

A Guidebook for Healthy Weight Program in Schools



Promoting Your Health
Health Promotion Administration,
Ministry of Health and Welfare

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Preface

Children and adolescents are the future of every country. They also ensure the sustainable development of a nation. WHO has reiterated that children represent the future, and ensuring their healthy growth and development should be the prime concern of all societies. As a result, we need to make sure that children and adolescents are growing and developing in a healthy way, receive education and participate in economic activities without the threat of diseases. Many physical challenges in adulthood may be traced back to one's childhood and adolescence development.

Research has shown that half of the obese children will end up as obese adults. Two-thirds of obese adolescents will become obese adults, suffering a higher risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes, metabolism syndromes, dyslipidemia, hypertension, and coronary artery heart disease. The results from the data of students' health checkup from the Ministry of Education in 2012 (analyzed according to "Suggested BMI for Children and Adolescents" announced by Ministry of Health and Welfare in 2013) showed that 29.8% (33.7% male students and 25.6% female students) of elementary school children and 29.5% (34.3% male students and 24.3% female students) of junior high school students were either overweight or obese. WHO reported in 2000 that obesity is a chronic disease, and "The Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health" in 2004 also indicated that healthy diet and physical activities are the two primary measures to prevent chronic diseases and reduce risk of obesity-related diseases. WHO has set nine goals for the prevention of non-communicable diseases before 2025 - including decreasing prevalence rate of adult overweight and obesity. Thus, obesity

prevention should start from childhood. Promoting healthy weight programs in schools will help our pupils develop healthy lifestyles, through healthy eating and building regular exercising habits.

Children and adolescents are growing rapidly and thus will be easily affected by the environments. Schools are vital places to cultivate students' healthy lifestyle. If schools can promote health concepts appropriately, students will be able to develop healthy habits. In order to assist schools in promoting healthy body weight, the Health Promotion Administration (HPA) compiled this guidebook to help our students learn about "eat smartly, exercise regularly and weigh daily", while at the same time satisfy their growth requirements. Through controlling their own weight, students may avoid the threats posed by underweight, overweight and obesity.

Children and adolescents are the treasures of our nation, and our love for them cannot wait. We would like to invite all parents and school staff to safeguard our students' health, by joining the healthy weight campaign proposed by HPA to create a healthy learning environment for our kids. Our students need to increase their physical strength and enhance their knowledge on nutrition and calories. Only through the health of our children can we see the future competitive edge of our nation!

Sincerely yours,

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Director General, Health Promotion Administration,
Ministry of Health and Welfare, Taiwan
2014. 10

Chapter One

Motivation



Students are important assets of our nation. It is our responsibility to ensure that all students will study and grow in a healthy and happy environment. With knowledge on health topics such as healthy BMI (Body Mass Index), physical activity and healthy diet, students will know how to attain healthy lifestyles. We aim to create a healthy, supportive learning environment for the sake of our children and adolescents.

1 Why Do We Need to Promote Healthy Weight Programs in Schools?

In 2012, 29.8% of elementary school children and 29.5% of junior high school students are overweight or obese. The data also showed that 7.1% of elementary school children and 6.2% of junior high school students are underweight.*



Increase proportions of students with healthy body weights

Reduced the threats of unhealthy weight to students' health, growth and development



Underweight students will suffer from problems such as growth retardation and reduced attention span. Overweight and obese students will suffer from a higher risk of chronic diseases, such as diabetes, metabolism syndromes, dyslipidemia, hypertension, and coronary artery heart disease. Therefore, healthy weights of students should be the major concern of educational staff and parents.

Increasing the proportion of healthy weight is one of the major policies of Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health and Welfare.



1. Ministry of Education included healthy BMI as an important health issue of health promoting school program.
2. Ministry of Health and Welfare launched the international accreditation of health promoting schools program, which includes healthy BMI program as one of its accreditation standards.



- *1. Resource: data of students' health checkup from the Ministry of Education, 2012.
2. The definition of underweight, overweight and obese are based on "Suggested BMI for Children and Adolescents" announced by Ministry of Health and Welfare in 2013.

2 What Are the Weight Problems of Our Students ?

We recommend conducting an assessment on the health needs of the teachers and students in the school with currently available data from the Ministry of Education, which will result in better understanding of health problems in each school and in each county/ city. Doing so will also help to interpret the results of the healthy weight management program. Please see the following examples.



Evaluate students' physique

Acknowledge the proportions of the obese, overweight, normal weight and underweight students.

Check physical fitness

Understand about the physical fitness status of teachers and students.

Compare data with other counties and cities

Be informed on the current health status of students in Taiwan; investigate the proportions of awareness on correct BMI calculation, prevalence of physical activities, healthy diet, and full 8-hour sleep among students. Conduct a survey on the aforementioned health literacy of students in counties and cities.

Chapter Two

Practical Tips



Schools are important learning places for children and adolescents. Schools have great influence over children's and adolescents' healthy behaviors. Through education and health promotion program, we are able to create healthy and friendly environments for them to learn and grow. We will also integrate community resources and intervene through various means to effectively promote students' health.

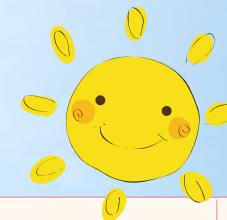


1

Five Tips for School Principals



- 1 Principals' pledge** Open pledge and commitment (please see the sample,P17)
- 2 Organize a task force** Convene a task force and assign a leader to promote healthy weight program.
- 3 Be aware of the current weight status** Be aware of the current weight status of staffs, teachers and students (please see table 2,P19)
- 4 Set up Goals** Set up Goals of the school' s Healthy Weight Program.
- 5 School Healthy Weight Policy** Draw up a school healthy weight policy and include the healthy weight program into school calendar via administrative meetings.



Sample of School Principal's Open Pledge and Commitment



Pledge of Healthy Weight Program in the
_____ Elementary School/ Junior High School

Students are the future of a nation. In order to ensure healthy body weights for all students, I (the Principal), on behalf of our school, hereby pledge to coordinate our staffs, teachers, students, parents, volunteers, and collaborate with communities, to set up a task force to promote healthy weight program in the _____ Elementary School/ Junior High School.

I promise to lead all students, staffs and teachers to enforce the promotion on healthy body weights. I promise to create a healthy and supportive environment to enhance the health of all students, staffs and teachers, and to cultivate students with best mental and physical health.

Signature:

Date:

Table 1 Healthy Weight Program Check List for School Principals

Items	Accomplished?	Date
1 Open pledge and commitment.	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	
2 Convene a task force and assign a leader to promote healthy weight program.	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	
3 Be aware of the current weight status of staffs, teachers and students.	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	
4 Set up goals of the school's healthy weight program.	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	
5 Draw up a school healthy weight policy and include the healthy weight program into school calendar via administrative meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	

Table 2 Check List for School Principals to Know Weight Status

Current Weight Status of Staff, Teachers and Students	Check by School Principals
1 Are you aware of the current weight status of students?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
2 Are you aware of the current weight status of staffs and teachers?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
3 Are you aware of the current status of students' dietary habits?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
4 Are you aware of the current status of students' exercise habits?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
5 Are you aware of the current status of staff's and teachers' dietary habits?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
6 Are you aware of the current status of staff's and teachers' exercise habits?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
7 Are you aware of any existing school healthy policies for healthy weight?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
8 Are you aware of the changing trends of weight status in your school?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
9 Are you aware of the comparison of weight status between your school and other schools in the county/city?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no

✧Set up Healthy Weight Goals:

Total Kilograms of Weight Loss

Weight loss target (kg) = The number of overweight and obese participants¹ x 1 kilogram per person

¹ The number of overweight and obese participants = The total number of students, staffs and teachers x Percentage of overweight or obesity individuals x Estimated rate of participation



Example

If the total population of the school was 1000 people, percentage of overweight or obesity individuals was 30%, and the estimated rate of participation was 9%, the calculation is as following :

- The population of obese and overweight individuals :
1000 people (Total population of the school) x 30%
(Percentage of overweight or obesity individuals) = 300 people
- The number of overweight and obese participants:
300 people (The population of obese and overweight individuals) x 9% (Estimated rate of participation) = 27 people
- The weight loss target :
27 people (The number of overweight and obese participants) x 1 kg per person = 27 kg

2

Tips for Members of Healthy Weight Task Force

(1) Roles and Duties of Every member

School Health Needs Assessment

- ✓ Conduct school health needs assessment and present report. (please see Table 1,P26)
- ✓ Draw up strategies to promote healthy weight program.
- ✓ Examine obesogenic environments.



Collaboration between each department in schools

- ✓ Team work and cooperation shows better results. (please see Table 2,P30)
- ✓ Assign each member with their team role.
- ✓ Office of Academic Affairs: integrate health promotion education into curriculums.
- ✓ Office of Students' Affairs: integrate concepts of health promotion into school calendar.
- ✓ Office of General Affairs: create environments in which physical activities are encouraged and provide healthy, safe and delicious lunch meals.



► Check List for Healthy Weight Task Force in Schools

Items	Accomplished?	Confirmation from Person in Charge	Date completed
1 Task Force is organized by staff, nurses, students, and parents in the school.	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		
2 Conduct school health needs assessment in the school.	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		
3 Set up a healthy weight program in the school.	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		
4 Integrate healthy weight programs into the school calendar.	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		
5 Set up action plans based on six components of Health Promoting School.	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		

Items	Accomplished?	Confirmation from Person in Charge	Date completed
6 Launch healthy weight programs in the school (for both overweight and underweight students).	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		
7 Convene task force meetings regularly and take minutes.	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		
8 Design theme-based lessons and integrate healthy weight and diet concepts into lessons.	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		
9 Integrate healthy weight concepts into school calendar.	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		
10 Create supportive environments for physical activities.	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		

Table 1 Comparison of Students' Healthy Weight and Healthy Behavior Status

		Nationwide		In Our County/ City	My School (Pre-test)	My School (Post-test)
		Elementary School	Junior High School			
Body Weight Status	Obese (%)					
	Overweight (%)					
	Obese and Overweight (%)					
	Normal (%)					
	Underweight (%)					
	Average Height (cm) of 7-years-old					
	Average Weight (kg) of 7-years-old					
Physical Activity	Exercise more than 420 minutes per week (Exercise at least 60 minutes a day, 7 days a week).					
	Watching TV, playing computer games, surfing the Internet, and using computers after school for less than 2 hours every day.					
Sleep 8 hours a day						
Healthy Diet	Eat breakfast every day.					
	Eat 5 servings of vegetable and fruit every day.					
	Do not drink sugary beverages.					
	Do not eat fried food.					
Aware of one's own BMI						

- The healthy weight task force should complete Table 1 according to the current body weight status of students. The task force should also draw up an action plan and integrate the plan into the school calendar, and conducts pre- and post-tests to compare the results, and report the findings to the principal.



Problem

The percentage of obese and overweight students is **higher than** that of the nation

Goal

- Goal 1** Reduce the percentage of overweight and obese among students.
- Goal 2** Set up weight loss goals for overweight and obese students.

Strategy

- Strategy 1** Provide an extra physical education session every week.
- Strategy 2** Provide enough exercise facilities and ensure the safety of exercise environments.
- Strategy 3** Provide healthy and nutritious lunch meals with less fat and more vegetables and fruits.
- Strategy 4** Encourage students to drink more water and do not offer sugary drinks as reward.



Table 2 Duty Assignment for Members of the Healthy Weight Task Force in Schools (for reference only)

Units	Duties	Person in Charge	Note
Office of Students' Affairs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide an extra physical education session every week. 2. Enrich students' knowledge on healthy weight and teach them how to calculate their own BMI. 		
Office of Academic Affairs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organize extra 30-minute sessions for physical activities in the morning or during recesses (morning/afternoon). 2. Organize sports events to increase exercise opportunities in school. 3. Organize intra- or inter-class/school events to promote healthy weight, healthy diet and dynamic life styles. 		



Units	Duties	Person in Charge	Note
Office of General Affairs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide enough exercise facilities and ensure the safety of exercise environments. 2. Provide enough drinking fountains. 		
Nurses	Use the results of students' physical checkup as basis and set up targets for excessive weight loss (in kgs) for overweight and obese students.		
Dieticians	Design healthy and nutritious lunch menus with less fat and more vegetables and fruits.		

(2) Whole-School Mobilization and Motivation

School staffs play vital roles in the promotion of healthy weight on campus. Especially school nurses, who are qualified professionals that are able to check students' physical conditions, file data and utilize it in health status reports. They are crucial to the promotion of healthy weight in schools. School dietitians are professionals in planning healthy diet, food safety and healthy lunch menus; they are instrumental in promoting balanced diet for the students.

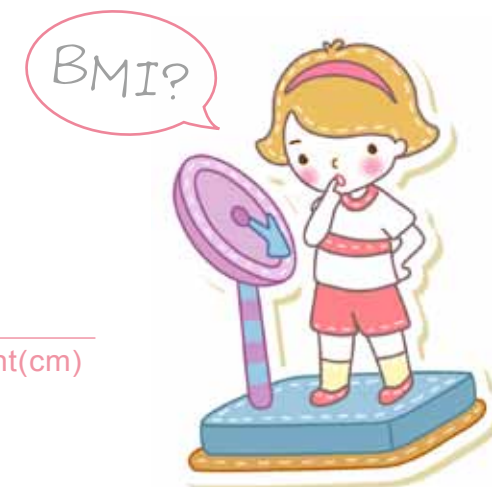


A. How to tell whether students are overweight or obese?

At the present time, we adhere to the “Suggested BMI for Children and Adolescents (P34, P35)” to tell whether a student is underweight, normal, overweight or obese.

► BMI: Body Mass Index

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{Weight(Kg)}}{\text{Height(cm)} \times \text{Height(cm)}}$$



Suggested BMI for Children and Adolescents

Age	Male			Female		
	Normal	Overweight	Obese	Normal	Overweight	Obese
	(BMI range)	(BMI \geq)	(BMI \geq)	(BMI range)	(BMI \geq)	(BMI \geq)
0	11.5-14.8	14.8	15.8	11.5-14.7	14.7	15.5
0.5	15.2-18.9	18.9	19.9	14.6-18.6	18.6	19.6
1	14.8-18.3	18.3	19.2	14.2-17.9	17.9	19
1.5	14.2-17.5	17.5	18.5	13.7-17.2	17.2	18.2
2	14.2-17.4	17.4	18.3	13.7-17.2	17.2	18.1
2.5	13.9-17.2	17.2	18	13.6-17.0	17	17.9
3	13.7-17.0	17	17.8	13.5-16.9	16.9	17.8
3.5	13.6-16.8	16.8	17.7	13.3-16.8	16.8	17.8
4	13.4-16.7	16.7	17.6	13.2-16.8	16.8	17.9
4.5	13.3-16.7	16.7	17.6	13.1-16.9	16.9	18
5	13.3-16.7	16.7	17.7	13.1-17.0	17	18.1
5.5	13.4-16.7	16.7	18	13.1-17.0	17	18.3
6	13.5-16.9	16.9	18.5	13.1-17.2	17.2	18.8
6.5	13.6-17.3	17.3	19.2	13.2-17.5	17.5	19.2
7	13.8-17.9	17.9	20.3	13.4-17.7	17.7	19.6
7.5	14.0-18.6	18.6	21.2	13.7-18.0	18	20.3
8	14.1-19.0	19	21.6	13.8-18.4	18.4	20.7
8.5	14.2-19.3	19.3	22	13.9-18.8	18.8	21

Suggested BMI for Children and Adolescents (continued)

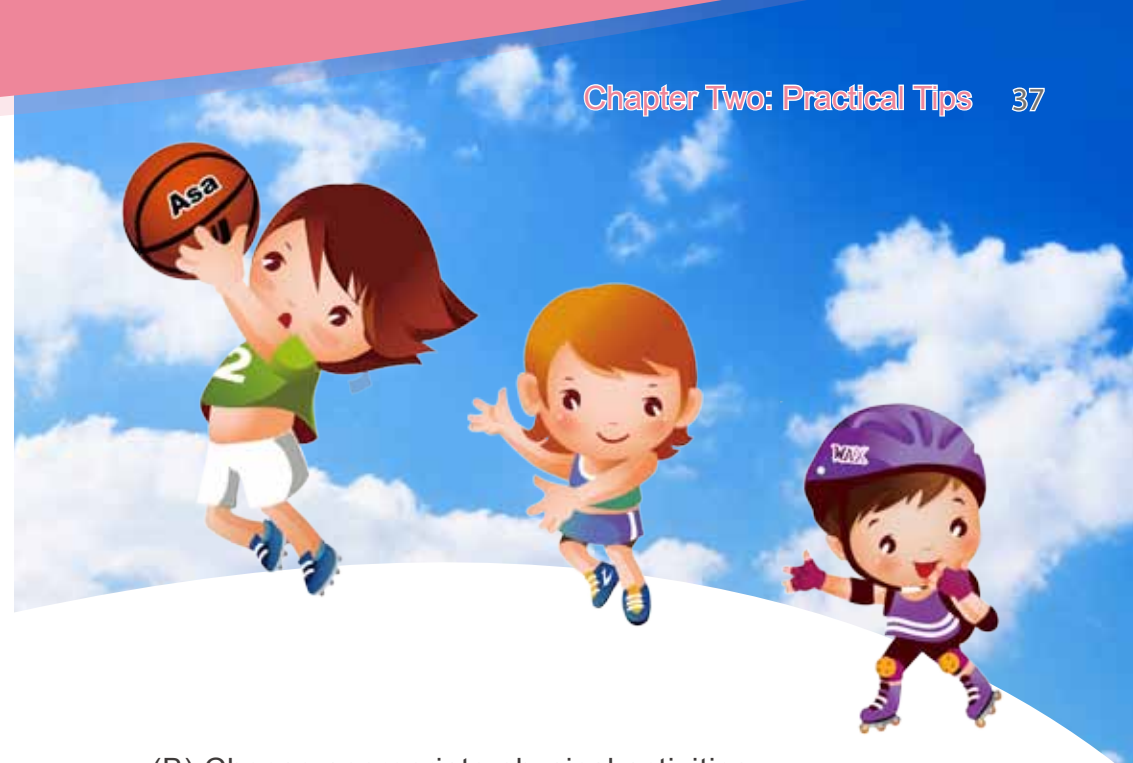
Age	Male			Female		
	Normal	Overweight	Obese	Normal	Overweight	Obese
	(BMI range)	(BMI \geq)	(BMI \geq)	(BMI range)	(BMI \geq)	(BMI \geq)
9	14.3-19.5	19.5	22.3	14.0-19.1	19.1	21.3
9.5	14.4-19.7	19.7	22.5	14.1-19.3	19.3	21.6
10	14.5-20.0	20	22.7	14.3-19.7	19.7	22
10.5	14.6-20.3	20.3	22.9	14.4-20.1	20.1	22.3
11	14.8-20.7	20.7	23.2	14.7-20.5	20.5	22.7
11.5	15.0-21.0	21	23.5	14.9-20.9	20.9	23.1
12	15.2-21.3	21.3	23.9	15.2-21.3	21.3	23.5
12.5	15.4-21.5	21.5	24.2	15.4-21.6	21.6	23.9
13	15.7-21.9	21.9	24.5	15.7-21.9	21.9	24.3
13.5	16.0-22.2	22.2	24.8	16.0-22.2	22.2	24.6
14	16.3-22.5	22.5	25	16.3-22.5	22.5	24.9
14.5	16.6-22.7	22.7	25.2	16.5-22.7	22.7	25.1
15	16.9-22.9	22.9	25.4	16.7-22.7	22.7	25.2
15.5	17.2-23.1	23.1	25.5	16.9-22.7	22.7	25.3
16	17.4-23.3	23.3	25.6	17.1-22.7	22.7	25.3
16.5	17.6-23.4	23.4	25.6	17.2-22.7	22.7	25.3
17	17.8-23.5	23.5	25.6	17.3-22.7	22.7	25.3
17.5	18.0-23.6	23.6	25.6	17.3-22.7	22.7	25.3

Announced on June 11, 2013 by Ministry of Health and Welfare.

B. Know the benefits of physical activities and create a supportive campus to promote physical activities

(A) Benefits of physical activity for students

- | | |
|--|--|
| ✓ Demonstrate higher academic performance | ✓ Improve self-confidence, social interaction and integration |
| ✓ Develop neuromuscular awareness (i.e. coordination and movement control) | ✓ Develop a healthy cardiovascular system (i.e. heart and lungs) |
| ✓ Develop healthy musculoskeletal tissues (i.e. bones, muscles and joints) | ✓ Improve control over anxiety and depression |
| ✓ Maintain a healthy body weight | ✓ Improve sleep quality and vitality |
| ✓ Increase daily life satisfaction | ✓ Improves immunity |



(B) Choose appropriate physical activities:

- Whole-body physical activity: perform at least one of the following: walking, fast-walking, jogging, swimming, water jogging, cycling, stair climbing, doing aerobics.
- Moderate-intensity aerobic activity means you're working hard enough to raise your heart rate and break a sweat. One way to tell is that you'll be able to talk, but not sing the words to your favorite song.
- Daily-life physical activity: daily physical activity can be performed in short multiple bouts of at least 10 minutes; recommend 60 minutes total every day.



C. Eat Smartly and Choose a Balanced Diet

A balanced and healthy diet will vitalize students and teachers, improve their health, and reduce disease risks. A balanced diet and healthy lifestyle will reduce the risks of chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular diseases and diabetes. There are many ways to attain a healthy diet habit:

- (A) Drink water; don't drink sugary drinks.
- (B) Chew carefully and swallow slowly.
- (C) Eat breakfast, lunch and dinner. Don't skip meals.
- (D) Eat low-fat food and less fried food.
- (E) Eat five servings of vegetables and fruits every day.
- (F) Eat a balanced diet.
- (G) Eat at least three hours before going to bed.
- (H) Don't overeat (stop eating when you feel 80% full).
- (I) Eat more natural and unprocessed food.
- (J) Do not eat desserts and late-night snacks.

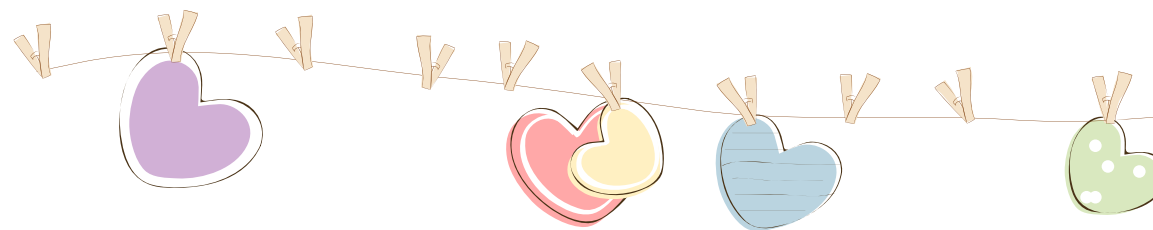
D. Easy ways to control healthy weight: cut down 100 Kcal every day

Obese or overweight students may lose up to 5kg in a year if they can cut down 100 Kcal everyday. For children and adolescents who are still growing, we may encourage them to exercise more often to burn off 100 Kcal, or reduce 100 Kcal of unhealthy food intakes, such as sugary drinks, fried foods, cakes and desserts, in order to successfully reach healthy body weight.



(3) Cooperate with Parents and Community Volunteers to Maximize Results.

Research has shown that boys are two times more likely to be obese if their parents are also obese. For girls, the risk is even higher: girls are four times more likely to become obese if their parents are obese. In addition to the genetic factor, diets, exercise habits and lifestyle will be passed down to the next generation. Particularly for students, it is the parents that often decide food intake for most of their meals. Parents also make decisions concerning students' extra curriculum activities and family trips. Therefore, the cooperation from parents and caregivers are very important when it comes to promote healthy weight status in the school. Community resources should also be integrated to help create a healthy environment for growth and to help students attain a healthy lifestyle.



A. Work with parents to create a healthy, supportive environment:

Through communication books, bulletin boards, family visits, and parent-teacher meetings to invite parents to help students attain healthy diets and exercise every day.

B. Schools, families and communities work together to promote healthy weight

- (A) Work with schools, families and communities to create supportive environments for promotion of healthy diet.
- (B) Choose good role models to encourage healthy weight trends.
- (C) Encourage and assist parents to participate in healthy-weight-related events and community services.

Chapter Three

Application and Example



Healthy Weight Promotion in
Guai-lin Elementary School in
Chia-Yi County: Strategies and
Results



According to the WHO survey, obesity rate around the world has doubled from 1980 to 2008. More than one-third of the world's adults are overweight and about one-tenth of adults are regarded as obese. More than 2.8 million adults die every year because of overweight or obesity. In addition, statistics also show that more than 40 million children under 5 years old are overweight. Some studies have indicated that childhood obesity is the main cause of adult obesity. Overweight children and adolescents are more likely to become obese adults and also increase risks

of chronic diseases and death. Additionally, the problem of underweight is also something that cannot be ignored. Underweight children will become easy victims to diseases, less energetic, slow in growth, more prone to respiratory and gastrointestinal diseases, and have weaker immune systems. Their intellectual development and performance will also be affected. As a result, healthy weight promotion among students in elementary schools and junior high schools is the first step to safeguard our nation's health.


In 2011, the Health Promotion Administration

Source: Guai-Lin Elementary School, Chai-Yi County.



▲ Magistrate Helen Chang performed healthy exercises with school children to encourage physical activities.

announced the obesity map of Taiwan for the first time. The rate of obese children in Chia-Yi County was the highest, and the rate of obese adults ranks the third nationwide. Such results were at first shocking for the residents in Chia-Yi County; the once healthy body shapes of the diligent People in Chia-Yi County have changed. Researchers have



shown that Chia-Yi County has the largest elderly population, lowest birthrate and increasing inter-cultural marriages. The family structure in Chia-Yi County has undergone a severe change: the number of children raised by single parents or by grandparents have increased dramatically. Foreign cultures and generation gaps have contributed to the lack of health education of the children's main caregivers, affecting children's dietary habits. In addition, the lack of exercise facilities and the prevalence of electrical devices have resulted in long hours of TV viewing and computer game playing for children. Imbalanced diets, together with the lack of exercise, have worsened the obesity condition of children in Chia-Yi County.

In the beginning of the 2012 academic year, the rate of students with unhealthy weight in our school

was 36%. When we further analyze the problems of our children's weight, we find that our students do not have enough exercise and their intakes of vegetable and fruit are too low. They also drink a lot of sugary beverages. Therefore, we commissioned Professor Ming-li Chen and her team to conduct a "Healthy Weight Action Survey" on our students. From the pre-test, it was found that for the question on "Whose advice will you take to eat more vegetables and fruits?", our children answered mostly "parents." As a result, in our plan to promote healthy weight management, we focus on parent's empowerment and students' health education. We hope that students will safeguard their own health and increase their exercise time in order to cultivate their own exercise habit. We encourage them to have a balanced diet and pursue a healthy lifestyle.



According to current resources available, we examined our current administration and reviewed our curriculums. We discussed with staff, teachers, and parent representatives during academic meetings and agreed to promote the following policies:

1. Set up consultation mechanism and aim for health management on a case-by-case basis



- (1) Based on the results of weight measurement in the beginning of the semester, we calculate the students' BMI and inform parents of children who are underweight, overweight and obese. So they will have a better understanding of their children's own weight status, and will work together with us for the sake their children's health.
- (2) Create case management for obese and underweight students. We administer a post-test of their dietary and exercise habits and record them in the "Health Diary." With parents' consent, we monitor the exercise time of obese children and control their diet, ensuring that they exercise at least 60 minutes a day and eat enough vegetables and fruits.

- (3) Based on the various physical conditions of the children, we created a chart of exercise time and intensity for school children to increase their physical fitness. For example, we suggested that students with normal weight should exercise at least 30 minutes a day; for obese students, they should exercise for more than 60 minutes. We also encouraged our students to jump rope; we placed a punch-in clock in the Principal's Office, and encourage obese students to punch in after they have jumped 150 times or more during class recess. At the end of each month, the principal will present award to students who have successfully lost some weight.

- ▼ Students jump ropes during class recess.



Source: Guai-Lin Elementary School, Chai-Yi County.

2. Review current courses and focusing on students' life experiences.

- (1) Promote awareness of healthy body weight during through lessons.
- (2) Focus on the promotion of balanced diet and nutrition education. Design related activities to increase student's knowledge of nutrition and change their dietary behaviors.
- (3) Organize sports clubs with teachers as volunteer supervisors, based on their expertise, and place them in different sports clubs on Tuesdays and Thursdays from

8:00-8:30 am. Students may join any clubs according to their interests. For example, there is unicycle club, rope-jump club, basketball club, field and track club, dance club, etc.

- (4) Teach students to swim and organize contests between classes and schools. We also plan summer and winter camps and health promotion carnivals, in which we plan various activities to cultivate students' exercise habits and to increase their exercise knowledge.



Photo by Mr. Yun-chi, Liao.

◀ Unicycle club members exploring the neighborhood. We encourage various kinds of sports.

Source: Guai-Lin Elementary School, Chai-Yi County.



Source: Guai-Lin Elementary School, Chai-Yi County.

3. Review school's nutrition policy to ensure a balanced diet.

- (1) We strictly monitor school's lunch menus and forbid fried foods and the addition of MSG. We add high-calcium foods, such as black sesame and dried fish, in our lunch menus. We provide low-fat milk once every week. For obese students, we provide fruits during the third recess in the morning. We increase the intakes of vegetables and fruits and balance our menus. We also encourage obese students to reduce food intakes during lunch to change their

eating habits.

- (2) Say no to sugary drinks: we set up clean and hygienic drinking fountains; we distribute reusable 200ml cups to students and teachers, and encourage students to drink at least one glass of water during each recess, in order to reach the goal of drinking at least 1500ml water every day.
- (3) In order to promote reading, we organized "Foreign Cuisine & Reading" event, inviting new immigrant mothers to the school and share their cultures and cuisines. We introduce students to foreign cultures and promote healthy diet at the same time. We invite parents to grow their own vegetables and donate them for school lunch, which help to reduce CO₂ emission and food wastage.



4. Increase parent's nutritional knowledge to empower them with health care information.



Source: Guai-Lin Elementary School, Chai-Yi County.

- (1) Through communication books and parent-teacher meetings, we provide parents with their children's health information. We remind parents to pay close attention to their children's balanced diet and exercise habit. We invite parents and teachers to work together and safeguard students' health.
- (2) Organize lectures on healthy diet: we invite dietitians from hospitals to come to schools and communicate with parents and community residents, and share healthy diet concepts with parents.

- ◀ The principal presented the current health situation of school children and sought supports from parents.



5. Promote healthy life in communities and focus on how to eat and exercise in a healthy way.

- (1) Organize community and school events for parents and kids; invite officials to schools to join in exercise events.
- (2) Build parks in school campuses and walking trails with caloric burnt markings to encourage residents, parents, teachers and students to exercise.
- (3) Through the exploration of our neighborhood, we extend our exercise space to communities. We planned safe and convenient running trails to encourage residents in the community to exercise.

► Dance club was invited to perform health exercises during community events.



Source: Guai-Lin Elementary School, Chai-Yi County.

We revise our intervention strategies after a year of implementation and review the results in school meetings. Major results are as follows:

1 About 60% of the students reached normal weight, which corresponded to an 8% decrease of unhealthy body weights.

2 Rates of students sleeping for more than 8 hours, vegetable intakes during lunch and exercises have reached 100%.

3 We procured three water fountains and inspect water quality regularly to ensure clean and fresh water are always available to students and teachers.

4 Banned fried foods and sugary drinks on campus. Our school lunch was evaluated as one of the best quality by the County Government.

5 Teachers, students and parents will exercise and pay attention to their diet.

6 Many students entered running activities and were awarded Fourth Place in the Sunny Road Running event in Chai-yi County.



“Eating smartly, exercising happily, and weighing daily” is the key to maintain healthy weight. However, students are often influenced by the environment in which healthy lifestyle cannot be maintained. As a result, schools should educate students about healthy lifestyle and encourage students to be the master of their own body. Students should learn to say “No!” to unhealthy foods and influence their parents. After promoting school health programs for years, teachers, students, parents and community residents will gradually feel the atmosphere and value their own health. In the future, as long as health concept is continually promoted, we will all have a healthy lifestyle.

Eat smartly, Exercise regularly
and Weigh daily



Appendix: A Letter to Parents

Dear Parents,

We would like to inform you that your child, (name)_____ in (class)_____ has a BMI of _____, after we measured his/her height and weight. According to "Suggested BMI for Children and Adolescents" the Healthy Weight Standards announced by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, your child is defined as obese. The World Health Organization has used BMI to tell whether one is obese or not. The higher BMI one has, the risk of suffering from obesity-related diseases is also higher. According to Article 10 of the School Health Act: The schools shall provide health guidance and corrective treatment for physical defects or treatment referrals based on the results of students' health checkup.

We have planned a healthy weight management program for the benefit of your child, and we plan to administer consultation for your child. We hope you may give us consent for the sake of your child.

In school:

1. Diet:

- (1) We provide free fruits during the third recess.
- (2) We provide less food during lunch to your child.
- (3) We encourage drinking at least 1500ml of water in school every day.

2. Exercise:

- (1) Exercise at least 60 minutes in school (rope jumping and walking are planned currently).
- (2) Join Exercise Club from 8:00 to 8:30 in the mornings of Tuesdays and Thursdays

At home: (Please keep a health diary)

1. Sleep more than 8 hours a day (Go to bed no later than 10 o'clock).
2. Finish breakfast before going to school.
3. Do not drink sugary drinks and say no to fried food and desserts.
4. Eat less.
5. No more than two hours each day for the following activities: TV watching, playing video games and using computer.

Sincerely yours,

Lee Chun-hui
School Principal,
Guai-lin Elementary School,
Chia-Yi County

Consent Form

I hereby agree that my child (name)_____ in (class) _____, will join the healthy weight management program in the Guai-lin Elementary School. I agree to work with the school to supervise my child to complete the health diary.

Guai-lin Elementary School, Budai Township, Chia-Yi County

Parents: _____

Date: _____



Memo
