

# First NBHWC-Approved Pediatric Health Coach Program Expands to Meet Childhood Obesity Challenge

*PHCA addresses growing demand to prepare health coaches to support prevention and wellness in kids, teens and families*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES, September 18, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In recognition of National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, the [Pediatric Health Coach Academy](#) (PHCA) is expanding enrollment with two additional cohorts for the Fall 2025–2026 program. PHCA is the only NBHWC-approved program specifically designed to train health coaches to work with children and adolescents.

This comes at a critical time. Childhood obesity has more than doubled over the past 20 years, and in 2024 alone, [35 million children under 5](#) were classified as overweight. Fortunately, obesity is largely preventable when families are educated on healthy lifestyle practices. Health coaches play a vital role in this shift by equipping children, teens, and families with practical, evidence-based strategies to build lasting habits, improve routines, and support long-term health outcomes.

[The health coaching market](#) is growing due to individuals looking for support from coaches who serve as mentors, motivators, and partners in wellness. Using an evidence-based approach, health coaches help build lasting habits around nutrition, activity, sleep, and emotional well-being. By focusing on behavior change, they empower clients to prevent chronic disease and improve overall health. PHCA's mission is to provide coaches with practical tools and guidance that can fit into any lifestyle, creating a ripple effect across communities and families.

"September revisits the urgent need to address a missing link within our healthcare system, preventative health for children and adolescents. With PHCA, our goal is to provide health coaches with the tools to meet families where they are and guide them toward healthier, more sustainable habits. Health coaches can provide evidence-based support at every stage of a child's life, we can help reverse this growing epidemic and create a healthier future for the next generation," said Dr. Thea Runyan, CEO and Founder of the Pediatric Health Coach Academy and Consulting Health Scientist for the CDC.

Enrollment for PHCA's February 2026 cohort is now open. Visit [pediatrichealthcoaching.com](https://pediatrichealthcoaching.com) to apply, and stay tuned for additional 2026 cohort dates.

## About Pediatric Health Coach Academy

The Pediatric Health Coach Academy (PHCA) trains health coaches to help children, teens, and families build lasting healthy habits. Founded by leading health experts, Dr. Thea Runyan and Dr. Arielle Levi, PHCA combines public health expertise, behavior change science, and coach training to deliver real-world, results-driven programs. PHCA's training is grounded in evidence and designed to be flexible, accessible, and supportive, equipping participants from clinical, health coaching, or general wellness backgrounds with the skills and confidence to create meaningful, lasting change. PHCA is the only program approved by the National Board for Health & Wellness Coaching that meets all national standards while specializing in coaching for children, teens, and families.

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