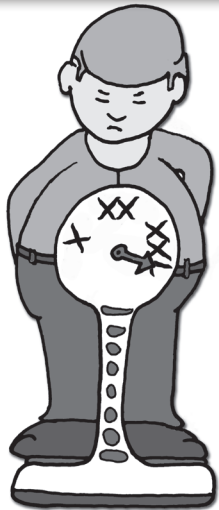
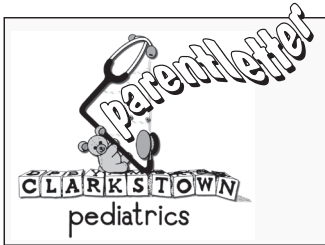
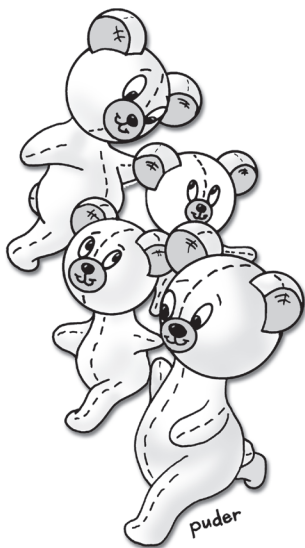


Generation **XXL** an obesity epidemic...



Encourage a healthy lifestyle, not an obsession with weight!



Exercise as a family!

Today there are twice as many overweight children as there were 25 years ago. One of every five children and teenagers is now obese! The risk of heart disease, colon cancer, arthritis, gallbladder disease, hypertension, and sleep apnea are increased for an obese child. If this epidemic continues, **generation xxl** may have a shorter life expectancy than their parents in spite of modern medical care. Obese children tend to have poorer self-esteem and may face discrimination.

Parents should **not** put a child with a weight problem on a “diet”. The real solution requires lifestyle changes for the whole family. Crash diets and fad diets don’t work and are dangerous. Diet medication is even more dangerous. We want to promote a healthy lifestyle, not an obsession with weight. Praise, love and cherish your child, and never tie acceptance to body size! Don't compare an overweight child to siblings or other children. So what can parents do?

eat as a family:

Children learn from their parents' example. When a family sits down for a meal together (with the TV off) parents also need to have healthy eating habits. Put the fork down between bites to slow down the pace of eating!

SPECIAL FAMILY TIMES: WITHOUT FOOD!

Make sure your child's fondest childhood memories are not associated with eating and “just sitting”! Please don't use food as a reward!

exercise, exercise, exercise!!!

generation xxl does not exercise enough! Without regular exercise, parents will fail to manage their children's obesity. Parents must first set a good example through their own regular exercise, and we encourage family exercise whenever possible. The family that goes for walks together, cycles together, etc. will help children learn to enjoy exercise! Make daily chores a part of your exercise (park the car further away from the store and walk). Exercise is not a punishment!

Children should try multiple different activities, and there is no one best exercise. Some like competitive sports, some do not. Children should find activities that they enjoy during every season. And change the routine so they don't get bored!

DON'T SKIP MEALS OR SNACKS:

Eat three meals a day and a snack between meals. It's not just eating that makes us gain weight. It's what and where we eat and drink, and portion size that really counts.

DON'T FORGET BREAKFAST!

Children who eat breakfast have better school attendance, higher

scores, and fewer weight issues! Cereal, low fat milk or yogurt, fruit, or whole wheat toast make a great start. Yes three snacks a day between meals helps keep the “engine running” so that you are not “starved” before the next meal. Try to eat more fruits and vegetables (2-4 servings of fruits and 3-5 servings of vegetables) and more fiber. Put down the potato chips and have a piece of fruit or peanut butter (1 tablespoon is a serving size), celery or popcorn (hold the butter please).

Avoid XXL portions:

Be aware of portion size and balanced meals. We are a "supersized" nation. If your family tends to eat out often, be aware restaurant portion sizes are generally too large. It is human nature to eat more when offered more. Cut the meal in half immediately and ask for a doggy bag. Cut down the amount of fried foods and saturated fats in your meal. Try fish, beans or other sources of protein instead of red meat at least once a week. Don't be afraid to introduce your child to different foods.

Drinks Matter:

Keep juice, sports drinks (*Gatorade*, etc.), and soda intake to a minimum. Water is the best beverage, and is our first choice. We like drinks flavored with **nutrasweet** for those who don't like plain water. **Nutrasweet** is safe for children! Although juice is “natural” and may provide vitamin C, it is nothing more than sugar water (fructose). Limit the juice boxes your child drinks (if your child does drink them, choose calcium fortified drinks). For the occasional soda, we recommend diet, caffeine free. *Gatorade* is high in calories and should only be used during intense physical exercise. We encourage milk: 1% or skim.

Television and Computers:

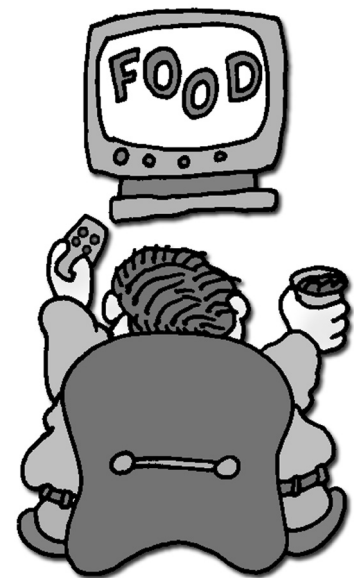
Television, computer games, and video games must be limited. With extra hours of TV children watch, the heavier they get. Never use TV as a babysitter. Try to limit TV to less than an hour daily. Please don't eat in front of the TV! The majority of commercials during children's shows promote sugary foods. TV eating or “grazing” teaches eating even when not hungry. We discourage TV/computers in a child's bedroom.

Pack Your Child's School Lunch:

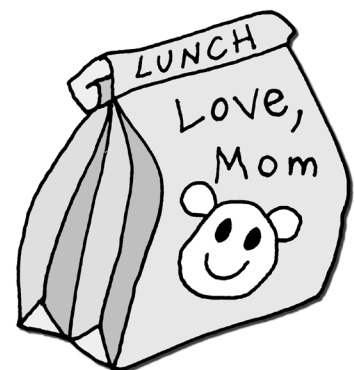
We need to work with our schools to provide healthier choices for school lunches. We also need to campaign for healthier choices in school vending machines. We support legislation to limit unhealthy foods in the school cafeteria.

Website Resources:

<http://www.mypyramid.gov> Food Guide Pyramid for Children.
www.kidnetic.com Kids program for teaching healthy lifestyles.



Nutrasweet
IS safe
for children!



by Doug Puder, MD and Susan Juechter, RD
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