Childhood Obesity
Modifiable Risk Factors

Poor Parental Role Modeling

Strategies:

• Shop, prepare food and dine as a family every night
• At the grocery store have children pick one fruit and vegetable to try and help prepare each week
• Reduce fast food to less than once per week
• Select one grocery store aisle each week to read food labels as a family
• Don’t draw attention to unhealthy activities with negative comments. Instead, praise the child when they choose active play or healthy foods.

A Mother’s Actions Scream Louder than Her Words… (Trim Kids, 2001)

- Mothers' food consumption is the single best predictor of toddlers' food consumption.
- Children’s food preferences are more strongly correlated with mother.
- Children will eat more food if served more.
- Mothers who are preoccupied with dieting may influence their daughters habits.
- Mothers food decisions influence daughters’ choices (milk, fruits/veggies, whole grains).

Mothers and Adolescent Offspring in the Molecular and Social Determinants of Obesity In Developing Youth Study

![Histogram of Daily Total Caloric Intake (Kilocalories) vs. Percent of Participants (N=50)](image1)

![Scatterplot of Maternal BMI vs. Offspring Total Caloric Intake (Kilocalories) with trendline showing significance P < 0.01*)](image2)

* Griffiths, et al, Obesity Society, 2015; manuscript in review
Childhood Obesity Modifiable Risk Factors

Food as a Reward

Strategies:

• Don’t label foods good or bad
• Never give food as a reward for good behavior
• Teach children that all food is OK; some is “grow tall or big” food and some is not

Scientific Support:

Bring your report card into your local Krispy Kreme and for every “A” we’ll give you a FREE doughnut!

Offer good for one doughnut per “A”, per grading period. For a limited time only. Not valid with any other offer. Original report card must be presented, and will be marked by Krispy Kreme. Limit 6 doughnuts per grading period. Designed for grades K-6.
Childhood Obesity
Modifiable Risk Factors

Sugar Sweetened Beverages

Strategy:
  • Give water for thirst and low fat milk during meal times

Scientific Support:
Childhood Obesity Modifiable Risk Factors

Skipping Breakfast

- Daily consumption of breakfast is inversely associated with obesity prevalence in 10-12-year-old children
- Breakfast skipping associated with increased intra-abdominal adipose tissue in Hispanic youth

Strategy:
- Always serve children a healthy breakfast of lean protein, fresh fruit and whole-grain products

Scientific Support:
Childhood Obesity
Modifiable Risk Factors

Large Food Portion Sizes

Strategies:
• Serve children an appropriate portion size of each food prepared
• Teach children it’s okay to leave food on plates, so they will learn to self-regulate
• Let your child’s appetite determine food intake

Scientific Support:
Childhood Obesity  Modifiable Risk Factors

Mindless Snacking

Strategies:

• Consume foods and drinks in the kitchen and dining room only
• Redirect unhealthy snack selections by giving choices
  • Example: Would you like strawberries, carrots or melon?

Scientific Support:

Childhood Obesity Modifiable Risk Factors

Non-Nutritious Snack Foods in the Home

Strategies:
• Gradually replace non-nutritious foods in the home.
• Display within reach nutritious foods naturally low in fat and sugar such as healthy fruits and snacks
  • Grapes, raisins, cheese, etc.
• Allow infrequent consumption of non-nutritious foods away from the home.
• Downsize: Place foods in serving size containers

Scientific Support:
  Lannigan, Child, 2010; Barlow, Pediatrics, 2007; Sothern, Handbook of Pediatric Obesity, Taylor and Francis, 2006

LSU Health New Orleans
Childhood Obesity Modifiable Risk Factors

Disproportionate Use of Strollers, Infant Seats, etc.

Strategies:
- Allow infants and toddlers unstructured floor and outdoor time
- Limit time in infant seats, high chairs and strollers

Scientific Support:
American Academy of Pediatrics, 2012