

community groups, and teaches children about the importance of healthy nutrition and exercise. This Fall [2004], we reached nearly 600 kids, and plan to expand the programme in 2005 to incorporate over 1,600 kids". Obesity is associated with high blood pressure and diabetes—two leading causes of kidney damage.

An analysis of the HSCNetwork International database of 24,000 health campaigners also reveals that as many as 800 groups worldwide (or 3% of the database) are not specialised in any disease area, but instead dedicate some or all of their time and effort to issues of children’s lifestyle and the prevention of various conditions, including obesity.

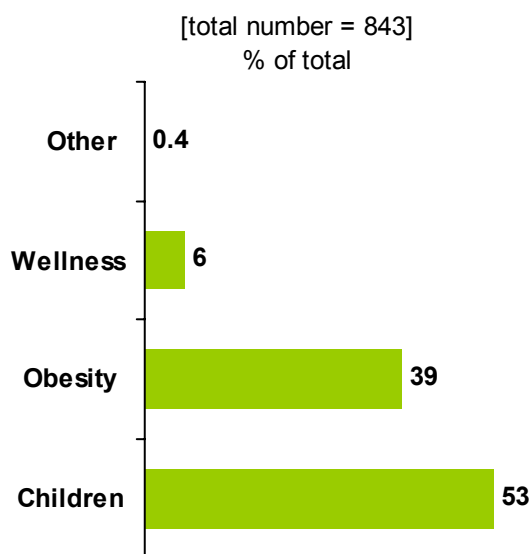
Most of these non disease-oriented health NGOs are based in the US, where the anti childhood-obesity movement has become strongest [see table on next page]. One example of

such a group is [America on the Move \(AOM\)](http://www.americaonthemove.org) [http://www.americaonthemove.org], a national organisation that hopes to improve the health and quality of life of individuals and communities by focusing on a preventive approach, and by encouraging schools to take part in its activities.

Other notable examples from outside the US include:

- [Early Childhood Australia](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au) [http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au] a children’s group that has published articles in its newsletter about the dangers of childhood obesity and the need for prevention, and
- the UK-based [Sustain](http://www.sustainweb.org) [http://www.sustainweb.org], a campaigner that focuses on food policy issues, has promoted a Children’s Food Bill to prohibit the gratuitous promotion of junk food to young people, and encourages better eating habits among the young.

**Specialities of non disease-oriented health campaigners that dedicate part or all of their activities to childhood obesity**



Source: HSCNews International, 2005

To get an idea of the thoughts of health campaigning groups on the subject of childhood obesity, *HSCNews international* conducted telephone interviews during April 2005 with six high-profile health campaigners from around the world. Five were associated with disease-based patient organisations. The individual from the US represented an alliance of health stakeholders that concentrated exclusively on childhood obesity. Some of the six organisations were spearheaded by doctors, rather than by patients or consumers. These medical professionals, however, explained during the telephone interviews that they were seeking alliances and partnerships with civic and patient NGOs.

The six were:

- ▶ Christine Walker of the [Chronic Illness Alliance \(CIA\)](#) in Australia
- ▶ Valentina Ocheretenko of the [Ukrainian Diabetes Federation](#);