

PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHY

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Kristen A. Copeland, MD, is a general pediatrician and a child health researcher. Her research interests are in early education settings—how the child care environment affects children's health. In the past she has focused on child care illness policies and the temporary exclusion of children from child care settings due to illness. She studied how exclusion decisions are influenced by personal beliefs and whether they comply with national guidelines. Her research has been published in peer-reviewed literature and covered extensively by the press, including *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *CNN*, and *Parents Magazine*.

More recently, Dr. Copeland has become interested in the opportunities child care settings offer for disease prevention and health promotion, in particular for preventing childhood obesity. Her research, funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, will identify the key aspects of the child care center environment—such as physical activity policies, amount and design of playground facilities, menu content, and staff attitudes and behavior that effectively promote children's physical activity and a balanced dietary intake. The goal of her research is to produce new knowledge that can inform the development of evidence-based policies and practices for child care centers that promote active play, improve children's diets and foster the development of lifelong healthy habits.

Originally from Raleigh, North Carolina, Dr. Copeland attained her bachelor's degree in Houston, Texas at Rice University, double majoring in French and the Social Studies of Science, Technology, and Medicine. She earned her M.D. from the University of Alabama in Birmingham. She completed a pediatrics residency at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in 2002 and pursued further training in public health and health services research as a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, Maryland. She returned