

Physical activity and childhood obesity

[Life](#), [Childhood](#)



As people age the knowledge and experiences they gain in life may help shape their daily decisions. Adults are often more conscientious of the benefits physical activity has on their bodies and their health. With the growing popularity of video games, the distraction of television and the fast paced lifestyles many people are now living, children are being greatly affected. The result of children being more sedentary in current times has led to a greater prevalence of childhood obesity in society.

In order to combat this issue it is imperative that children partake in physical activity. Children learn by example and the involvement the schools, communities and parents have with the child helps shape their outcomes in life. There are several factors that may contribute to childhood obesity. In an article on Children's Physical Activity and Obesity it states that; "[...] the effects of parenting, the home environment, and developmental and psychological factors on diet, obesity, and physical activity have received significant attention" (Luisa Franzini, PhD, 2009).

From this attention, new research and developments are achieved. The number of children who experience overweight is growing at an alarming rate in recent times. According to an article on overweight and obesity, 1 out of 3 children are considered overweight or obese (Kids Health, 2009). Research has shown that overweight and obesity leads to health issues, some of which can be fatal. Moreover, the CDC states; " Obese youth are more likely to have risk factors for cardiovascular disease, such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure.

In a population-based sample of 5- to 17-year-olds, 70% of obese youth had at least one risk factor for cardiovascular disease" (Healthy Youth, 2010).

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Further, experiencing overweight in childhood presents a greater possibility of experiencing overweight in adulthood. According to the CDC, obese youth are more likely to become overweight adults, and therefore more at risk for associated adult health problems, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, several types of cancer, and osteoarthritis (Healthy Youth, 2010).

A positive outlook on afore mentioned statistics is that these health issues can be prevented by adapting a proper diet and engaging in physical activity. There are a number of ways to prevent childhood obesity. According to an article on Disease Prevention Programs Targeting Obesity in Children, a majority of programs developed and tested to treat childhood obesity have included dietary modification, increased physical activity, and/or reduced sedentary behavior (Adrienne R. Hughes, 2008).

With the growing popularity of video games and number of television channels, more children are engaging in sedentary behavior. However, reducing sedentary activities among children can help prevent obesity. In fact, Hughes states; “ Encouraging obese children to increase their physical activity will help to reduce adiposity and improve cardiovascular, metabolic, and psychosocial health (Adrienne R. Hughes, 2008). The amount of time spent being physically active is also important in preventing child obesity.

In fact, in an article on Tackling Overweight and Obesity in Children it states; “ Children should take part in at least one hour of moderately intense activity per day; this should make breathing heavier than usual, but talking should still be possible” (Crocker, 2007). It is important to gradually increase physical activity in order to avoid injury or over exertion. Further, as a school, a community and as parents it is important to set good examples for

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children. Through proper physical activity and diet the prevalence of child obesity can be diminished.