

The Active NDN

“Information & Resources For Youth Obesity Prevention & Reduction”

Volume 3 December, 2007



New Reports About Healthy Weight
Editorial by André Cramblit (Karuk Tribe),
NCIDC Operations Director

Recently you may have read or seen reports about new information regarding being overweight. These reports authored by Katherine Flegal of the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention suggest that being slightly overweight might not be as risky as previously thought. The findings showed that weight does not increase mortality from all causes but rather in specific health related issues. “Diabetes, kidney disease, heart disease and many cancers are all more likely for people who are obese - but those of us struggling with 10 or 15 pounds of stubborn excess aren’t as likely to be at high risk.”

Many media outlets used this data to make splashy headlines like “Fear Not The Mashed Potatoes,” or “Live Longer, Have Extra Flab.” These sensational headlines are very misleading. They play upon people’s desire to hear only what they want to. Even the author herself cautions overweight people not to assume they’re suddenly healthier than they thought.

My concern with such enticing headlines is that people are fooled into thinking that being heavy does not put them at risk. Until more research is done it is best to lead a fit lifestyle to maintain good health. This includes eating nutrient rich whole foods, getting plenty of exercise and watching your weight.

Other studies have said that this is the first generation whose children may have a shorter life expectancy than the parents. This is due in a large part to the increasing rates of obesity in our children. As Native people we have a responsibility to be aware of the health risks that confront us. This includes many problems related to obesity such as heart disease, hy-

pertension and the world’s highest rate of diabetes.

What legacy are we leaving our children and grandchildren? It is up to us to set a good example. Show your children you love them by taking them outside and playing with them. We must demonstrate to them that by choosing nutritious foods, exercising and refraining from drugs, commercial tobacco and alcohol we can lead a long, healthy and fulfilling life. By sharing an active lifestyle and making good food choices your efforts will be rewarded when your children grow to be healthy Elders.



Native American Stick Game

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Making a Tradition of After-School Snacks

Allison Aldridge, Nutrition Manager
United Indian Health Services

We have all been told that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. This is true for all of us, but especially for school age children who need those nutrients to make the most of their educational day. For parents on the run breakfast does not need to mean homemade pancakes and waffles every morning. Ready-to-eat cereal with milk and fruit, a fruit filled breakfast bar, or a bagel and cream cheese can be just as good for providing needed nutrients. Studies have shown that children who eat breakfast had a general increase in math grades and reading scores, increased attention, and attend school more frequently, as well as keeping their weight under control, keeping their blood cholesterol levels down, and making fewer trips to the nurses office. In other words, eating a healthy breakfast is extremely important. This we know.

What we may not know however, is just how important a healthy snack is for children after a long day of activity. Good nutrition helps a child learn, play, and grow, and makes it easier for them to get through the day. In their early



years especially, learning is occurring at all times, through school as well as through everyday activities. Retaining as much of the information that is being thrown at them as possible depends largely on the nutrition a child receives. A long time passes between lunch and dinner, leaving many children hungry and unable to continue learning when the school day ends. Healthy snacks should ideally include both protein and carbohydrate for maximum nutrition. Some ideas include: fruit smoothies, whole wheat bread with peanut butter, whole grain crackers with low-fat cheese, and oatmeal made with skim milk and a tablespoon of peanut butter. As we all know, time is often limited, so make sure to keep a variety of fruits and vegetables on hand, already cut up and easy to get to. Nuts such as almond, acorns, and pine nuts are also easy snacks.

Healthy snacks equal healthy minds. Treat your child to a nutritious after-school snack every day!

Tangy Yogurt Vegetable Dip

Ingredients:

2 1/2 cups plain yogurt
1 packet onion soup mix
1 tablespoon parsley
1/4 teaspoon garlic salt
1 teaspoon dill weed
pinch black pepper

Combine all ingredients and refrigerate overnight. Serve with your favorite veggies for a healthy snack.



Childhood Obesity: A Food and Nutrition Resource List

This publication is a collection of resources on the topic of childhood obesity for educators and researchers. It is comprised of articles from professional journals (published 2000 to present), information available on the World Wide Web, consumer educational materials and contact information of related organizations. Items with a public health emphasis have been selected for this list. While there is extensive literature on the clinical aspects of pediatric obesity, it is not the goal of this publication to cover it. This Resource List is available from the Food and Nutrition Information Center's (FNIC) Web site at:

http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/pubs_and_db.html

Another online source of information is available through the Center for Disease Control (CDC). According to their website "Results from the 2003-2004 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), using measured heights and weights, indicate that an estimated 17 percent of children and adolescents ages 2-19 years are overweight." Complete information and tools can be found at:

www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/obesity/resources.htm

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NCIDC Mini-Grants For Youth Obesity Prevention & Reduction

A total of eight mini-grants have been funded by NCIDC. All of the mini-grants operating in Native communities are designed to work with American Indian children to educate them about healthy lifestyles and reduce the negative impacts of being overweight or obese. Current statistics show that around 20% of all youth in the U.S. are overweight and this number is even higher among Native Americans. This is a result of moving from a traditional diet enjoyed by our ancestors to a high calorie diet of prepackaged foods full of fat, sodium and empty carbohydrates. Both the Active NDN newsletter and the mini-grants are being supported by a contract with the California Department of Community Services and Development. The mini-grants assist Tribes, American Indian Education Centers, Native Head Starts and Indian Health Service Clinics focus on the unhealthy impacts of youth obesity.

In previous editions of the newsletter a profile of some of the funded grantees have been presented to show the wide range of services made available to Native youth. In this issue the LIFE Center in Shasta Lake City, Pauma Band of Mission Indians in San Diego County and the Washoe Tribe's Woodfords Indian Education Center will be presented.

Local Indians For Education *P'eleen Boos Camp*

Local Indians for Education, Inc. (LIFE) became incorporated in 1977 to provide an Indian Community Center for the Indians of California who are vitally concerned with improving the educational, self-esteem and employment levels of Native people in Shasta County. Their mini-grant project will support the annual P'eleen Boos cultural camp. This camp serves around 80 students from K-6th grades. Younger campers are there just during day-



light hours while older students stay overnight. Activities include hiking, traditional foods preparation, healthy living instruction and traditional dances.

A cultural celebration for the parents, local community and Elders is held at the end of the camp. They have worked closely for the past ten years with their local Indian Health Clinic to provide an overall healthy environment for the benefit of the students.

Woodfords Indian Education Center *Hung-A-Lel-Ti Di-es (Washoe Move It)*

The Washoe Tribe's Woodfords Indian Education Center has used their mini-grant to create the "Move It" diabetes reduction program. This project provides Tribal youth with fun physical activities and health education. They also hosted a well-received diabetic friendly Thanksgiving dinner for their community. Students will also be participating in traditional foods identification and gathering.



Pauma Band of Mission Indians *"Getting Fit"- Diabetes Prevention*

Diabetes is a known killer of Native Americans. We have the highest rate of this disease of any ethnic group in the world. Type 1 or Juvenile Diabetes is starting to occur in children at a much younger age. To help overcome this the Pauma Band of Mission Indians has started the Getting Fit Program. They will be working with students to keep food and glucose journals and will provide aerobic exercise programs using their Tribal gymnasium. They will also host a Community Health Fair.



It is the belief of NCIDC that by focusing on youth we can start to plan for a more vibrant healthy future. The intent of the Youth Obesity Prevention and Reduction project and the Active NDN is to make information and resources available to Native communities to combat the rising tide of health risks associated with being overweight. These mini-grants are an effort to promote local initiatives that support this endeavor. For a complete list of funded mini-grant programs and previous issues of this newsletter please see: www.ncidc.org/obesity/

Dr. Coyote's Clinic*

Unrealistic Answers To Your Health Questions

Dear Dr. Coyote;

I am writing to you because I am worried about my kids. I have read some reports recently that says teenagers in the United States are the heaviest of any nation in the world. My concern is that my father died from a heart attack at a young age and I don't want that to happen to my children or me. I am looking for things we can do together and Christmas is just around the corner. My kids have been clamoring for a video game. Should I try and get us to exercise more by buying one of those wireless consoles that we can use to play tennis, bowling, baseball or lots of other sports? What is your opinion? Signed, *Concerned Parent*



Dear Concerned; Boy am I glad you came to me with this important decision. Why must people always be looking for ways to spoil something so pure and simple like video games? I do not see the point of combining exercise with the relaxation of sitting in front of a TV. The closest I want to get to sweating to the oldies is a nice game of pac-man, that will sure give your thumb a workout. Your best bet is to get them a system that encourages your kids to spend long hours in front of the screen with a blank stare on their face. Also make sure you are giving them plenty of chocolate, candy, chips and sodas to keep up their energy level for a daylong marathon of video mayhem. Yours Truly,

Doc C.



Reasonable Health Practitioners Reply. You have every right to be concerned. Heart disease is the leading killer of Native Americans. Also, according to the US Department of Health and Human Services American teenag-

ers were the most overweight of all teens in 14 industrialized nations. The study's authors wrote "since most obese adolescents remain obese as adults, this age group is a very important group to reach through preventive programs addressing issues of diet and sedentary lifestyles." They went on to say "Overweight adolescents have an increased likelihood of being overweight during adulthood, and adult overweight increases the risk for such health problems as heart disease and diabetes." To read the complete study

please go to: <http://tinyurl.com/2l2yyq>

Take the money you were thinking about putting

towards a video game and purchase a gym membership. Most doctors would recommend that you and your children get 30 minutes of exercise daily to maintain good health. Take them outside for walks, find fun activities you can enjoy together such as biking, real tennis or gardening. For snacks you are better



off with seasonal fruits and veggies, air popped popcorn, yogurt or a peanut butter sandwich on whole wheat bread. To drink, stick with water, 100% fruit juices, milk (if your family is not lactose intolerant), or enriched soy milk. Your efforts will pay off with a much healthier life for both you and your children.

**Please note that in many cultures, Coyote is the trickster and his advice should be taken with a grain of sodium reduced kosher sea salt (his section is intended as humor or parody). For complete answers to your inquiries please consult your physician. If you have any questions to ask of Dr. Coyote about, diet, health, nutrition or exercise please email: coyote@ncidc.org*



Adolescent Appetites:

The road to disodium inosinate is paved with good intentions

Amy Linn in Grist Magazine

“Reprinted by permission from Grist.org. For more thought-provoking green news and views, visit Grist online at www.grist.org.”



Mea culpa. That’s the only way I can honestly write anything about getting older kids to eat healthy foods. Because I’ve been a sucker for the look my 11-year-old gets on her face if I plop down a bowl of nuclear-orange SpongeBob mac-and-cheese in front of her. Sheer joy: that’s the only way to describe it. Ditto for the times she eats (can I admit this?) Cookie Crisp cereal, high-fructose corn syrup laced yogurt, and the occasional bag of Doritos -- chips that look toxic enough to qualify as their own Superfund sites.

How have I sunk so low? That age-old problem, complacency, set in, combined with the fact that my daughter in recent years has become increasingly picky and health-food hostile. I let the junk into her life just so she’d eat something -- anything -- with enthusiasm.

The good news? I’ve turned a corner, thanks to this denial-busting assignment from Grist, with additional thanks to nationally known nutritionist Cynthia Sass, a New York City-based registered dietitian, health expert, and author of the book *Your Diet is Driving Me Crazy*. Give kids the information they need, Sass convinced me, and they’re going to want to eat right.

“What older children need is a basic understanding about this stuff -- about the chemicals and additives and fats and sugars and how it affects their bodies,” she says. “Kids are great critical thinkers.”

The pickiest fifth-grader and the most eye-rolling teen are equally devoted to taking control of their lives, in the food department and all others, she says. Engage their smarts and their natural sense of outrage -- about the disodium inosinate in those Doritos and the pesticide residue on that peach -- and they’ll become allies in the food fight.

“The key is to avoid trying to trick them, or sway them, or force them to clean their plate or eat in a

certain way,” Sass says. Playing the food cop when they’re downing the junky stuff “really pushes them toward those foods.”

By sleuthing with your kids instead of for them - - reading labels and finding out together what foods have nasty additives and which fruit juices have no fruit in them and how that strange purple vegetable from the farmers’ market actually tastes -- you engage them and bond with them, too.

Simple enough. I asked my daughter this week to read me the label on her maple syrup, which had not a single ingredient that was vaguely related to a maple tree. She was outraged.

Among Sass’s other recommendations:



- Take children to farmers’ markets (check out localharvest.org for a nationwide directory). Put them in charge of picking a different food each time; ask them to choose a variety of colors (they’ll get good phytonutrients along the way).

- Get them cooking and gardening. Kids who help in the kitchen, pick out recipes, and grow the foods

they love are likely to love what they eat.

- Create healthy cravings by celebrating with healthy comfort foods. If kids equate cake, ice cream, and candy with birthdays and other special times, they’re likely to have a yen for those foods all their lives.

- Make healthy, organic foods available in the fridge and on the table -- and eat those foods yourself.

Studies show that one of the greatest influences on eating habits in children up to age 18 is what their parents eat.

- Appeal to your kid’s inner rebel. Tweens and teens are highly offended by unfairness, hidden agendas, and con jobs. Watch the documentary *Supersize Me* with them or give them Eric Schlosser’s book *Fast Food Nation* and you might inspire more food activism than you dreamed possible.

For a quick fix, you can also download and print out the list below at : <http://tinyurl.com/35k5kg> of the eight foods every kid should eschew. Post it

HHS Launches Childhood Overweight and Obesity Prevention Initiative

www.hhs.gov/news/press/2007pres/11/pr20071127a.html

First Lady Laura Bush saluted the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' new Childhood Overweight and Obesity Prevention Initiative, announced at the National Prevention Summit, which targets obesity prevention and the promotion of healthy weight for children. Mrs. Bush delivered the keynote address at the summit, an annual HHS-hosted, cross-sector event that highlights new approaches to prevention and health promotion.

"Good health starts with good habits. By educating ourselves about our bodies -- and by taking simple steps to protect them -- we can prevent or delay some of today's most common and devastating health conditions," said Mrs. Bush.

"Our government is working to address one of the greatest dangers to America's young people: childhood overweight and obesity. Nearly one in five school-age children in the United States is overweight and the problem seems to be getting worse. Today, the Department of Health and Human Services is launching a new effort -- led by the acting surgeon general -- to coordinate and expand our government's existing childhood-overweight and -obesity prevention programs."



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, data from two National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (1976-1980 and 2003-2004) show that prevalence of childhood overweight is increasing. For children aged 2-5 years, the prevalence increased from 5.0 percent to 13.9 percent; for those aged 6-11 years, prevalence increased from 6.5 percent to 18.8 percent; and for those aged 12-19 years, prevalence increased from 5.0 percent to 17.4 percent.

"Overweight children have a higher risk of being overweight or obese as adults, and facing the health problems that can result," HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt said. "Parents, government officials, community and education leaders must work together to help the children. I'm pleased that Rear Admiral Steven Galson, the

acting surgeon general, is leading this important initiative."

As chair of HHS' Childhood Overweight and Obesity Coordinating Council, Rear Admiral Galson will work with HHS officials and community stakeholders as they develop and foster programs that share the goal of providing options for community-based interventions. The programs include

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's School Health Index: A Self-Assessment and Planning Guide;
- National Institutes of Health's We Can! (Ways to Enhance Children's Activity and Nutrition) program;
- Indian Health Service's diabetes prevention activities;
- Food and Drug Administration's Using the Nutrition Facts Label to Make Healthy Food Choices activities; and
- President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports' National Fitness Challenge

The National Center for Physical Development and Outdoor Play, announced by Mrs. Bush, will help Head Start programs evaluate their playgrounds, and educate children and their families about the value of healthy food and structured physical activity. HHS' Administration for Children and Families (ACF) will oversee a competition for a \$12 million, four-year grant to establish the center and will allocate up to \$10 million to fund the construction or improvement of Head Start playgrounds

"Early childhood is the best time to instill healthy habits," said Daniel Schneider, ACF acting assistant secretary. "Childhood obesity has enormous implications for individual development. This initiative will help to reduce the number of children at risk for becoming obese."

Also during the National Prevention Summit, nine organizations and businesses that have implemented creative health promotion and chronic disease prevention programs were honored as national Innovation in Prevention Award winners.

"Congratulations to the award recipients on their ingenuity and teamwork," said Secretary Leavitt. "Their efforts reinforce how important it is that we think creatively, join forces and learn from each other in order to make a collective impact on our nation's health and future."

Pathways Health Promotion Curriculum

<http://hsc.unm.edu/pathways/Intervention/intrvtn.htm>

The Pathways curriculum is a health promotion curriculum for American Indian children in grades three, four, and five. It was produced by the University of New Mexico. The curriculum incorporates American Indian concepts that are culturally appropriate for the seven American Indian nations who participated in the study. Some of these cultural strategies are recognized as a part of many other American Indian societies. The curriculum also recognizes that American Indian values and traditions for culture and gender are not always consistent with those reflected in American society.



The goal of the project is to create for American Indian children in grades three, four, and five, a culturally appropriate school-based curriculum that promotes healthful eating behaviors and increased physical activity. The primary Objectives are:

- Emphasize and reinforce traditional American Indian positive health behaviors for healthful eating and regular physical activity.
- Introduce American Indian children to a variety of healthful foods through taste-testing demonstration activities.
- Introduce and reinforce healthful eating behaviors to increase consumption of foods that are lower in fat.
- Introduce American Indian children to a variety of physical activities.
- Increase amount of moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- Identify and reinforce values on total well-being.

Pathways is a program to prevent obesity and related complications therefore the emphasis of the curriculum is designed to promote healthy lifestyles for all children. To achieve this, it is important to understand Pathways as a health promotion and not as an obesity prevention program. Also, Pathways is not to be confused with a weight reduction program. The framework for the Pathways curriculum is based on Social Learning Theory to encourage changes in the child's environment at home and school. These patterns are introduced by promoting healthful eating and physi-

cal activity; by providing opportunities to eat healthful foods; and by creating peer support for selecting healthful foods and doing regular physical activity.

Overall, the American Indian traditions that the curriculum upholds include:

1. The use of oral history to impart knowledge.
2. A holistic view of health and health practices.
3. Involvement of younger generations in everyday activities.
4. Concept of community in which everyone contributes to the survival of the group.
5. Maintenance of respect for individual worth.
6. Encouragement of physical activity.

NCIDC has been kindly granted permission to freely distribute the pathways curriculum to schools, tribes and American Indian Education centers. If you are interested in receiving copies of this innovative approach to helping our Native students please contact Andre Cramblit at (707) 445-8451 or email him at andrekar@ncidc.org



The Pathways project logo is a symbolic representation of the overall mission of Pathways among the culturally diverse tribes who are participating in the program. Each of the items in this logo are sacred to tribes and have been depicted in a manner to illustrate unity among the tribes and the participating institutions to accomplish the Mission of Pathways.