

Helping Children to be Healthy

The following tips can be used to help families make healthy choices for children:

- 1. Encourage parents to provide lots of opportunities for their children to be active, including having time for free play outdoors. Family walks or dancing to music at home can be fun and healthy.
- 2. Encourage parents to plant vegetables with their child in a garden or to plant herbs like rosemary, thyme, chives, mint, oregano, basil which will grow year round in a window box.
- 3. Encourage families to eat 5 servings of fruit and vegetables each day by having them at home and ready to eat. They can purchase high quality fresh produce at farmers' markets. They can find the nearest farmers' market on the internet at: www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/map.htm If there isn't one nearby, encourage them to try to start one at an area school.
- 4. Encourage families to "clean up" the home environment & get tempting sweets and high fat foods out of the cupboards, and soda, sweets and salty snacks should be "once in awhile" not "everyday" foods.
- 5. Encourage families to limit visits to fast food restaurants to no more than once a week. Suggest to them that if they go to a fast food place, ask for a nutrition chart and order the foods that are the lowest in calories and fat.
- 6. Encourage parents to limit their child's TV and computer time to no more than 2 hours a day.

Obesity Prevention is a Part of Injury Prevention

Using research, education and advocacy the physicians and community leaders who make up the Injury Free Coalition for Kids have developed a rich history of creating healthier, safer communities for children across the country. The Coalition has 43 hospital based, community oriented sites located in 38 cities. It encompasses all of this country's 10 Federal Trauma Regions. The organization began in 1995 with a mission to reduce injuries to children. Because of the difficulty obese children have healing after injuries, their increased susceptibility to injury, and the development of other diseases at early ages the Coalition decided to expand its efforts.

It is bringing the same successful model that prevents injuries throughout the country to the effort to prevent obesity. The Coalition is working alongside trusted partners in each community, increasing access to healthy foods, teaching parents and children how to make better food choices, and helping families incorporate safe physical activity into their daily lives.

○ Injury Free Obesity Prevention Sites:

Atlanta	Indianapolis	Peoria
Birmingham	Jacksonville	Phoenix
DC	Kansas City	Providence
Denver	Lexington	San Diego
Des Moines	Miami	Salt Lake City
Detroit	Minneapolis	Worcester
Harlem		

● RWJF funded Obesity Prevention Sites:

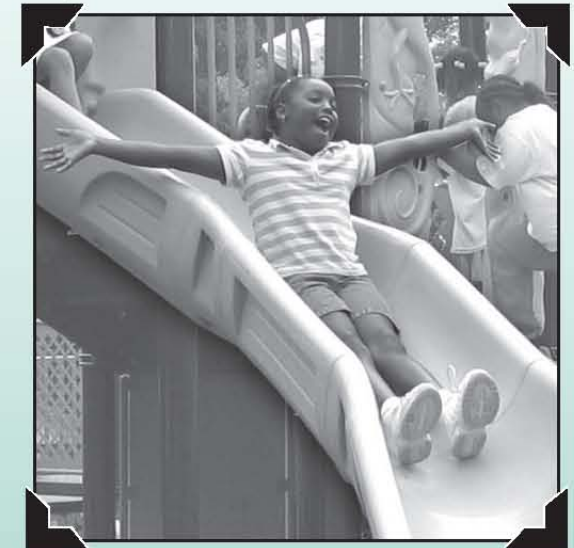
Cincinnati
 Chicago (Children's Memorial Hospital)
 Greenville
 Hartford
 Little Rock
 New York (Children's Hospital of New York)
 Portland
 Seattle



The Injury Free Coalition for Kids is a National Program of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation located in Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health.



Help Families Weigh In with Healthy Choices for Children



It is better to develop good habits as children than to change poor ones as adults.



Measuring Obesity

Doctors and nurses should measure children's height and weight and use that to calculate their BMI (Body Mass Index) and plot this on BMI charts. A high BMI for age (& sex) indicates a risk for high body fat level.



Reasons to weigh in:

- ✓ One out of every three children in the United States is overweight or at risk of becoming overweight.
 - ✓ 14% of 2-5 year olds are overweight
 - ✓ 19% of children ages 6 to 11 are overweight
 - ✓ 17% of teenagers are overweight
- ✓ Obesity rates have doubled among children and tripled among adolescents in the last 20 years.
- ✓ A child's risk of being over weight greatly increases if one of their parents is overweight.
- ✓ Two out of every three adults, 65%, in the United States are overweight or obese.
- ✓ African-American and Hispanic children and adolescents are particularly at risk for becoming overweight and for suffering health related consequences. Type 2 Diabetes in children, which is largely due to obesity, is 62% higher in African American children. Overweight children are more likely to experience depression and low self-esteem, develop asthma, shortness of breath, sleep problems, gallstones, bone and joint problems, and impaired balance.

How Injury Free Addresses Obesity Prevention

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funds Obesity Prevention efforts in eight Injury Free sites. Doctors, registered dietitians, and health educators in each site work with community coalitions to increase access to healthy food and physical activity. In addition, they work with Wellness Committees of their school districts to assess students' BMI status, increase physical activity, and improve the nutritional quality of food in schools, homes and communities.

Chicago provides healthy cooking classes to parents in a pre-school to increase their knowledge about nutritional food choices. They also make weekly low-cost fresh produce baskets available when parents pick up their children from school.

Cincinnati after-school programs have well-trained, highly motivated high school students teach elementary school students about nutrition, exercise, and to how make healthy snacks. Parents also attend classes to learn how to incorporate healthy lifestyle choices at home.

Greenville parents and children eat dinner together at weekly classes where they learn about healthy meals and find that tasting new foods can be fun. The classes also teach healthy nutrition concepts and incorporate family physical fitness into sessions. Injury Free mentors also visit families in their homes to help them make lifestyle changes in their own environment.

Hartford promotes "Kid Healthy" food choices and increased daily physical activity for six and seven year olds. Each of them is given a pedometer and a tracker where they keep count of their miles walked and collect prizes for their efforts. The program also works with corner grocery stores encouraging them to stock more nutritious foods and give incentives to students who buy healthy snacks.

In addition, Injury Free Hartford uses radio Public Service Announcements to teach people how to make healthy food choices.

Little Rock third and fourth grade students and school staff track their daily steps with pedometers in a program that guides them in a virtual walk around the state. They also participate in a Personal Best recess challenge program, which was initiated during the summer program in a local park. Other components of the Little Rock program, called SPORT, include reducing fat in the school meals, a healthy competitive foods program, classroom exercise breaks, a TV/Video "shut-off", and staff wellness.

New York partners with the Healthy Schools/Healthy Families Program to increase exercise with daily in class Brazilian dancing, jump rope competitions, and walk-around-the-block programs. This site also has farmers' markets that offer high quality, low-cost produce. In addition, they provide wellness classes to teachers to encourage them to be healthy role-models and discuss healthy eating concepts.

Portland partners with Abernathy Elementary School on a "Farm to School" program in which all meals are cooked on site, from scratch, using fresh ingredients some of which are grown on site in a garden produced by students. Young people at the school are tasting new foods and learning about nutrition, food and the environment in a Garden of Wonders curriculum that is integrated into science, math, language, history and art. The meals made from scratch and the Garden of Wonders program have resulted in the students eating more fruits and vegetables.

Seattle provides healthy school breakfast at two elementary schools. It makes nutritious ethnic foods available in a festive atmosphere. To keep children safe and increase physical activity, that site is coordinating a "walking school bus" program where parents walk children along specific routes to school rather than sending them on school buses. As an incentive, any parent who walks children to school is invited to join their children for breakfast.

