



U.S. Department of  
Health and Human  
Services



National Institutes  
of Health



National Heart,  
Lung, and Blood  
Institute



A national education program working with parents and caregivers to address the growing problem of overweight in our nation's youth.

# What is *We Can!*



A national education program targeting youth, ages 8–13, and their parents and caregivers in home and community settings to meet the overall goal of preventing overweight and obesity.

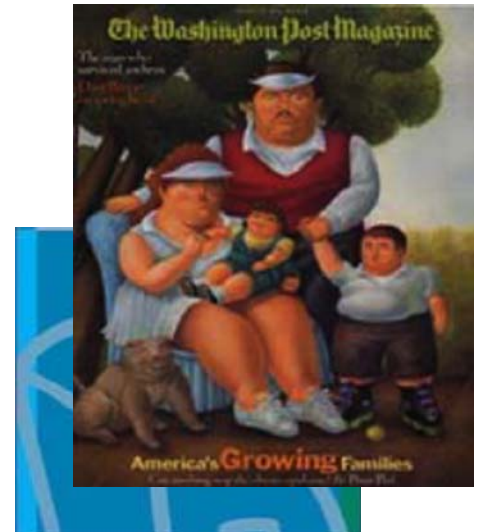
Turn-key,  
Science-based  
program for the  
entire  
community

Flexible!  
Use in a  
variety of  
settings

Fosters  
collaboration!

# It's time for *We Can!* now because...

- National data show alarming rates in overweight and obesity in children and adults.
  - The percentage of children & teens that are overweight has doubled in past 30 years
  - About 16% of children (2–19 yrs) are overweight
  - Overweight is having a greater effect on minorities, including African American and Mexican American children
- There are serious health problems related to overweight and obesity.
  - Heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, asthma, low self-esteem, isolation, eating disorders, and more
- Helping children helps our families.



# Why the increase?

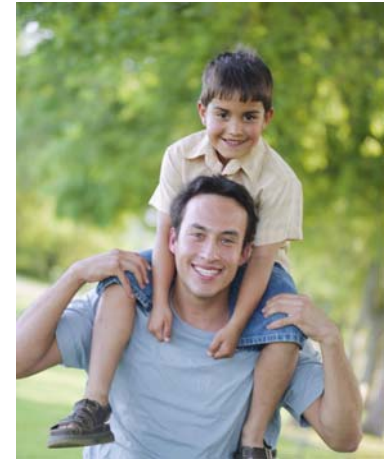
---

- Multiple causes
  - Lifestyle, environment, and genes
- Bottom line is ENERGY BALANCE (calories and physical activity)
  - Since 1978, more calories are being consumed:
    - Larger food portions and sizes
    - More meals consumed outside the home
    - Increased soda, pizza, and candy consumption
  - Since 1970, fewer calories are being used up:
    - Declines in physical activity
    - Increases in sedentary lifestyles and screen time
      - Computers and television time

# Why parents and caregivers?

---

- ❑ Studies show parents as effective change agents concerning obesity.
- ❑ The home is a primary source of nutrition for children.
- ❑ Parents can act as effective role models for youth.



# The *We Can!* Parent Curriculum

- Is a 6-session program that focuses on “energy balance”
- Has three topics of focus:
  - Smart nutrition
  - Physical activity
  - Screen time (TV, computer, video)
- Encourages *We Can!* specific objectives:
  - Offering healthier foods in the home
  - Enjoying small portions at home and at restaurants
  - Limiting foods and beverages high in fat and added sugar
  - Increasing family fun with physical activity
  - Reducing screen time
- Is not a weight loss program
- Is supplemented with online content and resources

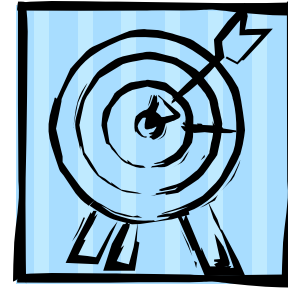


# What can *We Can!* do for you?

---

□ We hope you'll walk away with:

- Strategies and tools
- Ways to be an example
- Resources for the future



□ And we hope you'll enjoy learning together!





# Any Questions? Your thoughts?

---

