieces of legislation.

A comprehensive law to establish strong, science-based nutritional standards for the food and beverages offered our children at school is long overdue. NYSPAC has supported healthy school food legislation for several years because we know that good nutrition and regular exercise are central to the well-being of children. They are more critical now than ever in light of the current rise in childhood obesity rates – tripling in New York State over the last thirty years – which have resulted in an increase in diabetes, precursors to heart disease, asthma, sleep apnea and other serious and chronic illnesses. A healthy diet, coupled with an exercise program, actually improves not only students' health but also their performance in school.

One major roadblock to this legislation has been a concern that schools would lose money if they offered healthier food and beverage choices. Research, however, refutes this assumption. A 2005 U.S. Department of Agriculture study found that 12 out of 17 schools and school districts reporting income data for a comprehensive study on improving the nutritional content of school food actually *increased* their revenue as a result of the changes made, while four reported no change. Meanwhile, obesity-related illnesses are extremely costly, not only in terms of quality of life but a more than \$6 billion drain on the State of New York every year.

The increasing prevalence of Type 2 diabetes among children and teenagers is one of the most serious health issues stemming from the growth in childhood obesity. This disease has been termed "adult-onset" diabetes, but now up to 45% of all newly diagnosed cases of Type 2 diabetes in New York State occur in children. Pre-diabetes blood glucose levels that are higher than normal exist in one out of six overweight teenagers in the nation. Type 2 diabetics do not produce enough insulin, or their cells ignore insulin, leading to a buildup of glucose in the blood that can cause serious damage to the eyes, kidneys, nerves and heart. These health concerns are extremely challenging for patients, and they are also expensive for our society. A reported \$174 billion was attributable to "direct medical expenditures" or "lost productivity" arising from diabetes in our country in 2007, according to the by the American Diabetes Association.

Weight-loss and exercise programs, self-monitoring of blood glucose levels, working with a dietician and possibly taking medication are effective ways to manage diabetes. In order to do so, however, the condition must first be detected. Unfortunately, nearly one-third of all diabetics are unaware that they even have the disease. A.3826 would both raise awareness and, at the same time, provide a mechanism to enable early detection. Students in public schools are already required by law to have physical examinations when they enter 1st, 3rd, 7th and 10th grades. **Adding a diabetes risk analysis to that process, followed by testing for the disease if risk factors or a family history are identified, to the examination, enable children and their parents to take immediate steps to control the disease, thus helping those children to live healthier lives.**

On behalf of the more than 7,000 women represented by the 19 Junior Leagues of New York State, we call on you to take action now to help our children live longer, healthier and more productive lives.

For more information, please contact Sara Kandler: sarakandler@yahoo.com.