

LET'S MOVE!



The Facts for African Americans

Let's Move! is a comprehensive initiative, launched by the First Lady, dedicated to solving the problem of childhood obesity in a generation so that kids born today will grow up healthier and able to pursue their dreams. This is an ambitious goal. But it can be done. Combining comprehensive strategies with common sense, *Let's Move!* is all about putting children on the path to a healthy future starting with their earliest months and years and continuing throughout their lives. Giving parents helpful information and fostering environments that support healthy choices. Providing healthier foods in our schools. Ensuring that every community has access to healthy, affordable food. And, helping kids become more physically active.

Obesity in the African American Community

Over the past three decades, childhood obesity rates in America have tripled. In the African American community alone, nearly 40% of children are overweight or obese. Among young African American children, over 11% of those ages two-five already are obese. The statistics for African American adolescent girls ages 12-19—who have the highest prevalence of obesity of any group by gender, race or ethnicity—are equally alarming.

Obesity has serious health consequences. Childhood obesity is a contributing factor to a higher risk of chronic illnesses—including diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer and asthma—among African American youth.

“In the end, as First Lady, this isn’t just a policy issue for me. This is a passion. This is my mission. I am determined to work with folks across this country to change the way a generation of kids thinks about food and physical activity.”

—First Lady Michelle Obama

Mrs. Obama began a national conversation about the health of America’s children when she broke ground on the White House Kitchen Garden with students from a local elementary school in Washington, DC. Through the garden, she began a discussion with kids about nutrition and the role food plays in living a healthy life. That discussion grew into the Let’s Move! campaign, which was launched by the First Lady in February, 2010.





“As adults it is up to us to be good role models to the younger generation. When it comes to taking charge of our physical health, we can educate and empower children to make smart choices so that they will learn the benefits and make physical activity and good nutrition a lifelong habit.”

—Dominique Dawes, Olympic Gymnast;
Co-Chair, President’s Council
on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition

Find out more
www.letsmove.gov

Learn more about how your family can make healthier choices and get moving. Find tips on healthy eating. Discover fun activities you and your family can do together. Read the latest *Let’s Move!* news. Sign up for our newsletter and see what else you can do to fight childhood obesity in your community or schools.

Additional resources
www.fitness.gov
www.presidentschallenge.org



What You Can Do

The good news is you can help your children maintain a healthy lifestyle. Remember, you are a role model when it comes to your children’s eating and exercise habits. Encourage kids to eat healthier and to move more. When children combine physical activity with health in their daily routine, they help prevent a range of chronic issues, including heart disease, cancer and stroke—the three leading causes of death. Along with decreasing obesity risk, physical activity helps to control weight, build lean muscle, reduce fat and promote strong bone, muscle and joint development. Physical activity has also been shown to improve academic performance, including better grades, test scores, classroom behavior, attention, and concentration. And, of course, healthy eating gives kids the proper nutrition they need to stay energized, active and maintain a healthy weight.

Let’s Get Moving

Get kids moving and make healthier choices for your children

- Children need 60 minutes of active and vigorous play each day
- Serve fruit or veggies with every meal
- Substitute water or low-fat milk for sweetened beverages
- Pick a vegetable they like and find different, tasty ways to prepare it
- Substitute healthier ingredients such as whole wheat pasta, and lean meats in their favorite recipes
- Eat meals as a family

Take your family to see a doctor

- Make sure that every family member gets their Body Mass Index (BMI) checked when they go in for annual check-ups
- Talk to your doctor about diet, physical activity and other behaviors that affect your family’s health

Earn a Presidential Active Lifestyle Award (PALA)

- When you and your kids commit to an activity five days a week for six weeks—like walking to school together, riding bicycles or taking the stairs instead of the elevator—you can each get an award from President Obama!

Support a community garden

- Find a place to grow a garden with your kids—at school, church or in an empty lot—so they can learn to eat what they grow

Help build a community playground

- Work with your community and other organizations to build a playground so that kids have a place to get 60 minutes of physical activity a day