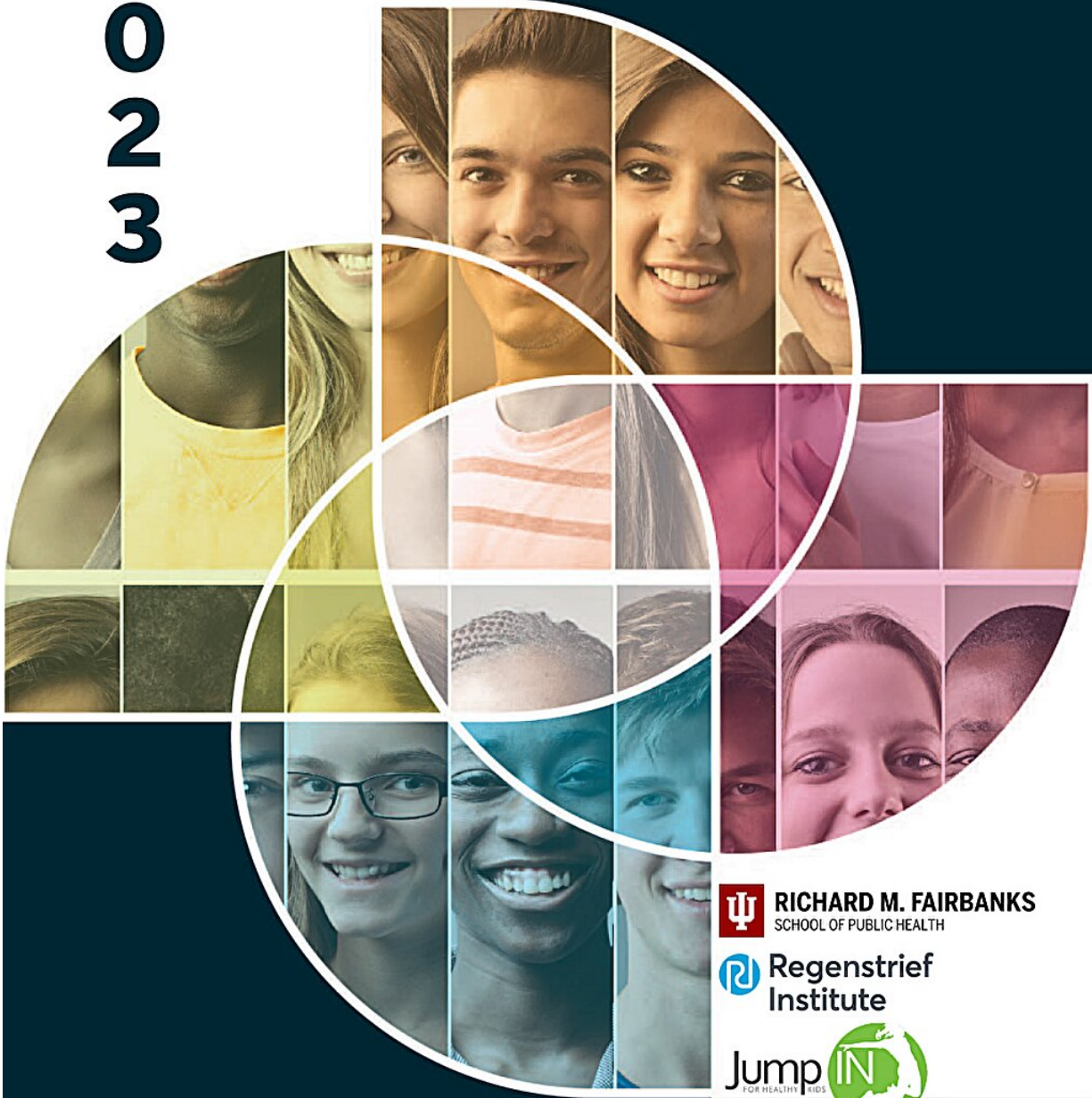


Childhood obesity study reveals increases in rates and trends in central Indiana

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Weight Trends Among Children and Adolescents within Central Indiana



 **RICHARD M. FAIRBANKS**
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 **Regenstrief**
Institute

Jump 
FOR HEALTHY KIDS

Credit: Indiana University/Regenstrief Institute/Jump IN for Healthy Kids

Researchers at the Indiana University Richard M. Fairbanks School of Public Health in Indianapolis have identified the most detailed findings to date on childhood obesity rates and trends in central Indiana.

Examining data from Jan. 1, 2014, to Dec. 31, 2022, the researchers found that [childhood obesity](#) had increased nearly 36%, affecting 1 in 5 children between the ages of 2 and 19. More than half of that increase occurred during the pandemic years 2020 to 2022.

"Having this data is a huge win for [public health](#)," said Thomas Duszynski, assistant professor at the Fairbanks School and an affiliated research scientist at the Regenstrief Institute. "We can't begin to work on prevention and treatment until we understand the prevalence of an issue. And now, central Indiana has almost a decade of data that will create a baseline for [health care providers](#) and children's health partners to track and identify obesity rates."

Funded by Jump IN for Healthy Kids, the report "[Weight Trends Among Children and Adolescents Within Central Indiana](#)" used data from the state's Health Information Exchange, which contains electronic health record data contributed by Community Health Network, Ascension St. Vincent, Eskenazi Health, IU Health and other health providers and [data sources](#) in central Indiana—Boone, Hamilton, Hendricks, Marion, Hancock, Morgan, Johnson and Shelby counties. Data for this project was sourced by the Regenstrief Institute. Jump IN has secured funding to continue collecting and analyzing data to update this report through 2026.

"Jump IN has long sought funding to collect comprehensive height and weight data to develop accurate overweight and obesity prevalence rates," Jump IN CEO Julie Burns said. "We can now strengthen prevention and intervention and more effectively address health inequities. Further research may shed more light on both the decreases

and increases we see in these data. We hope rates continue to decline to pre-pandemic levels as our community returns to the multi-sector, systems-level, collaborative strategies that research demonstrates improve [child health](#) and population obesity."

Marion County has the highest rates of female and male childhood obesity in the central Indiana area.

Other data from the report indicates that from 2014 to 2022, childhood [obesity rates](#) in central Indiana increased:

- 32% for females.
- 39% for males.
- 69% for Hispanics and 66% for Asians.
- 96% for 2- to 5-year-olds, 40% for 6- to 11-year-olds and 26% for 12- to 19-year-olds.

"There is not one single factor that contributes to childhood [obesity](#)," Duszynski said. "Too many Hoosiers face significant barriers to health. This report lays the groundwork for future action to address the barriers that prevent our neighbors from being healthy and help kids and families in central Indiana achieve better health."

More information: Weight Trends Among Children and Adolescents Within Central Indiana. [www.jumpinforhealthykids.org/c ... ldhood-obesity-data/](http://www.jumpinforhealthykids.org/c...ldhood-obesity-data/)

Provided by Indiana University

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