

Township of Manalapan

BOARD OF HEALTH

120 Route 522 • Manalapan, NJ 07726 • 732-446-8345 • Fax 732-446-1576

Website: www.mtnj.org



September is NATIONAL CHILDHOOD OBESITY AWARENESS MONTH

About 1 of every 5 (17%) children in the United States has obesity and certain groups of children are more affected than others. In the past four decades, obesity rates in the United States have soared among all age groups. This rise in obesity rates has affected our youth in alarming fashion. Childhood obesity has increased more than fourfold among those ages 6 to 11. More than 23 million children and teenagers in the United States ages 2 to 19 are obese or overweight, a statistic that health and medical experts consider an epidemic. And this epidemic puts nearly one third of America's children at early risk for Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and even stroke – conditions usually associated with adulthood. While there is no single or simple solution, National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month provides an opportunity for learning about ways to prevent and address this serious health concern.

Childhood obesity is a major public health problem.

- Children who have obesity are more likely to have obesity as adults. This can lead to lifelong physical and mental health problems, including diabetes and increased risk of certain cancers.
- Children who have obesity face more bullying and stigma.
- Childhood obesity is influenced by many factors. For some children and families factors include too much time spent in sedentary activities such as television viewing; a lack of bedtime routine leading to too little sleep; a lack of community places to get adequate physical activity; easy access to inexpensive, high calorie snacks and beverages; or a lack of access to affordable, healthier foods.

There are ways parents can help prevent obesity and support healthy growth in children.

- To help ensure that children have a healthy weight, energy balance is important. To achieve this balance, parents can make sure children get adequate sleep, follow recommendations on daily screen time, take part in regular physical activity, and eat the right amount of calories.
- Parents can substitute higher nutrient, lower calorie foods such as fruit and vegetables in place of foods with higher-calorie ingredients, such as added sugars and solid fats.
- Parents can ensure access to water as a no-calorie alternative to sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Parents can serve children fruit and vegetables at meals and as snacks and model this behavior themselves.

Addressing obesity can start in the home, but also requires the support of communities.

- We can all take part in the effort to encourage more children to be physically active and eat a healthy diet.
- The federal government is currently helping low-income families get affordable, nutritious foods through programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and the Child and Adult Care Feeding Program (CACFP).
- Schools can help students be healthy by putting into action policies and practices that support healthy eating, regular physical activity, and by providing opportunities for students to learn about and practice these behaviors.
- With more than 60% of US children younger than age 6 participating in some form of child care on a weekly basis, parents can engage with child care providers to support healthy habits at home and in child care settings.

For more information contact the Manalapan Township Health Department:

Hours:

Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Location:

Manalapan Town Hall
120 Route 522 & Taylors Mills Road, Manalapan, NJ 07726

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