

# PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN



Heart of Largo—Eat Smart Play Hard—Project

## Parents: Do Your Kids 'Eat Smart & Play Hard'?



**The Heart of Largo - Eat Smart, Play Hard** is a project that is helping to build the environment in Largo to promote healthy eating and increase physical activity in children.

**Mission:** *Strive to achieve and maintain healthy weights among early elementary school children through multi-level, community-driven, environmental change. Changes will focus on increased knowledge, awareness and opportunities surrounding healthful eating, active living, and physical activity.*

**Heart of Largo** is reaching the community through:

-  Advertising campaign
-  Community Events
-  Programs that promote a healthy lifestyle
-  Healthy Choices Restaurant Program
-  Community Partnerships
-  School Cafeterias



This project is being implemented in the nine elementary schools located in Largo:

**Anona**  
**Belcher**  
**Fuguitt**  
**Mildred Helms**  
**Oakhurst**  
**Ponce de Leon**  
**Ridgecrest**  
**Southern Oak**  
**Walsingham**

### *Did you know ...*

62.9% of the people living in the United States are overweight or obese?

62.1% of people living in Florida are overweight or obese?

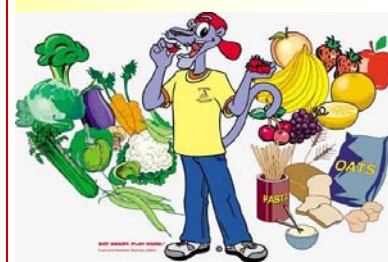
63.2% of Pinellas County residents are overweight or obese?

Being overweight can lead to heart disease, type two diabetes, cancer and death?

Cumulative data from Largo area elementary schools indicate that in School Year 2005-2006, 28.8 % of Largo 1st and 3rd graders were either overweight or at risk to be overweight.

One year later the percentage in Largo had risen to 32 %. (2nd graders are not measured)

Data source: 2007 BRFSS



# Grab Quick and Easy Snacks

Healthy snacks give kids extra energy to play and grow. Snacks are a normal part of a healthy diet for growing kids. Fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain foods make good snacks. All foods can fit into a healthy diet. Choose low-fat, reduced sugar, and reduced salt snacks.

**Did you know that healthy snacks...**

- ▶ **Can supply a big part of the food and nutrition kids need for energy.**
- ▶ **Are great as mini-meals in addition to regular meals.**
- ▶ **Are a great way to get kids to eat more fruits and vegetables.**
- ▶ **Make get-togethers with friends more fun!**

# Keep Your Kids Healthy



## ▶ Sweetened Beverages

Teach children to avoid high-calorie, nutrient-poor beverages. These beverages do not offer the nutrients needed by growing children, but do increase their calorie intake. By age 14, 32% of adolescent girls and 52% of boys in the U.S. drink three sweetened sodas a day.

## ▶ Physical Activity

Support your children's physical activity interest and get them to play outside. Many recreation centers offer free or low cost physical activity programs geared toward youth.

## ▶ Television Viewing and Recreational Screen Time

Limit children's TV, video, or computer game playing to less than two hours per day. One study found that youth who watch more than five hours of television per day were 4.6 times as likely to be obese as those watching no more than two hours daily.

## ▶ Parents as Role Models

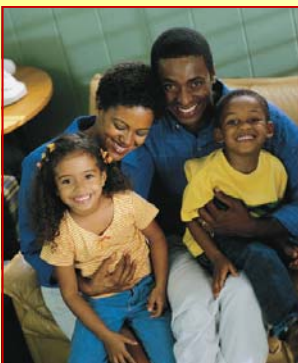
Set a good example for children by eating healthy and being physically active.

# Power Up With Breakfast

Breakfast gives you energy to grow, go and glow. A healthy breakfast is important for everyone, especially for growing children. Eat breakfast with kids to start a lifelong healthy habit. No time for breakfast? Pack it to go or help kids take part in the school breakfast program.

Kids who eat breakfast:

- ▶ Do better in school and are more alert when they eat breakfast
- ▶ Perform better with increased attention span and memory
- ▶ Feel better and complain less of headaches and stomach aches from being hungry
- ▶ Miss fewer days and are late less often
- ▶ Have an improved behavior and attitude
- ▶ Get the nutrients they need to grow and develop



**Plan:** Set out bowls and cereal the night before to make the morning meal quick and easy. Keep sliced fruit or hard-boiled eggs in the refrigerator.

**Prepare:** Feed kids on the go. Keep 100% juice, dried or fresh fruit, yogurt, bagels or breakfast bars handy. Kids can grab these as they rush out the door.

**Dare:** Suggest kids try something different like a burrito or other leftovers, such as a stuffed baked potato.

**Change the Pace:** Have a breakfast picnic on the weekend. Celebrate a special occasion with breakfast instead of dinner. Eat breakfast at school with your kids!

