Welcome to HLTH100

Childhood overweight and obesity rates have increased over the last several decades and continue to be high. Childhood overweight and obesity put young children at risk for a host of health problems in later life. This course presents information about early childhood obesity and strategies for addressing obesity and promoting healthy behaviors in child care. When successfully implemented, these strategies can help to improve the health of all children in your care.

Course Objectives:

By taking notes on the handout and successfully answering assessment questions, participants will meet the following objectives as a result of taking this course:

- Identify important facts about obesity and overweight in young children
- Define Body Mass Index (BMI)
- Identify causes of and long-term risks associated with obesity
- Identify recommended activity levels and best practices for promoting health in child care
- Identify strategies for promoting nutritious foods in child care
- Identify best practices regarding screen time and young children
- Define weight stigma and understand the child care provider’s role in supporting children

References:

**Important Note about the Content of this Course**

This course presents generally accepted information about early childhood obesity and is not a substitute for medical advice. Any serious concern about a child should be discussed with the child’s family and referred to a health care provider. Follow the policies and procedures your program has in place regarding these issues.

**What is Obesity?**

**Important Fact**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) tells us that the terms *obesity* and *overweight* are

**Body Mass Index (BMI)**

The *Body Mass Index*, or *BMI*, is

To calculate *BMI*:

- \[ BMI = \frac{\text{Weight in Kg}}{(\text{Height in meters})^2} \]
  
  Or,

- \[ BMI = \frac{\left(\frac{\text{Weight in pounds} \times 703}{\text{Height in inches}}\right)}{(\text{Height in inches})^2} \]

For adults, experts have produced the following BMI reference ranges. You can calculate your BMI per the formula above (or use an online BMI calculator) and check your numbers:

- Less Than 18.5: Underweight
- 18.5-24.99: Normal-weight
- 25-29.99: Overweight
- Greater Than/Equal To 30: Obese

**Body Mass Index-for-Age Percentiles**

The CDC created growth charts to determine the corresponding BMI-for-age percentile. You can find a free BMI Calculator for Children on the CDC’s website.

Using the growth charts, children can be classified into the following weight status categories:
BMI-for-age weight status categories and the corresponding percentiles follow:

- **Underweight**: Children who have a body mass index-for-age percentile of ________________ percentile.
- **Healthy Weight**: Children who have a body mass index-for-age percentile ________________ percentile to ________________ percentile.
- **Overweight**: Children who have a body mass index-for-age percentile ________________ percentile to ________________ percentile.
- **Obese**: Children who have a body mass index-for-age percentile ________________ percentile.

**Statistics**

- Obesity prevalence in U.S. children ages 2-19 years is ________%; this represents a doubling for preschool children over the last 40 years, and a tripling or quadrupling in older groups of children.
- Obesity is highest in U.S. ________________ and ________________ children, and lowest in ________________ children.
- The prevalence of obesity in U.S. 2 to 5-year-olds decreased from ________% in 2004 to ________% in 2014. While this is good news, prevalence remains high and requires continued attention.

**Causes and Risk Factors**

Many factors may contribute to overweight and obesity in children and adults including:

- Diet
  - The Dietary Guidelines for Americans provides information on what to eat and drink for healthy Americans ages 2 and older.
  - The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) MyPlate is an easy-to-use tool that demonstrates nutritious food choices aligned with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

**Physical Inactivity**
Psychological Factors

Family Factors

Socioeconomic Factors

Environment

Effects and Risks

Childhood obesity can lead to serious health conditions including:

- High Blood Pressure
- Heart Disease
- Diabetes
**Sleep Apnea**

Common sleep apnea symptoms include:

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**Asthma**

Symptoms of asthma include:

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**Psychosocial Risks**

Overweight and obese children (and the adults they will become) are at risk of suffering:

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The **social consequences**

The **economic impacts**

There are serious potential **health risks**

The term **weight stigma** refers to

**Video Content: Weight Bias at Home and School**

**When to Seek Medical Advice**

In addition to BMI and charting weight on growth charts, the health care provider may evaluate:

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**Treatment**

Treatment may include:

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Physical Activity

In general, child care providers can use the following strategies to increase children’s physical activity:

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Screen Time

Therefore, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends the following:

- No screen time for children ________________________, except for the use of live video chat that engages the child. (e.g. Skype, FaceTime with parents in deployment, grandparents, etc.)
- For children ________________________, families may introduce limited screen time of only high-quality educational programming (such as Sesame Street or PBS) and only to be watched with adults.
- For children ages ________________________, screen time should be limited to 1 hour of high-quality programming per day, and families should continue to co-view with children to discuss the program and help children understand its application to their context.
- ________________________ should be screen-free.
- ________________________ should be screen-free, and viewing should cease at least ________________________.

The AAP has created an interactive Family Media Plan tool that families may find useful.

Dietary Changes

Behavior Modification
Role of Child Care Providers in Obesity Prevention

Supporting Healthy Eating in the Child Care Setting

Child care providers can have a positive influence on early childhood eating behaviors and intake by:

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Healthy Beverages, Meals, and Snacks

In some states, licensed child care centers and group homes are required to comply with the standards of the USDA’s Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), even if the facility does not participate in the program.

The standards emphasize:

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Gold Standard Feeding Practices

Mealtime provides an opportunity for much learning! Best practices in feeding, as recommended in Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, 4th Edition (CFOC4) are designed to optimize dietary intake as well as encourage the development of motor and social skills. These practices include:

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Role Modeling

Here are a few ways you can lead by example:

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Nutrition Education

Here are some ideas that embrace these principles:

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Supporting Physical Activity in Child Care

Using Movement Across the Curriculum
Regardless of the content area or concept being explored, there is a way for children to experience it physically.

Take “Brain Breaks”

**Cross-lateral movement** is anything that requires

**Using Transitions to Promote Physical Activity**

**Teach Movement Skills**

Just as reading and writing must be taught in early childhood, so too must motor skills. That begins with basic *locomotor* and *non-locomotor* skills.

*Locomotor skills* include:

*Non-locomotor skills* include:

**Suggestions for Encouraging Children’s Active Movement**

The position of the [Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE America)](https://www.shapeamerica.org) is that

Their guidelines for physical activities for young children state that **young children should not be sedentary for ________________________, except when sleeping.**

SHAPE America **recommends** that toddlers accumulate daily ___________________ of structured physical activity and ___________________ of unstructured physical activity.

Preschoolers should engage in the same amount of unstructured activity but accumulate ___________________ daily of structured physical activity.
General Strategies for Promoting Physical Activity

Arrange the Environment to Encourage Movement

Demonstrate Enthusiasm for Physical Activity

Help Children Understand Why Movement is Important

Video Content: Childhood Obesity - In Defense of Food

Summary