

Community Health Coalition, Inc.



Healthy People  
2020

Improving the health of Durham  
& NC communities since 1989

Community Health Coalition, Inc.

407 Crutchfield Street P. O. Box 15176  
Durham, NC 27704

Tel: (919) 470-8680 Fax: (919) 470-8688

[www.chealthc.org](http://www.chealthc.org) [healthcoali@aol.com](mailto:healthcoali@aol.com)

[www.facebook.com/chealthc](https://www.facebook.com/chealthc) [www.twitter.com/chealthc](https://www.twitter.com/chealthc)



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## Healthy Sunday Topic: Childhood Obesity September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month



Childhood obesity has become an epidemic in the United States. However, research consistently shows that certain racial and ethnic communities are disproportionately affected. Sharply higher rates of overweight and obesity have occurred among African-American, Latino, American Indian and Alaskan Native children and adolescents. Although the Center for Disease Control reports a 40% decrease in the obesity rate of children ages 2 to 5 years old, children of minority communities have not yet shown as much of a decrease in obesity rates.

Dr. Matthew Brothers, pediatric cardiologist at Novant Health Pediatric Cardiology in Charlotte, NC says, **"The success of our communities is dependent on the health of our children. Childhood obesity is one of the biggest preventable threats to our future."** North Carolina has the 23rd highest childhood obesity rate in the United States. Currently 31.4% of youth in North Carolina are overweight. Obese children are more likely to become obese adults. And if you're overweight as a child, your obesity in adulthood is likely to be more severe. It is therefore more important to make changes while you're young.



Matthew Brothers, MD

## What are the Consequences of Childhood Obesity?

- Increased risk factors for cardiovascular disease such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure.
- Increased risk of “prediabetes,” a condition that is associated with a high risk of developing diabetes.
- Greater risk for bone/joint problems, sleep apnea, and social and psychological problems such as stigmatization and poor self-esteem.
- Higher likelihood to be obese as adults, which is associated with heart disease, diabetes, stroke, cancer and osteoarthritis.

## A Look at the Epidemic at a Glance

- The food industry spends **\$1.6 billion** marketing its products to children and adolescents, disproportionately to children of minorities
- **35% of American children** are overweight or obese
- On an average visit to a fast-food restaurant, teens ordered **800-1,100** calories in a single meal -- half of their recommended daily caloric intake
- Children ages **8 to 18** spend about **7.5 hours per day** using TV/computer/video games compared to 12 minutes engaged in vigorous physical activity
- **Increases in television viewing** are associated with **increased calorie intake** among youth.

## How to Prevent Childhood Obesity

**A**void high-calorie, low-nutrient foods, such as juices, soda, and treats. Don't deprive children of occasional treats, however. This can make them more likely to overeat.

**B**e active! Children and teens should participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity most days of the week, and every day if possible.

**C**reate a family culture that supports a healthy lifestyle. Choose healthful foods and participate in physical activity as a family



## For More Information

[www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org](http://www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org)

[www.letsmove.gov](http://www.letsmove.gov)

[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)

**Health Tip** is a message from **Community Health Coalition, Inc.** and is written in partnership with Central Carolina Black Nurses' Council Inc., The Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Durham and Vicinity, and Duke Regional Hospital.

**REMEMBER Healthy People 2020: A Clear Vision to Healthy Living!**