

Is Your Child On The Road to Obesity? 4 Mistakes You Can Fix Now

Everywhere you look, you'll see the signs of an obesity epidemic in the United States. Adults struggling with their weight, levering themselves into and out of cars. Many so morbidly obese that they'll circle a parking lot four or five times before parking rather than be forced to walk an extra hundred feet.

In all honesty, we can not totally place the blame for this on the individuals themselves. Several studies have shown that for a number of people, their chemical and genetic makeup aide in their body's ability to process certain fats. Sure being 100 plus pounds over weight might have been good in the Ice Age but today this is simply not the case.

This becomes even clearer when we witness the growing problem of children with obesity. Nutrition counselors agree that for every 3 to 5 pounds a child is over their normal weight level before they reach puberty, that child will become on average 15 to 30 pounds before they reach the age of thirty. To add to this, Type II diabetes is now become one of the fastest growing diseases among teens.

At the ages of 12 - 16 is when most young girls and boys are self conscious about their bodies. Even "normal looking" kids get teased. If we allow our children to continue down a slippery slope toward obesity, we are setting them up for a very difficult childhood. Parents must be told that healthy eating habits and not Slimfast diet shakes or Medifast meals are the key to weight loss and a nutritious lifestyle.

The good news is that this trend can be stopped. In fact, you may be surprised at the simple solution.

Look back at your younger days and remember what you did as a kid before the electronic babysitters came on the scene. If you recall this time in your life, you will more than likely remember going to the park with friends, playing kick ball or soccer.

If you felt tired or felt dehydrated, you immediately reached for a glass of water or milk. Sweets were a treat for good behavior rather than your main course. Snacks did not come prepackaged but rather apples, oranges and bananas were your choice.

While the fast food outlets might not want you to know this, many parents are successfully teaching their kids to make healthy eating decisions. Today however, water too many of our youth is like the library, they've heard about it but never fully experienced it. Listen up parents. Sodas, juices or energy drinks are not a substitute for water. When properly hydrated, hunger pangs were shown to decrease significantly compared to those individuals who consumed no water.

Another simple trick is to schedule snack times along with family style meals. As an example, rather than Johnny eating a snack whenever he is bored, you establish certain times during the day when he will have a snack and what his choices are. By doing this early, it minimizes the impulse eating and helps children make proper choices.

Staying physically active is an absolute necessity. Children are usually mirror images of their parents. If you as a parent live a sedentary life, the chances of your child duplicating your example are very high. If you have little league teams in your town, encourage your children to participate. Not all kids are athletic but all kids need to be active. In addition, set aside at least one day in the week where the entire family is physically active together. It could be a walk in the park or playing tag in the backyard.

Have you ever heard the acronym "WYSIWYG"? It stands for "What You See Is What You Get". Well, that is the reality your children are faced with on a daily basis. They will never raise their standards of healthy living beyond that of your own. If you are serious about having an impact on their lives, ask yourself this question, what can I do today that will demonstrate to my family that I am committed to living a long and fruitful life.

About the Author

Dorothy Weatherbush is a child advocate committed to ending [childhood obesity](#). She is the author of several articles exposing the hidden dangers behind many of the most [respected diet programs](#) around.

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