

Celebrate Black History Month with Michelle Obama



Learn the Facts: *Let's Move!*

"The physical and emotional health of an entire generation and the economic health and security of our nation is at stake." – Former First Lady Michelle Obama

Obesity by the numbers

Over the past three decades, childhood obesity rates in America have tripled, and today, nearly one in three children in America are overweight or obese. The numbers are even higher in African-American and Hispanic communities, where nearly 40 percent of the children are overweight or obese. If we don't solve this problem, one third of all children born in 2000 or later will suffer from diabetes at some point in their lives. Many others will face chronic obesity-related health problems like heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer, and asthma.

How Did We Get Here?

Thirty years ago, most people led lives that kept them at a healthy weight. Kids walked to and from school every day, ran around at recess, participated in gym class, and played for hours after school before dinner. Meals were home-cooked with reasonable portion sizes and there was always a vegetable on the plate. Eating fast food was rare and snacking between meals was an occasional treat.

Today, children experience a very different lifestyle. Walks to and from school have been replaced by car and bus rides. Gym class and after-school sports have been cut; afternoons are now spent with TV, video games, and the internet. Parents are busier than ever and families eat fewer home-cooked meals. Snacking between meals is now commonplace.

Thirty years ago, kids ate just one snack a day, whereas now they are trending toward three snacks, resulting in an additional 200 calories a day. And one in five school-age children has up to six snacks a day.

Portion sizes have also exploded -- they are now two to five times bigger than they were in years past. Beverage portions have grown as well- in the mid-1970s, the average sugar-sweetened beverage was 13.6 ounces compared today, kids think nothing of drinking 20 ounces of sugar-sweetened beverages at a time.

In total, we are now eating 31 percent more calories than we were forty years ago—including 56 percent more fats and oils and 14 percent more sugars and sweeteners. The average American now eats fifteen more pounds of sugar a year than in 1970.

Eight to 18-year old adolescents spend an average of 7.5 hours a day using entertainment media, including, TV, computers, video games, cell phones and movies, and only one-third of high school students get the recommended levels of physical activity.

Now that's the bad news. The good news is that by making just a few lifestyle changes, we can help our children lead healthier lives—and we already have the tools we need to do it. We just need the will.

Let's Move! was an initiative launched by Mrs. Obama and dedicated to solving childhood obesity within a generation so that children born today will grow up healthier and able to pursue their dreams. Everyone has a role to play in reducing childhood obesity, including parents, elected officials from all levels of government, schools, health care professionals, faith-based and community-based organizations, and private sector companies. Your involvement is key to ensuring a healthy future.

-- <https://letsmove.obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/learn-facts/epidemic-childhood-obesity>

Name _____ Class _____



Test your knowledge by reviewing today's reading on good health.

1. What are the health risks of obesity?

2. Compare today's lifestyle and eating habits with those 30 years ago.

3. Part of our problem is portion size and sweets. Explain, citing specifics.

4. How do television, computers, cell phones and video games contribute to health problems?

Michelle Obama: ‘Let’s Lead Healthy Lives!’

When she was First Lady, Michelle Obama urged young Americans to eat well, exercise and avoid obesity to achieve good health. Often, Mrs. Obama did calisthenics with children to provide a positive example.

Write a strong essay in response to the “Let’s Move” article making sure to fill the lines below. Cite three or more pieces of evidence from the material. Indicate the importance of nutrition and balanced meals. Keeping in mind the advice of Mrs. Obama, tell how we can improve our diets and lead healthier lives.





