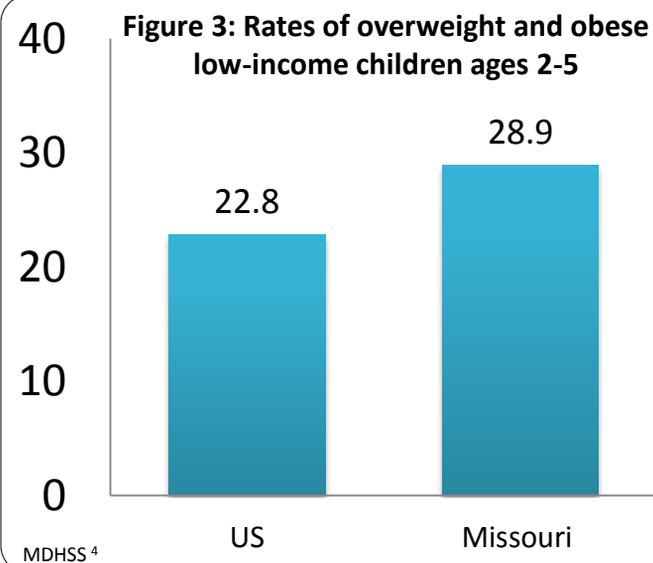


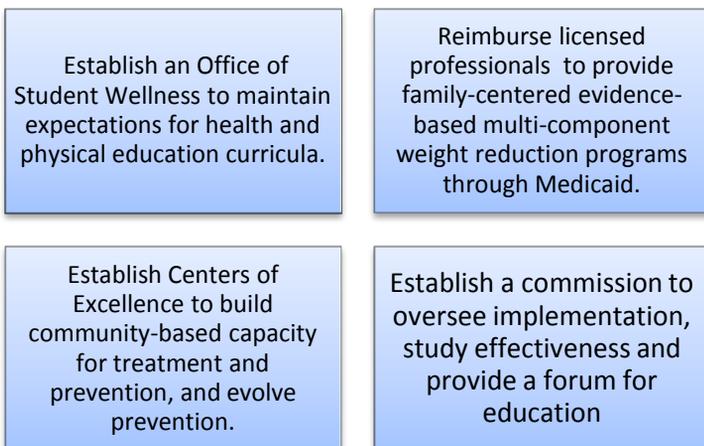


## Taking Action

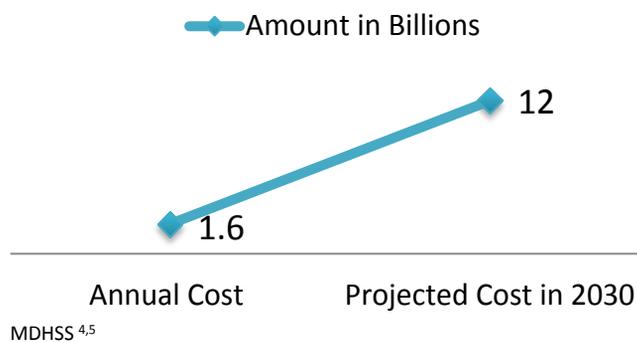
- The Missouri Children’s Service Commission, Subcommittee on Childhood Obesity, recommends a strategic dual action approach focused on prevention and treatment.<sup>4</sup> (Figure 4)
- The Missouri Foundation for Health (MFH) has developed Healthy Schools Healthy Communities (HSHC); a five year, three-tiered approach to increase physical activity and healthy eating; engage parents and stakeholders to promote health and wellness in communities, families, and schools; and implement and enforce environmental and policy changes to support physical activity and healthy eating. Ten of the 12 areas MFH is focusing interventions in are rural counties.<sup>7</sup>
- In coordination with 81 partnering organizations, including the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (MDHSS), the Missouri Council for Activity and Nutrition (MoCan) has devised a strategic plan to prevent obesity and other chronic diseases. The strategy consists of four main goals and their specific plans of action, with an overall goal of decreasing obesity among children, youth and adults in Missouri. The vast majority of interventions are focused in lower-income, high need, rural regions of Missouri.<sup>1</sup>



**Figure 4: Potential policy actions to improve children’s health**



**Figure 5: Obesity-Related Health Care Cost in MO**



## Conclusion

Reversing childhood obesity is essential to enhance the quality of life, prevent the development of disease, and decrease obesity-related medical expenses. Sustainable lifestyle interventions, medical interventions, changes in current policy, community involvement and environmental changes are critical to reducing the prevalence of childhood obesity and the associated health risks. It is important that rural Missourians are provided with the education and tools that enable healthy decisions. With the discussed action plans, Missouri has the potential to be a leader for other rural areas facing similar childhood obesity issues.

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2. Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. Health in rural Missouri: Biennial report 2012-2013. Office of Primary Care and Rural Health.
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5. Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. Obesity state: A closer look at obesity in Missouri. Accessed May 2015. <http://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/obesity/pdf/ObesityState.pdf>.
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7. Missouri Foundation for Health. Healthy Schools Healthy Communities. Accessed May 2015. <https://www.mffh.org/content/740/healthy-schools-healthy-communities.aspx..>