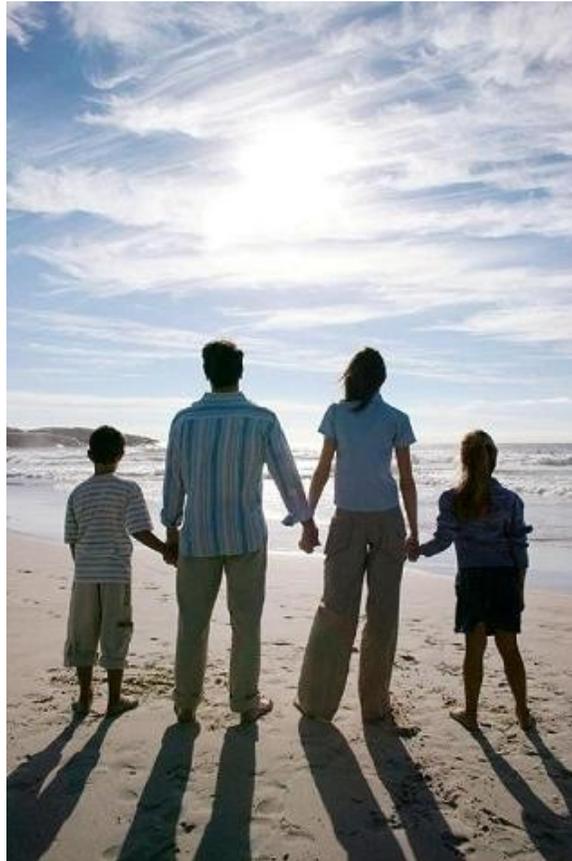


Helping Your Kids Grow Up Healthy Manual

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Who Is To Blame For An Overweight Child?

According to a recent study of over 5,000 families with children ages 4-5, parent's have a major role in their children's health while they grow up. Parents with permissive or no limits on their children and often disengaged were more likely to have overweight or obese children. Those with consistent follow through and instructions and clear limits were less likely to have children with higher BMI's.

This is pretty easy to see when you think about it. What determines your health? Your Habits. Who helps children develop their habits? Their parents.

Starting Early!

Your children develop habits while they are young and continue ingraining those habits throughout their life. Those habits become further ingrained as they get older.

This relationship is so strong that the predictor of obesity in adulthood is often obesity in children. Over half to nearly three-quarters of overweight teenagers will remain heavy or obese as an adult. Only about one-quarter of those in preschool age will remain with the condition into adulthood.

Where to Start

The best place to start is through setting a good example for your children. You can't expect your children to live a health life if Mom or Dad is chowing down on all the junk food you don't want them to eat. Or they see them living an unhealthful lifestyle by being overweight.

Your children's healthy habits start in the home. No matter what age they are, the parents will always be the largest influence on their children's eating habits.

While children may be away for school and out of your immediate control for periods of time, the habits that are with them will go with them.

Foods To Avoid

There are many foods either advertised as healthy or often thought to be health by the general public, but often these are nothing more than sugary mixtures, bars or mixes.

Common foods to avoid: fruit juices, energy bars, sports drinks (pure sugar), granola bars, foods with cartoons on the package are often marketed to taste good and usually not healthful.

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Why It's Important

It's so important to help your kids grow up healthy, not just for health concerns, but for physical, emotional and social as well. Even though it may not be right, weight bias and emotional scaring can be very real when kids are exposed to peers and other influences.

Tips For Parents

1. During pre-teen and early teenage years you don't want to focus on severe calorie restriction or excess weight loss, you want to ingrain those healthful habits to be continue throughout the rest of your child's life.
2. The easiest way to do that is by making it easy on your child – to live a healthy life.
3. For an after school snack rather than setting out a plate of cookies, prepare some cut up vegetables or other health snack. Berries, apples, oranges, bananas, mixed nuts and other grab and go type foods are very easy to have around and much better than those packaged garbage foods.
4. Don't set a lock and key on any treats. It's okay to treat yourself or reward with those not-so-healthy foods, just keep those to the special times or on weekends. It's all about moderation and control – not dictatorship. Having those foods available for your children rather than forced is a better approach and will encourage compliance with all served foods.
5. Exercise and any form of physical activity is also very important. Encouraging activities are often easier and more successful then stressing “exercise sessions”. Even something as taking a family walk or going to the park to play on the equipment is at least something. Playing a sport, going for a swim, riding a bike, any of these are great activities that help burn additional calories.
6. As discussed before: Set An Example. Eat healthier foods in front of your children, turn off the TV and go for a walk with them, maintain a healthy body and healthy appearance. Make sure your children see you doing the same habits that you want them to pick up and maintain throughout life.
7. Have fun with cooking. If your children want to help with cooking or perhaps want to try a new or creative dish don't be the party pooper. Encourage healthy meals and variety in eating.
8. Replace all calorie containing beverages with either water or milk. Often the supposed health or fruit juices are condensed sugar or high-fructose corn syrup which are not healthful nutrients.

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9. Have a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables (celery, carrots, peppers, cucumbers, etc.) available to grab and go either in the fridge or on the counter top. As the rule goes, you can only eat what it there, and you can't eat what isn't there.
10. Create healthful foods that are also high on the taste-o-meter by adding tasty treats such as fruit slices, various nuts or textured vegetables to a regular salad.
11. Have fun with low calorie treats such as: Jello squares with fruit slices.
12. Have healthy cereals around for breakfast with low-fat or skim milk. Good old-fashioned quaker oats are about the best you can get. Other options such as Cheerios, or Wheat Chex are also acceptable and much better than the high sugar cereals with their cartoon counterparts (Quaker Oats with their Quaker Man figure are an exception to this cartoon rule).
13. Focus on addition rather than restriction. Where fast-food restaurants such as McDonald's may not be the best option, it's not the worst thing to have once every other week, just to keep the kids happy.
14. Limit time wasting activities like video games and watching TV. While these activities are okay in moderation excess amounts tend to limit other healthful activities, perhaps taking a walk in the park or any other regular physical activity.

Want More Great Fitness & Nutrition Tips?

For additional nutrition and fitness tips go now to www.SpokaneFitnessCoach.com for a FREE subscription to the Fitness Truths Weekly. The Fitness Truths Weekly is a weekly email newsletter where you'll get the inside scoop on what it really takes to achieve a fit and healthy body.

Each issue is packed with fitness, nutrition, and motivational tips as well as answers to commonly asked questions, to help you succeed on your journey to a better body and a better life!!

As an added bonus you will also get the Special Report: "The Fitness Truth" (\$15 Value), which reveals the 4 critical elements of any successful fitness program that will guarantee you optimal health and a body to be proud of.

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