One priority focus of the Foundation is community efforts to improve the prevention or mitigation of childhood obesity. Communities across the nation are increasingly aware of the childhood obesity epidemic, and this awareness is being transformed into active efforts to improve community access to foods and beverages that contribute to a healthy diet and increase opportunities for regular physical activity. In response to this Request for Proposals (RFP), communities may propose to collaboratively develop and promote programs that encourage healthy eating behaviors and physical fitness, particularly for populations at high risk of childhood obesity.

Continued on page 2
Budget Planning

Grant awards of up to $150,000 in grant funding and project periods up to 24 months (a change from 12 months in 2007) will be considered. Grant awards for this RFP are limited to 75 percent of the overall project costs. The remaining project budget (25 percent of the overall project costs) must be comprised of matching/in-kind funding to support implementation of the desired work in its totality.

As an example, if a project is requesting a full 24-month grant for the maximum $150,000 in grant funding, the overall project budget would need to be at least $200,000 with the difference ($50,000) being comprised of matching or in-kind funding support. Requests can still be made for smaller grant amounts or for shorter project periods of time dependent on your proposed scope of work. As an example, you could request a 12-month project period with a grant request of $60,000. In this budget planning scenario, the overall project budget would need to be $80,000 with the difference ($20,000) being comprised of matching or in-kind funding commitments.

2008 GRANT PROGRAM
COMMUNITY RESPONSIVE CYCLES

The Wellmark Foundation will also support community-based projects that advance health promotion and preventive services known to be effective and sound approaches. Our hope is to offer funding to catalyze stakeholders in communities to collaboratively plan scientifically-based projects that have a health promotion and prevention impact. Of particular interest are vulnerable/health disparate populations of our two states that potentially experience a deficiency in the use of preventive care.

In addition to these changes in funding priorities, our grant making process has been modified to require a Letter of Interest (LOI) submission as the initial application step. The introduction of an LOI into our funding process is designed to both honor and lessen your initial time commitment as an applicant. The process will also help The Wellmark Foundation more deliberately shape the field of fully developed proposals going forward to create a portfolio of complementary grants.

After careful review of the LOIs submitted, The Wellmark Foundation will issue invitations to submit full grant proposals to those organizations most likely to successfully execute a community response to their targeted issue(s) within our funding priorities. This Request for Proposals (RFP) outlines the new application process. Please consult The Wellmark Foundation staff with any questions.
Grant Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a grant from The Wellmark Foundation, the primary applicant (grant fiscal agent) must meet all of the following requirements:

- Must be classified as a Section 501(c)3 tax exempt organization under Internal Revenue Code.
- Cannot be a private foundation under Section 509(a).
- Must be an organization within the state of either Iowa or South Dakota.
- Must not have a contractual relationship with Wellmark, Inc., Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa, Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of South Dakota, or Wellmark Health Plan of Iowa, Inc.

Proposed projects are more likely to be funded if as many of the following criteria as possible are met and demonstrated:

- Closely aligns with The Wellmark Foundation grant making mission.
- Has potential for outcomes that are clearly stated and measurable.
- Has potential for sound evaluative process.
- Maximizes collaboration with applicable, needed stakeholders.
- Aligns with evidenced-based, best practices and/or principles.
- Leverages private, public, and/or community resources.
- Has a legitimate, sound prospect to progress beyond initial Wellmark Foundation grant support (sustainability/reproducibility).

The Wellmark Foundation will not consider making grants for the following:

- Biomedical research that will not impact local residents in the immediate future or that does not have a direct application to implementing a community-driven health intervention.
- Uncompensated care for direct clinical services, or services that are billable for third-party reimbursement.
- Capital campaign support.
- Projects completely requesting support for equipment.
- Projects without viable prospects for sustainability.
- Organizational indirect/overhead costs.
- Individuals.
- For-profit organizations or programs operated by or for the benefit of for-profit organizations.
- Debt retirement.
- Annual fund drives.
- Fundraising events.
- Endowments.

If you have questions related to whether your organization or coalition is eligible to receive a grant from The Wellmark Foundation, please contact Foundation staff at 515/245-4819 or 515/245-4997.

Question and Answer Conference Calls

A toll-free, conference call will be offered for each grant cycle to allow prospective grant applicants the ability to 1) learn more about the changes in our approach to project support in 2008 and 2) allow community members direct access to ask Wellmark Foundation staff about anything related to the application process that needs clarity to best position your proposed project concept(s).

Teleconferences are scheduled for March 5, 2008, and July 21, 2008, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. (CST). The conference call-in number is 888-454-6808 and the participant code is 7825751. You will not need to pre-register to take part in the call. As always, potential grant applicants are also invited to contact Wellmark Foundation staff directly to ask specific questions related to individual proposal ideas.
Prevention is the global theme of The Wellmark Foundation’s 2008 funding agenda. The following *Spectrum of Prevention* is a systematic tool that promotes a multifaceted range of activities for effective prevention. As you consider potential proposals, these project level definitions are helpful as they highlight that prevention is more than education and goes beyond the individual. Applicants are asked to think about these distinctions when planning an initiative. This grant support could take the form of planning grants, community-based program implementation, organizational capacity-building, health policy advancement, or a combination of these.

The *Spectrum of Prevention* is a Prevention Institute tool originally developed by Larry Cohen in 1983 while working as director of Prevention Programs at the Contra Costa California County Health Department. It is based upon the work of Dr. Marshall Swift in preventing developmental disabilities. More information is available at [http://preventioninstitute.org/tool_spectrum.html](http://preventioninstitute.org/tool_spectrum.html).

### LEVEL OF PROJECT | DEFINITION OF LEVEL
--- | ---
1. Strengthening individual knowledge and skills | Enhancing individuals’ capability of preventing injury or illness and promoting safety
2. Promoting community education | Reaching groups of people with information and resources to promote health and safety
3. Educating providers | Informing providers who will transmit skills and knowledge to others (public)
4. Fostering coalitions and networks | Bringing together groups and individuals for broader goals and greater impact
5. Changing organizational practices | Adopting regulations and shaping norms to improve health and safety
6. Influencing policy and legislation | Developing strategies to change laws and policies to influence outcomes

### CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION

The magnitude, scope, and impact of the childhood obesity epidemic have important repercussions for public health, threatening to reverse the gains in life expectancy achieved over the last two centuries. Today, more than a third of young people in the United States are overweight or obese. Childhood obesity is a complex topic involving genetic and environmental factors. Prevention activities can help avoid the pitfalls of dieting in children that could include negative impact on growth and development, body image distortion, and learning restrictive eating practices. Prevention efforts can be incorporated into home, health care, child care, school, and community settings and include healthy eating, appropriate physical activity, providing nurturing environments, and fostering a healthy body image.

Together we can begin to change childhood overweight in our communities. Individuals, families, communities, schools, youth service organizations, public health, media, and government all need to determine their role and take action to prevent and decrease childhood overweight and obesity. The following offers potential, but not exclusive, grant ideas for project support that would be responsive to this call to action and funding opportunity:

- Efforts to ensure daily, quality physical education in all school grades.
- Initiatives to reduce screen time spent watching television and in other similar sedentary behaviors.
- Projects that build physical activity into regular routines and playtime for children and their families in efforts striving to achieve recommended levels of physical activity each day.
- Efforts to make community infrastructure (built environment) more available and accessible for physical activity.
- Initiatives to promote healthier food choices, such as consuming recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables.
- Projects to ensure schools provide healthy foods and beverages on campus and at school events.
- Efforts to promote culturally appropriate interventions to address disparities in the prevalence of childhood overweight and obesity among various racial and ethnic, gender, socioeconomic, and age groups.
Initiatives to educate expectant parents about the many benefits of breastfeeding as breastfed infants may be less likely to become overweight as they grow older.

Projects designed to educate health care providers and health professional students in the prevention and treatment of childhood obesity.

Efforts that emphasize the consumer’s role in making wise food and physical activity choices by providing age appropriate education in schools, youth service organizations, or family and community settings.

Initiatives that address issues of healthy food access, dietary choices, and health by improving food production/distribution networks.

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**WELLNESS AND PREVENTION**

Together we can change health outcomes in our communities. The Wellmark Foundation seeks to support communities to develop, implement, and enhance a broad spectrum of local level wellness and prevention programs. Wellness and prevention programs focus on health promotion, health education, disease prevention, and injury prevention. These programs should be population-based, i.e., they work with a non-patient population vs. targeting patients already in a clinical setting. Successful proposals will focus on prevention rather than treatment and will reflect the priority health needs of the community. Potential indicators of priority community health needs might be found through a community health needs assessment or state epidemiological health data.

Tools like The Community Guide (www.thecommunityguide.org) or U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (www.preventiveservices.ahrq.gov) may help grant applicants justify project plan choices and make stronger funding requests. The following offers potential, but not exclusive, grant ideas for support that would be responsive to this call to action and funding opportunity:

- Support of various cancer screenings, especially efforts to promote the use of or access to cancer screenings.
- Maternal and child health initiatives, especially programs that encourage participation of high-risk mothers in prenatal care.
- Community-based initiatives to promote wellness in the elderly population, including exercise, diet, and regular medical visits.
- Injury prevention.
- Community-based initiatives to encourage establishment of a medical home for children.
- Social marketing programs that encourage healthy behaviors or address specific risk behaviors (substance abuse, youth risk behaviors).
LETTER OF INTEREST (LOI) SUBMISSION

Submission of a Letter of Interest (LOI) is required as the first step in the grant application process for this Request for Proposals (RFP).

The purpose of the LOI is to acquaint the Foundation with the abilities, interests, and plans of the applicant/applicant coalition prior to requiring completion of the entire grant application process. After thoughtful review of the submitted LOIs, the Foundation will invite selected applicants to submit a full grant application. The selected applicants will receive additional information and guidance from the Foundation to build upon their LOI and complete their full grant application.

Submission of a Letter of Interest must include the following components as described in this RFP:
1. Community Responsive Grant Program Cover Page
2. Letter of Interest addressing the requested elements
3. Appendix items

1) COMMUNITY RESPONSIVE GRANT PROGRAM COVER PAGE
A cover page is required and can be downloaded as a Word document from www.wellmark.com/foundation.

2) LETTER OF INTEREST – REQUESTED ELEMENTS
Your LOI should address the following elements within its three-page limit to allow the Foundation to see your capacity, vision, and preparation for ensuring success of your proposed project.

Problem or Issue Statement: Describe the problem your project is attempting to prevent/solve or the issue(s) your project will address. Please define the community your project will impact (geographic, target population, socioeconomic status, etc.)

Community Needs/Assets: Specify the needs and/or assets of your community and organization that led your organization (or collaboration of organizations) to design a project that addresses the problem. List stakeholders in your community who are necessary for the success of your project and how you plan to engage them (or already have engaged them) in your proposed project work.

Desired Results: Identify desired results by describing what your project is expected to achieve in the short and long term. Indicate how you will know if you have been successful.

Strategies: List the strategies your project will utilize and how they have helped communities like yours achieve the kinds of results your project seeks (evidence-based).

Budget Planning: Offer a preliminary budget with the resource/funding expectations you anticipate needing in order to fit the proposed scope of work of your project. If your LOI is invited for full proposal development, we’ll ask you for greater line item budget detail and explanation of matching requirements. Please note the list of activities the Foundation does not intend to support (page 3) to avoid budget request items that cannot be approved.

3) REQUIRED APPENDIX ITEMS
The organization (fiscal agent) applying for the grant must submit all appendix items listed below with the cover page and Letter of Interest. Include these documents with the ORIGINAL copy only.

- IRS determination letter verifying 501(c)3 status (or statement of governmental entity status).
- Audited financial statement for 501(c)3 entity – most recent available (or governmental auditor’s statement for a governmental entity).
- Board of Directors list (or governmental board or community advisory body with governance capacity for your entity).

LETTER OF INTEREST GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS
- LOI, cover page, and appendix items are required from all potential applicants.
- The maximum length of the LOI is three (3) typed pages (excluding cover page and appendix items) addressing the requested elements.
- Use 11-point font or higher, single-spaced lines, and one-inch margins all around.
- All pages of the LOI should be numbered (excluding cover page and appendix items).
- Original documents (cover page, LOI, and appendix items) plus three copies (cover page and LOI) must be delivered in the same package (four total copies).
- Original documents should be clipped or fastened. Copied proposals should be stapled.
- Proposal packet must arrive at The Wellmark Foundation on or before the deadline dates of either April 2, 2008 (grant cycle 1) or August 21, 2008 (grant cycle 2).
- Proposal packets should be mailed to:
  The Wellmark Foundation
  636 Grand Avenue, Station 150
  Des Moines, IA 50306-9232
Standard mail or overnight mail delivery is preferred, but hand-delivered LOIs will be accepted. Hand-delivered applications must be delivered to the skywalk level guard station of II Ruan at 601 Locust Street (corner of Locust Street and Sixth Avenue) by 3:00 p.m. on the established due date for each grant cycle. Following receipt, a confirmation email will be sent to your identified project contact person.

**FULL GRANT APPLICATION SUBMISSION WILL BE ACCEPTED BY INVITATION ONLY**

After review of the submitted Letters of Interest (LOI), the Foundation will invite grant applications from those organizations whose LOIs offer the strongest potential for grant funding. For further funding consideration, the invitees will be asked to submit completed grant applications to The Wellmark Foundation Board of Directors. After review of the LOIs, if the Foundation wishes to receive a full grant application from your organization/coalition, Foundation staff will contact you to discuss perceived project merits and areas to be strengthened prior to full application submission.

*Full application format and submission will be shared and accepted by invitation only.*

**RESUBMISSION OF LOIs**

LOIs not invited to develop full grant proposals may be submitted in subsequent/future grant cycles for consideration again – hopefully with some improvement or modifications to strengthen the project concept to make it more competitive. Each of the two (2) grant cycles of 2008 will be viewed as mutually exclusive funding competitions with all applications being given equal consideration in each cycle, i.e., the results from cycle 1 (positive or negative) will not have a bearing on cycle 2 applications. Each cycle starts anew and is independent from the other. An applicant/fiscal agent that is successfully awarded a grant in cycle 1 is eligible to apply in cycle 2, but the second LOI must be for a different purpose/scope of work than the initially awarded grant to avoid the potential for duplication/overlap in funding support.

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**2008 Grant Cycle Timeline**

This guide is designed for use by applicants requesting project funding from The Wellmark Foundation during its two 2008 annual grant cycles. Letters of Interest are due on *April 2, 2008 (grant cycle 1)*, and *August 21, 2008 (grant cycle 2)*. Applicants with an LOI selected for further development will receive an invitation to submit a full grant proposal and additional application guidance. Only those applications invited to the full proposal round will be reviewed for the full proposal deadlines.

**2008 COMMUNITY RESPONSIVE GRANT CYCLE 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>Prospective grant applicant conference call</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>Letters of Interest due</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 10</td>
<td>Invitations to submit a full proposal are issued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Full proposal due – by invitation only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 9</td>
<td>Board of Directors selects final grant awardees</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1</td>
<td>Initial project funding released/start of grant period</td>
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**2008 COMMUNITY RESPONSIVE GRANT CYCLE 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 21</td>
<td>Prospective grant applicant conference call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 21</td>
<td>Letters of Interest due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 28</td>
<td>Invitations to submit a full proposal are issued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 23</td>
<td>Full proposal due – by invitation only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 3</td>
<td>Board of Directors selects final grant awardees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>Initial project funding released/start of grant period</td>
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PLEASE CONTACT
THE WELLMARK FOUNDATION
WITH QUESTIONS

Foundation staff members recognize this represents a new approach to our grant funding. As such, we are committed to being available to discuss your project ideas and providing any desired technical assistance. Your inquiries are welcome at any time. Please remember that each cycle has a scheduled introductory teleconference call-in time (March 5th and July 21st for each grant cycle, respectively) for staff to offer guidance related to the application procedure and for you to ask specific questions related to preparing a project concept for LOI submission.