

Safe kids Healthy kids Happy kids

More News About Childhood Obesity

New studies help parents understand the rising problem of childhood obesity. Obesity continues to affect one out of every three U.S. children and teens. Four to five million U.S. youth are overweight. Obese children will most likely face obesity as adults.

Obese kids are at risk for a number of health problems. Many are unhappy, stressed and socially isolated. They are more likely to be involved in bullying. Doctors at Children's Hospital in New York City report that obese kids are more likely to have early degeneration of the spine.



themselves regularly. They drank water and ate more fruits and vegetables. They also avoided junk food and drank less soda.

This study showed that children can lose weight and maintain weight loss. They did not need a magic solution, a fad diet or pills. *Healthy diet and exercise* aided the weight loss effort.

What is the cause of childhood obesity? New data *suggests* that a lack of exercise is **not** to blame for childhood obesity. In the past 20 years, children have become heavier, yet their physical activities have not changed much. **Studies suggest that unhealthy diets may be to blame for excess weight.**

Children eat like their parents. A California study shows that teens are more likely to eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day if their parents do. Kids whose parents drink soda every day are 40% more likely to drink soda daily. If parents eat fast food, kids are more likely to eat fast food.

In a weight control study, 62 teens lost weight. Sixty-eight did not. Teens that lost weight increased their exercise, walked more, climbed stairs and weighed

What will help kids lose weight? Parents can support kids in their weight loss effort. They can:

- *Make healthy eating a family lifestyle change.*
- Start with small changes.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Buy less high fat and junk food.
- Try eating less food, more often. Healthy snacks may help.
- Exercise daily. Choose a variety of exercise activities.
- Weigh regularly.
- Avoid fad diets.

Parents who focus on healthy eating and exercise teach their children to be healthy. A healthy weight is the result.

Brought to you by Parent Help Line and St. John's Children's Hospital



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1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
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