

Saving Obese Kids

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How We Typically Define Being Overweight:

- Body Tissue Approach:

Body Mass Index (BMI)

- BMI serves as a surrogate marker for body fatness in epidemiological studies
- Calculated as $Wt (kg) / Ht (m^2)$
- High BMI - excess body fat (FM) or excess body muscle (FFM)?

Obesity Defined

- BMI > 25 - 27 kgm^2 considered to confer "probable health risks"
- BMI > 29.9 kgm^2 considered obese with "discernable health risks"
 - (WHO 2003)

Childhood Obesity

- "Childhood obesity is no longer simply a cosmetic problem but a serious medical problem in itself"
- male children that are overweight (BMI > 25 kgm^2) has increased by 22% between 1981 - 1996
- The number classified as obese has increased by 8%
- 1/3 of male children are presently considered to be overweight
- female children who overweight has increased by 14% from 1981 to 1996
- The number classified as obese has increased by 7%
- 1/4 of female children being classified as overweight

The average child:

- watches 23 hours of television per week
- spends 5 hours per week playing on the internet-video games
- spends 30 hours per week inactive at school (Robinson, 1999)
- this time represents fully 2/3 of a child's waking hours per week

Obeseogenic Factors

Child Characteristics

- Dietary Intake - What, how much and when they eat
- Sedentary behaviour - Engagement in sedentary pursuits
- Physical activity - Frequency, intensity, type, self-efficacy
- Genetics - Familial traits

Parenting Styles

- Child feeding practices
- Parent dietary habits
- Parent activity patterns
- Peer or sibling interaction
- Monitoring of and access to inactivity

Community Characteristics

- Family leisure time activity
- School physical education programs
- Socioeconomic status
- Recreation facilities and programming
- Safe neighborhood programs

Finding Solutions: Partners in Prevention and Treatment?

Intervention Strategies - Home

- Provide parental support
- Implement active living strategy – family activity time
- Educate parents on how to set limits

Intervention Strategies - Schools

- Implement Daily Physical Activity
- Minimum of 60 mins of vigorous play every day (300 – 400 kcals/day)
- Health Report Cards?
- Integrate activity into curriculum
- Teacher education/support

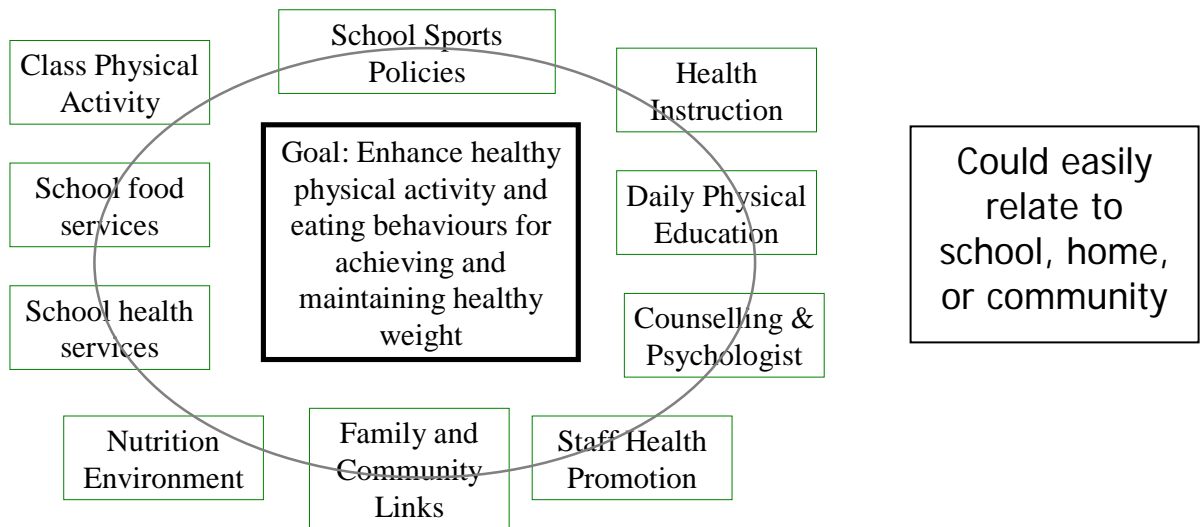
Intervention Strategies - Communities

- Program planning for family activity
- Programs for children and youth
- Safe Play Areas – Fenced, Lit etc
- Walking School Buses

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Story, 1999. Int J Obesity, 23(S2): S43-S51



How you fit...

Early Exercise Intervention

- positive health habits initiated early in life provide the basis for lifelong well-being
- how the child eats, exercises, relates to other people, and responds to stress are established early in life

Game Plan?

- introduce physical activity early
- teach children to move
- create positive experiences
- stimulate motivation from intrinsic enjoyment of the activity
- set the stage for regular exercise habits that continue into adulthood

Removing Barriers: Modifiable Determinants

- enjoyment
- perceived competence, self-esteem/concept
- parental / adult support and encouragement
- attitude; intention to be active
- parental and sibling activity
- time outside

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