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Rutgers Launches New Jersey Healthy Kids Initiative



The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation awarded Rutgers \$3 million for a collaboration that brings together pediatric research efforts across the university

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The New Jersey Healthy Kids Initiative will focus its work at the interdisciplinary epicenter of medicine, nutrition, culinary arts, physical activity lifestyle management and early education.

Photo: Albert Vecerka/Esto

The [New Jersey Institute for Food, Nutrition, and Health](#) (IFNH) has been awarded a \$3 million, three-year grant by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to launch the New Jersey Healthy Kids Initiative (NJHKI). The initiative is a partnership between IFNH and the [Child Health Institute of New Jersey](#) that will focus on improving the health of New Jersey children.

The grant, secured in partnership with the Rutgers University Foundation, includes a challenge to raise \$1 million for the New Jersey Healthy Kids Initiative. When matched by the RWJ Foundation, the challenge would generate an additional \$2 million in support, for a total of \$5 million in new funding to invest in the health of New Jersey's children.

“We are grateful for the investment the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has made in the New Jersey Healthy Kids Initiative,” stated IFNH director Peter Gillies. “With an interdisciplinary approach and a community voice at the initiative’s core, we strengthen our chances of ensuring a healthy future for the children of New Jersey.”

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“Translating the best science from the laboratory to children, families and communities is our ultimate goal,” said Arnold Rabson, director of the Child Health Institute of New Jersey, part of Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. “This collaboration between our two institutes coupled with the strong community focus of the New Jersey Healthy Kids Initiative brings the broad pediatric research efforts across Rutgers together with the community for the health of children.”

The New Jersey Healthy Kids Initiative will focus its work at the interdisciplinary epicenter of medicine, nutrition, culinary arts, physical activity lifestyle management and early education. The NJHKI will:

- Convene multiple conferences, workshops and public forums to explore the frontiers of science and technology with regard to childhood obesity and child education;
- Expand the work of the Culture of Health Children's Academy, the IFNH's co-located preschool;
- Develop and validate a state-of-the-art nutrition, culinary skills, physical fitness and healthy lifestyles in the home curriculum; and
- Implement educational enrichment programs for local schools and summer camps focusing on nutrition literacy, cooking skills and physical fitness.

About the New Jersey Institute for Food, Nutrition, and Health

The New Jersey Institute for Food, Nutrition, and Health exists to improve the health of New Jersey through interdisciplinary research and programs related to food, nutrition, and physical activity. The institute oversees centers of excellence related to lipid metabolism, digestive health, human performance, and early childhood nutrition education. For more information, visit ifnh.rutgers.edu.

About the Child Health Institute of New Jersey

The Child Health Institute of New Jersey, part of Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, exists to prevent and treat childhood diseases by taking basic biomedical research into the clinical arena and into the community. The CHI conducts research in four major areas: inflammation and immunity, autism and neurodevelopment, pediatric cancer and stem cell biology, and childhood endocrine and metabolic disorders. For more information, visit rwjms.rutgers.edu/chinj/.

About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

For more than 40 years the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has worked to improve health and health care. The foundation is working with others to build a national Culture of Health enabling everyone in America to live longer, healthier lives. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org. Follow the foundation on Twitter at www.rwjf.org/twitter or on Facebook at www.rwjf.org/facebook.

About Rutgers University Foundation

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