

We are all concerned about our children and doing what's best for them.

We want them to know that they are loved no matter what. Childhood obesity is a subject that many families struggle to address because they are unsure of how they should talk to their children about the issue and they may not know when to talk with their family physician.

This guide is meant to provide physicians and parents with resources to help “build healthy kids.”

## HEALTHY KIDS

### Addressing childhood overweight and obesity is important.

There is a proven relationship between childhood obesity and lifelong weight and related medical problems. Consider these facts. More than 15 percent of all school children are considered obese or overweight. Overweight teens have a 70 percent chance of becoming overweight or obese adults, and obese children are three times more likely to suffer from high blood pressure. Eighty-five percent of children who have Type 2 diabetes are overweight or obese and have a significant risk for complications early in adulthood.

### Why?

Studies have shown that the rise of childhood overweight and obesity in the United States is directly related to increased caloric intake and physical inactivity.

*DID YOU KNOW?  
Children spend an average of three  
hours each day watching TV or  
playing computer games.*

### What can you do?

There are positive steps that families can take to foster healthy eating, physical activity and achieving and maintaining a healthy weight.

#### Eat Breakfast Every Day.

Studies show that breakfast is an essential meal of the day because it helps the body and mind get off to a good start. This is especially important for children so that they can be prepared to perform well at school.

#### Eat Meals Together.

Taking time to sit down and share meals together regularly provides quality time to talk with your children and stay involved.

#### Provide a Wide Variety of Foods.

A diet that includes a wide variety of foods, especially fruits and vegetables, is full of essential vitamins and minerals. And, the variety encourages children to try new things.

#### Make Time for Physical Activity.

Regular physical activity helps build healthy bodies and self-esteem.

#### Be a Good Role Model.

Your children look to you as an example.

### Snacking

Snacking is an important part of healthy eating for children. By limiting unhealthy foods in your home and making healthy snacks easily accessible, you and your children will be able to learn and make healthy choices. For a list of healthy snack options, refer to "Healthy Snacking for Children" in this publication.

### General Recommendations for Healthy Eating:

- Increase intake of fruit and vegetables.
- Use lower fat alternatives.  
Avoid fried foods and added fats like margarine, mayo or dressings.
- Limit sugary foods and beverages. If sugar is in the top three ingredients, use this food in moderation.
- Encourage healthy snacks.
- Pay attention to serving sizes.
- Increase activity and limit time in front of the TV and video/computer games.

### Goal Setting

Set healthy and realistic goals. Changes do take time. Allowing your child to grow into his or her current weight can be healthier than pursuing weight loss and it makes the process less stressful. Remember to stay positive and focus on establishing healthy habits; these goals will promote lifetime wellness for your child.

### HCAFHK Committee

Martha Rardin, RD, CD  
Director, Nutrition and  
Dietetics  
Hendricks Regional  
Health  
317.745.3768

Betsey Thompson, RN  
Clinical Nurse Specialist  
Hendricks Regional  
Health  
317.718.8444

Beth Switzer, MS, RD, CD  
Extension Educator,  
Foods & Nutrition  
Purdue Cooperative  
Extension Service,  
Hendricks County  
317.745.9260

Monica Smith, RN, MSN  
Public Health Nurse  
Hendricks County Health  
Department  
317.745.9222

Heather Harris, LMHC,  
NCC  
Child/Adolescent Therapist  
Hamilton Center, Inc.  
317.837.9719

Lori Leyba  
Community Relations  
Coordinator  
Hendricks Regional  
Health  
317.745.8606

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

### GET MOVING, GET FIT, HAVE FUN!

Did you know that for good health, kids need 60 minutes of physical activity most days? While 60 minutes is a great goal, don't worry if it seems like too much to do at one time. Start with 5-10 minute sessions and see how many sessions can be completed during the day.

Encourage kids to get up and get moving rather than spending all their free time glued to the TV. Set a screen time budget. Allot kids one to two hours per day to spend on TV, video games or fun time on the computer. Devise an after-school action plan that includes activities to get kids on their feet and off the couch after school. Encourage kids to move in front of the tube by jogging in place or riding an exercise bike while watching TV. Tune out at meal times to help you and your kids tune into what's going on in each other's lives. This also allows you to focus more on how much you're eating and enjoy your food. Remember: The TV is not a family member. Turn it off and enjoy each other!

Make fitness a family affair. If you have trouble getting your kids up and moving, first take a look at the example you are setting. Be a positive role model by being physically active yourself and displaying a positive attitude that being active is fun and feels good. Provide regular opportunities for the whole family to enjoy physical activity together.

Here's a list of ideas to get your family started:

- Head out for a family walk or bike ride each evening after dinner
- Spend a weekend afternoon roller-skating, in-line skating or playing touch football
- Team up to do housework or yard work
- Visit walking-friendly places such as museums and zoos
- Practice sports such as basketball, baseball or soccer with the kids
- Take tennis or golf lessons together or go to community swim sessions
- Participate as a family team in a charity fun run, fun walk or car wash
- Purchase a family membership at the community recreation center, YMCA or health club  
Schedule family trips there a few times each week
- Walk the dog or offer to walk the neighbor's dog
- Rake leaves, pull weeds or sweep the sidewalk

Need some more suggestions for getting your child moving? Send them outside to:

- Walk to a friend's house that's close
- Play tag
- In-line skate
- Practice the Hula-Hoop
- Jog around the block
- Play Frisbee
- Skip rope
- Shoot baskets in the driveway
- Kick a soccer ball
- Hit a tennis ball against the wall

Stuck inside? Try these:

- Blow up a balloon and play volleyball
- Do part of an exercise tape
- Ride an exercise bike
- Turn on your favorite music and dance
- Do inside chores like vacuuming, dusting or emptying the garbage
- Do gymnastics or tumbling
- Play Twister

## HEALTHY SNACKING

### HEALTHY SNACKING FOR CHILDREN

Snacking can be an important part of a child's diet. It is a good time to increase nutrient intake by including foods from the five major food groups. A good snack can be healthy, fun to eat, tasty and quick and easy to make. Below are some ideas for healthy snacking at home.

- Children need more energy and nutrients as they grow. It is important to choose healthy foods to be sure they are not filling up on low nutrient foods.
- Snacking can help round out their diets by including foods from all food groups daily.
- Try to offer foods from at least two of the five major food groups at each snack.
- Plan snacks halfway between meals so they have an appetite at meals.
- Limit high sugar drinks. Children may fill up on these and not want to eat.
- School-aged children are usually hungry after school and may benefit from a snack at this time.
- Have healthy food in the house and make it easy to get to.
- Allow sweet treats at times, but limit how often they are offered.
- Cut up fruit and vegetables ahead of time so they are ready to grab.
- Pack snacks in individual containers instead of eating out of a large bag or box.
- Have your children join you in food preparation. Children enjoy helping in the kitchen. They are often more likely to eat foods that they help prepare.
- Cut foods into shapes or use cookie cutters to shape foods.
- Avoid offering food as a reward for good behavior.
- Excessive eating between meals of high sugar or fat foods can lead to obesity.
- If your child is overweight, encourage increase in physical activity and healthy food choices. Do not cut back drastically on food intake. Growing children need those nutrients for growth and development.
- Parents should be good role models and have healthy snacks and meals themselves.
- Teach your children early to eat healthy snacks. What you teach them now will last a lifetime.

### Ideas for Healthy Snacks

- Fresh fruit
- Snack-sized yogurt (like Yoplait Yumsters or Go-Gurt)
- Animal crackers and milk
- Frozen berries, slices of melon or banana
- Half ham sandwich on whole wheat bread
- Raw vegetables with cottage cheese or low fat dressing
- Ready-to-eat cereal in portable containers, dry or with low fat or nonfat milk
- Half a hard-boiled egg
- Pudding
- Graham cracker with peanut butter
- Yogurt smoothie
- Peanut butter and fruit sandwich (try bananas, apples or raisins)
- Tortilla with refried beans, cheese, shredded lettuce and salsa
- Rice cakes topped with hummus or peanut butter
- Ants on a log (fill celery with peanut butter or cream cheese and place raisins along the top)
- Snack kebobs (raw vegetables or fruit on a pretzel stick)
- Low fat string cheese

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Clinical Nurse Specialist  
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Extension Service,  
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Community Relations  
Coordinator  
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Health  
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## EMOTIONAL ISSUES

### **DID YOU KNOW...**

- Overweight and obese children and teenagers suffer negative assumptions about their character as well as their appearance
- People assume that overweight people are lazy, unclean and have no feelings
- Children who have significant behavior problems are nearly 3 times as likely as other children to be overweight and are about 5 times more likely to become overweight later in life
- Children who are depressed are often less active, or may console themselves with food, which may set them up for weight gain
- Overweight children may develop anxieties or social interaction problems because of self-consciousness or teasing about their weight
- There is a clear association between obesity and depression and anxiety disorders among children and teens; and that untreated depression is both the cause and effect of obesity
- A University of Minnesota study found that 26% of teens who were teased about weight at school and home reported they had considered suicide and 9% had attempted it

### **Childhood Obesity Results in the Following Challenges for Youth**

#### Self-Esteem Issues

- Obese boys and girls have significantly lower self-esteem than non-obese peers at age 14
- Obese adolescents with esteem problems are more likely to engage in risky behaviors such as smoking and drinking alcohol
- Obesity can cause feelings of sadness, loneliness and nervousness

#### Quality of Life

- A 2003 study found that obese children rated their quality of life as low as those of young cancer patients on chemotherapy
- Teasing at school, difficulties playing sports, fatigue, sleep apnea and other obesity-linked problems severely affected the well-being of obese children
- Parents of obese children rated their child's well-being even lower than ratings of the children

#### Depression

- Poor self-esteem can result in feelings of depression and social isolation

### **Behavior Modification**

Successful mental health treatment of childhood obesity should include:

The therapist treating this disorder must have the ability to teach behavior modification principles to children and their parents and partner with other healthcare professionals. Treatment should also address the emotional and behavioral symptoms that may result from obesity. Group treatment is often recommended, but individual therapy can be just as effective.

#### Tips for Parents:

Avoid using food as rewards for good behavior. Trips to the park and special outings with Mom or Dad (especially if it includes physical activity) are much more meaningful and effective in motivating children.

Be a good role model for your children. Let them see you eating healthy and make exercise a regular part of your routine.

## RESOURCES

### WEBSITES

Hendricks Regional Health  
[www.hendricksregional.org](http://www.hendricksregional.org)

Action For Healthy Kids  
[www.actionforhealthykids.org](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org)

Activate (Activities for kids and information for parents)  
[www.kidnetic.com](http://www.kidnetic.com)

American Dietetic Association  
[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)

American Academy of Pediatrics  
[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

American Academy of Family Physicians (Links for parent, teens and kids)  
[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)

Children Today (Nutrition and health link)  
[www.childrentoday.com/resources](http://www.childrentoday.com/resources)

Dole Five-A-Day Campaign (Games for kids and information for parents)  
[www.dole5aday.com](http://www.dole5aday.com)

Eat Smart, Move More  
[www.eatsmartmovemoreenc.com](http://www.eatsmartmovemoreenc.com)

Food and Nutrition Information Center  
[www.nal.usda.gov/fnic](http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic)

Games Kids Play  
[www.gameskidsplay.net](http://www.gameskidsplay.net)

Get Active Stay Active  
[www.getactivestayactive.com/](http://www.getactivestayactive.com/)

Get Kids in Action  
[www.getkidsinaction.org](http://www.getkidsinaction.org)

Helping Your Overweight Child  
[www.win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/over\\_child.htm](http://www.win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/over_child.htm)

InShape Indiana  
[www.inshape.in.gov](http://www.inshape.in.gov)

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Community Relations  
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Health  
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## RESOURCES (continued)

### WEBSITES

Keep Kids Healthy  
[www.keepkidshealthy.com](http://www.keepkidshealthy.com)

Log It! Elementary School Program  
[www.peclogit.org/logit.asp](http://www.peclogit.org/logit.asp)

We Can! Families Finding Balance  
<http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov>

Take Ten! Classroom Based Physical Activity Program  
[www.take10.net/](http://www.take10.net/)

Nutrition and Dairy Council (Parents, kids and educators)  
[www.nutritionexplorations.org](http://www.nutritionexplorations.org)

Spark Early Childhood Physical Activity Program  
[www.sparkpe.org/programEarlyChildhood.jsp](http://www.sparkpe.org/programEarlyChildhood.jsp)

US Department of Agriculture (Team Nutrition)  
[www.fns.usda.gov/tn](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn)

### BOOKS

*American Academy of Pediatrics Guide to Your Child's Nutrition*,  
William Dietz and Loraine Stern, American Academy of Pediatrics, 1999.

*Child of Mine: Feeding with Love and Good Sense*, Ellyn Satter, Bull Publishing, 2000.

*Your Child's Weight Helping Without Harming: Birth Through Adolescence*,  
Ellyn Satter, Kelcy Press, 2005

*Healthy Foods, Healthy Kids*, Elizabeth Ward, Adams Media Corporation, 2002.

*How to Get Your Kid to Eat...But Not Too Much: From Birth to Adolescence*,  
Ellyn Satter, Bull Publishing, 2001.

*If Your Child Is Overweight: A Guide for Parents*,  
Susan Kosharek, 2nd Edition, American Dietetic Association, 2003.

*Raising Happy, Healthy, Weight-Wise Kids*,  
Judy Toews and Nicole Parton, Sarasota Press, 2001.

*Real Kids Come In All Sizes: 10 Essentials Lessons to Build Your Child's Esteem*,  
Kathy Kater, Broadway Books, 2005.

*Food, Fun 'n Fitness: Designing Healthy Lifestyles for Our Children*,  
Mary Friesz, Designs for Healthy Lifestyle, 2002.

*Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family*, Ellyn Satter, Bull Publishing, 1999.

## RESOURCES (continued)

### COOKBOOKS FOR BUSY FAMILIES

*5 Ingredient 15 Minute Cookbook: Cooking Light*,  
Anne Chappell Cain, Oxmoor House 1999.

*Quick Meals for Healthy Kids and Busy Parents: Wholesome Family Recipes in 30 Minutes or Less from Three Child Nutrition Experts*,  
S. Nissenberg, M. Bogle, and A. Wright.

*Meal Solutions for Busy People*, Shirley Chambers and Sharon Smalling, Memorial Hermann.

*Quick and Healthy Recipes and Ideas*, Brenda J. Ponichtera, 1995.

*Lickety-Split Meals for Health Conscious People on the Go!*, Zonya Foco, 1998.

### PUBLICATION ORDERING INFORMATION

*Encourage Your Child to Be Physically Active* (HE50368)  
American Academy of Pediatrics, 141 Northwest Point Blvd., Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098  
[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

*Better Health and Fitness Through Physical Activity* (HE50090)  
American Academy of Pediatrics, 141 Northwest Point Blvd., Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098  
[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

*Healthy Habits for Healthy Kids: A Nutrition and Activity Guide for Parents*  
American Dietetic Association  
[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org) or [www.unicare.com](http://www.unicare.com)

*Helping Your Overweight Child* (NIH publication #04-4096)  
Weight-control Information Network (WIN), 1 Win Way, Bethesda, MD 20892-3665  
phone (202) 828-1028. Downloadable and copyable.  
[www.niddk.nih.gov/health/nutrit/nutrit.htm](http://www.niddk.nih.gov/health/nutrit/nutrit.htm)

*A Guide for Busy Parents: Making Meals Matter for Your Young Child*  
Dairy Council of California  
[www.dairycouncilofca.org](http://www.dairycouncilofca.org)

*Healthy Habits for Healthy Kids* (DC91)  
Washington State Dairy Council, 4201 198th St. SW, Lynnwood, WA 98036  
phone (425) 744-1616, fax (425) 670-1222  
[www.eatsmart.org](http://www.eatsmart.org)

*MyPyramid for Kids - Tips for Families* (CNPP-18)  
Purdue Extension Media Distribution Center  
phone (888) 398-4636, email [media.order@purdue.edu](mailto:media.order@purdue.edu)

*BMI Wheel*  
Gerber Professional Information Line, phone (800) 595-0324, fax (231) 928-2408

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## PARKS AND RECREATION

### Avon

**Avon Town Park - 6570 E US Hwy 36, 272-0948, [www.avongov.org/recreation](http://www.avongov.org/recreation)**  
(70 acres) Fishing, picnic tables, paved multi-use trail, unpaved nature trails, greenway, playground.

**Burnett Woods Nature Preserve - CR 100 S east of Dan Jones Rd.**  
(50 acres) Marked nature trail.

**Washington Township Community Park - 115 S CR 575 E (off E US Hwy 36), 745-0785, [www.washingtontwpparks.org](http://www.washingtontwpparks.org)**  
(75 acres) Basketball, fishing pond, interpretive trails, mountain bike trails, playground, horseshoe pit, sand volleyball, picnic shelters, gazebo.

### Brownsburg

**Brownsburg Parks Department, 858-4172, [www.brownsburgparks.com](http://www.brownsburgparks.com)**

**Arbuckle Acres - SR 267 north of railroad tracks**  
(68 acres) Little league baseball, lighted basketball, horseshoes, lighted tennis courts, volleyball, 1.3 mile paved walking trail, ADA-accessible playground, picnic shelters, picnic tables, grills.

**Brownsburg Community Center - 111 Eastern Ave.**  
Workout room, aerobics room, basketball, massage therapy, game room that may be reserved for parties, conference rooms, special classes and events.

**Lincoln Township Park - SW corner of US Hwy 136 and CR 550 E**  
(10 acres) Baseball/softball field, soccer field, paved walking trail.

**Stephens Park - 610 S Stephens Dr. off W Tilden Rd.**  
(4 acres) Picnic shelter, playground, sand volleyball, grills.

**Vic Overman Sportsfield Park - NE corner of Odell St. and Sycamore Dr.**  
(17 acres) Junior football, girls softball, playground, two covered picnic tables.

**Williams Park - 940 S Locust Lane**  
(77 acres) 12,000 square foot "Blast-Off" playground area, basketball court, paved walking trail, three tier rentable gazebo with kitchen, picnic shelters.

### Danville

**Danville Parks Department, 745-3015, [www.danvilleindiana.org/recreation/](http://www.danvilleindiana.org/recreation/)**

**Blanton Woods Nature Park - 625 N. Washington St.**  
(50 acres) Rentable conference center, environmental education, nature trails, bird watching, shelter house.

**Ellis Park - 600 E Main St.**  
(50 acres) Amphitheater, little league baseball, basketball, football, horseshoes, large "Playscape" playground, softball, swimming pool and water park, clay tennis courts, memorial gardens, rentable gazebo, picnic shelters, train station conference room, walking trail to Blanton Woods Nature Park.

## PARKS AND RECREATION (Continued)

### North Salem

**Hendricks County Park and Recreation Board, 718-5495, [www.hendrickscountyparks.org](http://www.hendrickscountyparks.org)**

#### McCloud Nature Park - 8518 N. Hughes Rd.

(230 acres) Nature park and wildlife habitat with walking and hiking trails, handicapped accessible trail, canoeing, kayaking, fishing. Nature Center, (765)676-5437.

### Plainfield

**Plainfield Parks Department, 838-0655, [www.town.plainfield.in.us/parks](http://www.town.plainfield.in.us/parks)**

#### Anderson Park - 1050 S Center St.

(7 acres) Pavilion, playground, skate/skateboard park for ages 11 and up.

#### Franklin Park - NW corner of N Mill and Lincoln St.

(35 acres) Baseball, exercise stations, horseshoes, volleyball, playground, lighted tennis courts, picnic shelters.

#### Friendship Gardens - Center St. and Stafford Rd.

(13 acres) Gazebo pavilion seats 100 or 75 with tables, strolling gardens, fountain waterfall.

#### Hummel Park - 1500 S Center St., 839-9121

(200 acres) Activity building, baseball/softball pavilions, basketball, fishing, sand volleyball, soccer field, playground, 3.5 miles of paved trails, nature trails, picnic shelters, gazebos, amphitheater, community center.

#### Plainfield Recreation/Aquatic Center - 651 Vestal Rd., 538-7665

Weight room, gymnasium, indoor walking track, media center, meeting rooms, indoor playland, indoor pool, outdoor pool and water park.

#### Swinford Park - 1007 Longfellow Lane, south of Plainfield High School

(25 acres) Picnic shelter, playground, lighted softball, lighted tennis courts, sand volleyball, picnic shelter.

### Pittsboro 892-3598 or 989-3599

#### Pittsboro Town Park - center of town off US 136

(15 acres) Basketball, shelter houses with grills, kitchen, baseball/softball, soccer field, walking trail with stretching equipment, playground including tot lot, community building, memorial hall.

#### Scott Park - Meridian and Scott Streets

(4 acres) Little League baseball diamond, basketball, shelter house, grills, playground.

### Additional Parks and Recreation

Indianapolis Parks  
[www.indyparks.org](http://www.indyparks.org)

Indiana State Parks  
[www.in.gov/dnr](http://www.in.gov/dnr)

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