



## SUSTAINABILITY

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### **Susan Dingee**

2006 Grantee – Movement & Joy ~ Movimiento y Alegria

### **Liz Gallo**

2007 Grantee – A Growing Adventure

### **Tamara Schryver**

Senior Nutrition Scientist

Bell Institute of Health and Nutrition (a division of General Mills)

### **Mary Beth Whalen**

Vice President, Executive Director

American Dietetic Association Foundation

### **Patricia Splett**

Independent Evaluation Consultant

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**Susan Dingee:** To me, sustainability is the name of the game. It just doesn't make sense to fund a program that is going to end and be finished at the end of a grant period. Things need to always grow and develop and always go to the next stage.

**Mary Beth Whalen:** There's a program in the state of Ohio where it started with the General Mills program, and it was a very small local initiative that got some attention from the state, and now the program is delivered statewide. So when you talk about sustainability and you talk about leveraging, it was just that initial seed money that they were able to use to demonstrate that, yes, we can make this happen, and then other funders stepped in to pick up the slack.

**Tamara Schryver:** I think sustainability really in the end is about making a culture change where the whole organization thinks about physical activity and nutrition in everything they do and it's not just a one-off item.

**Liz Gallo:** You know, you don't want to do a one-off grant. You know, we've learned from the past you do a grant here and a grant there, and it just never works.

**Tamara Schryver:** For us I think sustainable is really about an attitude change that goes on in the program itself; for example, if you're a school, if you are a YMCA, all of a sudden you're thinking about how can I implement nutrition in a lesson plan, or how can I implement physical activity in a break, or how can, you know, everybody's thinking at the program level is all about how can we include physical activity and nutrition in everything we do.

**Liz Gallo:** We have, 95% of our children are minority. One hundred percent are from low income, free and reduced lunch, and right now we have 52% of our children who are clinically obese, and 28% are diabetic. We built greenhouses to start growing their own food, fruits and vegetables, and we are going to plant some trees and hopefully start an apple orchard as it comes down. General Mills with the grant with the greenhouses really gave us the money to start it. Maintaining it is really not that, that much. You know, so we've been looking at grants where the money gives us that great starting power, and then we can just maintain it amongst ourselves. It's really changing an attitude.

**Tamara Schryver:** I think that's what \$10,000 can do. It can make an attitude change that in the long term changes programming.

**Mary Beth Whalen:** A lot of times that \$10,000, which you might just consider seed money, is some of the hardest money to get. But once you get that first grant, once you've got some experience running a program, then you can go back and you can leverage that to get additional funding. And it's no small challenge to say, hey, we received funding from the General Mills Foundation. I mean, that's huge. The name carries a lot of weight. So I think it should not be seen as the last step. It's basically the first step in the process.

**Patricia Splett:** When I talk about financing programs and being mindful throughout the early planning and implementation of the program, what the various components of the program require in terms of resources, and then as this program unfolds, if there is some accounting, maybe official kind of keeping track of things, but maybe more casual, at least an awareness of what resources are we using and drawing on to deliver the various components of the program, then when it comes time to think about sustainability or what are we going to do next year, we have a more clear picture of the kind of resources that are necessary.

**Mary Beth Whalen:** So look at it as an opportunity to kind of get your program started, to demonstrate how effective you can be, and the opportunities are there to get more funding.

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