

4 in 10 kids

in central Indiana are at an unhealthy weight

That's

221,000

children at significantly higher risk of diabetes, heart disease and cancer

And a

53%

child obesity rate in central Indiana by 2025 if trends continue

3x

more children affected today than 30 years ago

70%

of children with obesity have at least one risk factor for cardiovascular disease

67%

of high school students don't get enough daily physical activity

5x

preschoolers with overweight/obesity are 5x more likely to be overweight/obese in adulthood

How did we get here?

The causes of the obesity epidemic are numerous and complex. Food has become highly processed, calorie dense, and "super-sized." Many families lack access to affordable, healthy food. Children have fewer opportunities to play and be active, as recess and physical education classes have been reduced or cut entirely in schools. Too many kids spend too much time sitting in front of computer screens, tablets, or smart phones. Many of them live in neighborhoods that lack safe places to play.

Simply promoting public awareness and "personal responsibility" will not solve this crisis. There are no simple or one-size-fits-all solutions.

We all need to take action: child care providers, employers, schools, neighborhoods, families, and more.

What can we do?

No single entity or organization is able to tackle the childhood obesity issue on its own, but communities that engage a coordinated multi-sector approach to interventions have demonstrated success in reversing the trends. Here's how:

Child Care Providers

Ensure that children are physically active for a minimum of 30 minutes for every 4 hours in care. Limit screen time and replace sedentary time with more active play. Follow Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines for meals and snacks and serve more water, limit juice.

Employers

Start or continue a workplace wellness program that provides employees with healthy food and beverage choices and opportunities for physical activity. Promote healthy habits that employees can share with their families. Prioritize wellness in strategic philanthropy efforts.

Schools

Familiarize all stakeholders with documented connections between health and academic achievement. Offer universal breakfast service and follow best practices for food service and marketing, including snacks, celebrations, and fundraisers. Provide opportunities for physical activity every day, using recess, physical education, brain breaks and other best practices.

Neighborhoods

Make it easier for families to buy healthy, affordable food and beverages close to home. Help local schools create shared-use agreements to offer programming to the community during out-of-school hours. Investigate and address other obstacles to healthy living in the built environment.

Families

Strive to meet 5-2-1-0 goals daily: eating 5 or more fruits and vegetables, limiting screen time to 2 hours or less, getting active for 1 hour or more, and drinking 0 sugary beverages and more water. Volunteer to serve on your local school's wellness committee. Model healthy choices.