

It is an election year and conflict and discord is everywhere. In a time when so many are looking for someone who can promise a better economy, a better living and even better healthcare, I find this time to be a reaffirmation of my faith.

As YOUR TITLE/POSITION of the YOUR DENOMINATION/ORGANIZATION, all of the campaign promises and platforms are poignant reminders of the core principles of YOUR RELIGION. While many are just now reacquainting themselves with their morals and standards to find a candidate who fits the bill, the faith community can use this time to challenge ourselves. Are we serving others as we should? Are we lights in our communities? Are we working for positive change yearround?

ADD SENTENCES HERE THAT TALK ABOUT YOUR SPECIFIC FAITH'S THOUGHTS ON HELPING THE LESS FORTUNATE, ESPECIALLY CHILDREN, AND DOING WHAT'S RIGHT. CITE SCRIPTURES OR BASIC TENETS OF YOUR FAITH THAT SPEAK TO SOCIAL ADVOCACY AND CIVIL RESPONSIBILITY OR BEING THE KEEPER OF YOUR BROTHER.

And while there are many important issues being argued in televised debates and around kitchen tables, I believe that few are as urgent or more closely aligned with these basic principles of our faith than the fight to end childhood obesity.

Childhood obesity has risen dramatically in the past three decades. As a result, children born today may actually live shorter lives than their parents - the first time this has occurred in modern times. The economy is reeling from the staggering human and economic costs of the epidemic, and the country continues to wait for the answer. However, around an issue like this one that affects all children, it is critical that we find practical solutions and fast.

As a member of Faith United to End Childhood Obesity, I support a joint initiative of 33 faith groups that range from XXXXX to XXXXX. We are united behind the support of policy change that will curb trends in childhood obesity and close the disparity gaps that exist between low- and middle/high-income children.

The first policy change we recommend is that every state and every governor implement Targeted Coordinated School Health (TCSH), regardless of political affiliations or agendas. TCSH is a program that works in all schools, in part by improving access to healthy foods and increasing gym and physical education. An affordable first step to tackle childhood obesity, TCSH is based on research and a model developed by the Centers for Disease Control so we know it works. It empowers local leaders like teachers and parents and works with nonprofits, faith groups, and businesses. This kind of local connection means neighborhoods can take initiative to help their own children, effectively giving them control over their own destinies. But today, Tennessee is the only state that's funding and implementing statewide.

We of different faiths, philosophies, and politics have come together for our children and we implore our politicians to do the same. This is our opportunity to do more than pray. Let's put our faith to work and support powerful, lasting change that will protect our children's futures and illustrate the core belief of any and all faiths: to love.

Learn more about Targeted Coordinated School Health and Save the Children's Campaign for Healthy Kids at campaignforhealthykids.org, ask your leaders to adopt it, and join the fight to end the epidemic of child obesity. There are few other issues as important or precious.