



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

HEALTHY WEIGHT AND YOUR CHILD PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Promoting Achievable Change

Childhood Obesity is a growing problem in the United States. More than one third of children and teenagers ages two to 19 are obese or overweight, and that rate has tripled in the past 30 years. Childhood obesity can have a harmful effect on the body in several ways, putting children at high risk to develop cardiovascular disease, diabetes, sleep apnea, asthma, joint problems, heartburn, and social and psychological problems. Obese children are more likely to become obese adults, leading to more serious health conditions including heart disease, diabetes and some cancers.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

In response to this critical health care issue, Healthy Weight and Your Child (HWYC) is an evidence-based, weight-management program that seeks to empower children and families through education, healthy eating, and physical activity. The program's goal is to elicit positive change and help families learn skills and behaviors that enable them to live a healthier lifestyle so that children enter adulthood at a healthy weight.

Through the leadership of trained Y staff, the 25-session program engages a child and adult as a pair so that, together, they can understand how the home environment and other factors influence choices that lead to a healthy weight. The program is structured with the first 20 sessions occurring twice per week and the last 5 sessions occurring once per week. Each session is two hours in length and includes content and physical activity. Made up of groups of 10 to 15 families (child and adult), the program creates a safe, fun, and active environment where families have the opportunity to explore and adopt proven methods to living a healthier lifestyle.

PROGRAM BENEFITS

Healthy Weight and Your Child is based on Mind, Exercise, Nutrition...Do It! (MEND), the most widely disseminated and extensively evaluated child weight-management program in the world. Research on the program model has shown statistically significant reductions in body mass index, waist circumference, and sedentary activities, and improvements in physical activity and self-esteem at six months—results that were sustained at 12 months.

The program is designed to support youth and families as they seek to achieve positive change including:

- a reduction in the child’s body mass index (BMI);
- the adoption of healthier eating habits by the family;
- an increase in daily physical activity; and
- improved self-esteem for participants.

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Youth must meet the following criteria to qualify to participate in the program:

- The child must be 7 to 13 years old at the start of a group class.
- The child must carry excess weight, with a body mass index of the 95th percentile or higher.
- The child must receive clearance from a health care provider or school nurse to participate in physical activity.
- An adult must attend all sessions with the child.