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Childhood Obesity is Major Concern in the US

Childhood obesity rate is triple the rate in 1963. One in three American kids is overweight

Parents are urged to encourage our youth to make healthy lifestyle choices. The Anson County Health Department encourages healthy habits in children early on in life.

Childhood obesity is a major concern in the United States. Today, about one in three American kids and teens are overweight or obese, nearly triple the rate in 1963. Among children today obesity is causing a large range of health problems. These include high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and high blood cholesterol levels.

Children become overweight and obese for many reasons. The most common causes are genetic factors, lack of physical activity, unhealthy eating patterns, or a combination of these issues. A child's total diet and activity level play an important role in determining a child's weight. Today many children spend a lot of time being inactive. For example, the average child spends about four hours each day watching television. As computers and video games continue to become more popular the number of hours of inactivity may increase.

The best way to determine whether a child is overweight is by making a doctor's visit. The doctor will measure your child's weight and height and total his body mass index (BMI) to compare this value to average values. The doctor will also consider your child's age and growth patterns. This can help determine if your child's weight is in an unhealthy range.

To help decrease childhood obesity parents and children can:

- Provide plenty of vegetables, fruits and whole-grain products.
- Include low-fat or non-fat milk or dairy products.
- Choose lean meats, poultry, fish, lentils and beans for protein.
- Serve reasonably-sized portions.
- Encourage your family to drink lots of water.
- Limit sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Limit consumption of sugar and saturated fat.
- Encourage physical activity.

Anson County had the highest rate of overweight and obese children ages 2 through 4 in 2012 within its Peer County Group. Anson County was one of 3 counties in its Peer County Group with an increase in the percentage of overweight children ages 2 through 4. Anson also had the highest percentage increase.

To help decrease childhood obesity in Anson County, Atrium Health has introduced the 5210 Program to the schools of Anson. The 5210 Program encourages five servings of fruits and vegetables daily, no more than two hours of screen time per day, one hour of activity or play time and zero sugary drinks.

For more information on childhood obesity or free educational sessions provided on childhood obesity, nutrition, or physical activity, please free to contact the Anson County Health Department's Health Educator Dinikia Savage at (704) 994-3342. The Anson County Health Department is located at 110 Ashe Street in Wadesboro.

Think You May be Eligible for WIC?

WIC is a nutritional supplemental program for pregnant, postpartum, or breastfeeding women, infants and children under 5 years of age. To be eligible for WIC you must live in North Carolina.

If you receive Medicaid, Work First Families Assistance, or SNAP you automatically meet the income eligibility requirements.

A family may be eligible for WIC based on your household income, even if you do not receive Medicaid, Work First Families Assistance, or SNAP. The following list is income guideline that went into effect July 1, 2018.

- Family of 1 - monthly income \$ 1,872 - weekly income \$ 432
- Family of 2 - monthly income \$ 2,538 - weekly income \$ 586
- Family of 3 - monthly income \$ 3,204 - weekly income \$ 740
- Family of 4 - monthly income \$ 3,870 - weekly income \$ 893
- Family of 5 - monthly income \$ 4,536 - weekly income \$ 1,047
- Family of 6 - monthly income \$ 5,202 - weekly income \$ 1,201
- Family of 7 - monthly income \$ 5,868 - weekly income \$ 1,355
- Family of 8 - monthly income \$ 6,534 - weekly income \$ 1,508

For a family size greater than 8 please call the office for income information. For income based on annual, bi-weekly, or twice a month please call the office. The WIC office is located at 110 Ashe Street in Wadesboro. The office phone number is 704-694-9844. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Storytime Every Wednesday at Partnership for Children

The Anson County Partnership for Children offers Storytime in the Early Childhood Resource Center each Wednesday, from 10 to 10:30 a.m. for children ages 3 to 8. For more information call 704-694-4036.



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