



School Wellness

One tool for combating the childhood obesity epidemic

February 2010

WELLNESS means being HEALTHY

in body
and mind



Childhood obesity is an “epidemic”?

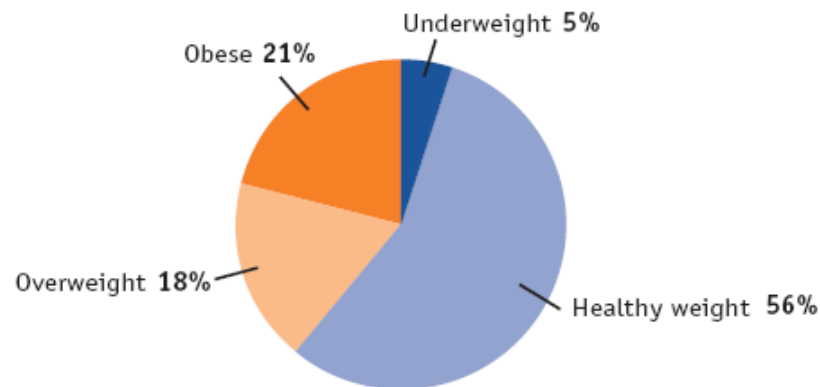
- Ø One-third of American children are overweight or obese.
- Ø Rates of obesity have tripled in the past 30 years.
- Ø Overweight and obese children are at higher risk than their healthy-weight peers for a host of serious illnesses, including heart disease, stroke, asthma and certain types of cancer. Obese children already are being diagnosed with health problems previously considered to be adult illnesses, such as type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure.*

**Robert Wood Johnson Foundation <http://www.rwjf.org/childhoodobesity/challenge.jsp>

What about New York City?

**In New York City,
almost 40% of public schools students
are overweight or obese.***

Weight status in NYC public schools, Kindergarten–8th grade



*Based on 2007-08 NYC FITNESSGRAM results published in *NYC Vital Signs*
<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/survey/survey-2009fitnessgram.pdf>

SCHOOL WELLNESS fights obesity

Ø School wellness works toward changing the nutrition and physical activity environments in schools.

Ø Congress required all school districts to have a School Wellness Policy in place in 2006.

Ø Information about DOE School Wellness is at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/Health/GenProgServ/Wellness.htm>

Ø The draft of the updated DOE School Wellness policy is available there and is open for public comment.



NYC schools are part of the solution

- ØImproving school food to include low and non-fat milk, whole grains, and more fresh food offerings.**
- ØImproving the capacity of schools to deliver physical and health education in traditional and non-traditional classes and settings.**
- ØProviding healthy beverage and snack options in school stores and vending machines.**
- ØOpening facilities and school yards for year-round community use.**
- ØPartnering with DOHMH to increase access to health care and support.**

DOE School Wellness Policy:

- ü Supports all schools in providing opportunities for all students to be physically active on a regular basis.
- ü Ensures that food and beverages sold or served at school will meet or exceed the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- ü Ensures that school meals provide a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet health and nutritional needs while accommodating the religious, ethnic, and cultural food preferences of the student body.
- ü Provides nutrition education and physical education to foster life-long habits of healthy eating and physical activity.

What can parents do at home?

- ü Encourage healthy eating habits.
- ü Look for ways to make favorite dishes healthier.
- ü Remove calorie-rich temptations.
- ü Help kids stay active.
- ü Reduce sedentary time.
- ü Don't let children drink their calories. Choose water or low-fat milk, not high-calorie juice or soda.
- ü Snack on fruits and vegetables instead of junk food.

The anti-obesity formula:

Balancing
Calories IN
with
Calories OUT

Parent involvement in schools

- Ø See if your child's school has a School Wellness Council.
- Ø If one is in place, ask about their activities and consider joining.
- Ø If one does not yet exist, talk to your principal about creating one.
- Ø The DOE and DOHMH can provide guidance and assistance through the Office of School Health. Contact wellness@schools.nyc.gov

Michelle Obama on obesity



“Ultimately, it’s going to take all of us – businesses and non-profits; community centers and health centers; teachers and faith leaders; coaches and parents– all working together to help families make commonsense changes so our kids can get, and stay, healthy.

“We don’t need to wait for some new invention or discovery to make this happen. This doesn’t require fancy tools or technologies. We have everything we need right now – we have the information; we have the ideas; and we have the desire to start solving America’s childhood obesity problem. The only question is whether we have the will.”

**Make the right
choice
for the entire school
community.**

Choose WELLNESS.