

Want more information?

For more information about childhood obesity and how to fight the global epidemic, check out the following helpful websites:



- Alliance for a Healthier Generation:

www.healthiergeneration.org

- Centers for Disease Control:

www.cdc.gov/obesity/

- Obesity Society:

www.obesity.org/

- Supersized kids:

www.supersizedkids.com

- Healthier Generation:

www.healthiergeneration.org

Together we can make a difference!



Shippensburg University

1071 Old Main Drive
Shippensburg, PA 17257

Phone: 555-555-5555

Fax: 555-555-5555

E-mail: fightchildhoodobesity@example.com

Parent information
on how to fight the
global epidemic

What YOU can do!

How to Prevent Childhood Obesity



By Leah McDermott

What are the statistics?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), childhood obesity is becoming a global epidemic, especially in the United States. Childhood and adolescent BMIs (Body Mass Indexes) are at an all-time high, according to several research studies conducted through the CDC.

In 2008, 9.5% of infants and toddlers were ranked in the 95th percentile for weight, showing that the problem of overweight and obese children is starting at extremely young ages. For children and adolescents ages 2-19, 12% were at or above the 97th percentile, 17% were at or above the 95th percentile, and 32% were at or above the 85th percentile. These trends show a growing need for reform and education.

High BMI in children is a public health concern because children that are obese often stay this way, becoming obese adults, which are then prone to develop disorders such as high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and many types of cancer.



Why is this happening?

Scientists, doctors, and child development researchers are consistently looking for factors in our environments that are contributing to the overwhelming amount of children that are overweight or obese. Some of the main factors that are shown to contribute to this epidemic are:



Poor food choices are a main contributor to childhood obesity.

- *Reduced activity levels*— With the time that students spend watching TV, playing video games, combined with less-and-less P.E. time in schools, children are not exercising as much as they should.
- *Increased consumption of foods that are higher in fat and sugar*— Today's children eat almost triple the amount of snack foods than children just 20 years ago. In addition to foods, soft drink consumption in children and adolescents has doubled in the past two decades.
- *Targeted marketing and advertising campaigns*— To make matters worse, many fast food companies target students in their advertising campaigns. In addition, many schools and after-school programs provide soft drinks and unhealthy snacks to students.

What can I do?

As a parent, you are the main influence in your child's life! Here are some steps that you can take to prevent childhood obesity:

- *Don't reward children with food*— Using candy and snack as rewards encourage bad habits. Find other ways to celebrate good events!
- *Practice what you preach*— If you are practicing healthy habits, it is easier to teach your children to do the same. Exercise with your child and get them excited about eating healthy foods!
- *Encourage physical activities*— Find physical activities that your child enjoys and promote them! Better yet, do them WITH your child!
- *Limit TV, video game, and computer time.*
- *Help develop a positive self-image*— Always focus on positives instead of negatives. Everyone enjoys being praised for a job well done!
- *Be an advocate for healthy children*— Encourage your child's school district to offer healthy food choices on the lunch and snack menu.

