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It's becoming an epidemic and if we don't do something about childhood obesity now it's going to produce devastating affects on our society.

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McAllister's Fitness
5/66 Railway Road
Blackburn Vic, 3130
Ph: 9877 0572
mcallisters.fit@optusnet.com.au

Hi and welcome to the August newsletter.

Winter is almost over and spring is knocking at the door. Spring is a fantastic time of the year, it's full of excitement with events like the Spring Racing Carnival, The Royal Melbourne Show, the Fringe Festival, Spring Fashion Week, and how can you forget the AFL footy finals. There are a plethora of reasons to kit up in your best gear and strut your stuff, and if you have been consistent and disciplined with your food and exercise, you should have no worries about looking and feeling great.

Speaking of looking good and feeling great, they are or should be part of living a healthy lifestyle. The vision of us all living healthily is rapidly diminishing due to the unhealthy existence that we are leading. Childhood obesity is on the rise and if we don't take the steps to change things, children will be living shorter lives than their parents. This month's article investigates childhood obesity and what we can do to lower the rates of this serious problem.

The message for the month is to become aware of the factors that contribute to childhood obesity and start to work on the things you can do to make a difference to reduce the shocking statistics.

And again, we have more great programs and events happening to keep you enthused and on track throughout winter.

I hope you enjoy the read and it inspires you to make a change.

All our newsletters are posted on our website. The link is www.mcallistersfitness.com.au

Have a great month.
Enjoy!

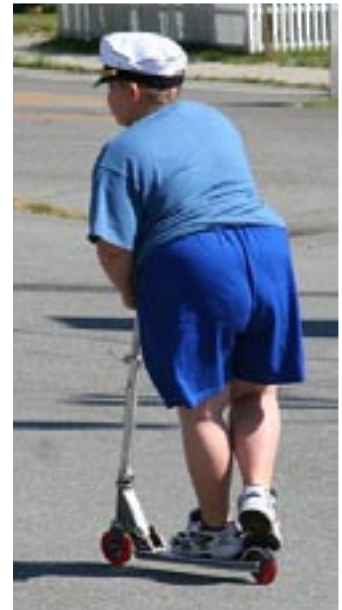
Danny

Childhood obesity: whose fault is it?

Australian kids are growing fatter and fatter at a faster rate than ever before, but who is to blame? Is it – our lifestyle, parents, fast food companies or the children themselves?

About one in five children and adolescents are either overweight or obese and the prediction is that by the year 2020 65 per cent of young Australians will be overweight or obese. This is a worrying number, especially when you consider that there is more information, resources and activities to deal with the problem than ever before, yet the message still isn't getting through.

In Australia, the medical consequences of childhood obesity cost us \$680 - \$1239 million dollars per year, and some of these children are already showing the same health problems seen in overweight adults, and that's very scary.



The thing is, I believe the problem can be reduced immensely starting at home, and it needs to be addressed there before any major breakthroughs can be made. By taking small steps to alter the situation we can create major changes that will benefit the kids (from little things big things grow). Too many times we look at a situation or problem, label it, and make some band-aid effort to reduce the symptoms but not the cause. Or we turn a blind eye and hope it goes away. This crisis isn't going to disappear instantly, in fact, it's going to get a lot worse before it gets better.

Some parents may not realise how detrimental obesity is to their children's emotional health. They may think that obesity is just a passing phase and may not understand the psychological devastation that it can cause. Our society emphasises slimness, and we have many misconceptions about being overweight, and as a result, obese children are often treated differently. This may be the most devastating effect of obesity on a child. They may feel isolated and lonely, which could lead to self-esteem and identity problems. It is important to be sensitive to this issue and to understand that an individual's confidence, especially a child's, is affected by self-image and perceptions of peers.

How do we do that?

We need to look at the cause of the problem, identify the factors that have contributed to childhood obesity. Let's look at it from a physiological perspective first. The body does one of two things when it receives energy (food) – it either burns it up or stores it as fat. If you consume more energy than you use, guess what? You end up with a surplus of stored energy, which equates to stored fat (energy in versus energy out).

“We can promote healthy eating and physical activity till the cows come home, but if people aren't into doing something, there's no way it will take off.”

Using this theory, we need to look at some contributing factors that may cause too much energy in, compared to energy used up:

- Food choices – Food has become more energy dense, processed, marketed and readily available.
- Lack of physical activity – Children are less active today than in the past.
- Sedentary hobbies – Watching TV, playing computer games and more sedentary activities.
- Stranger danger – Kids are privately transported more these days.
- Overweight parents – Poor family eating patterns and food choices.
- Food as rewards – Using food as a reward for doing chores, good behaviour, celebrations etc.
- Society's obsession of slimness – Don't put your children on diets, encourage healthy eating instead.
- Genetics – Family genes that contribute to obesity, you need to be aware of this and work with what you've inherited

Taking control of some or all of these factors can help reduce the prevalence of the overweight/obesity epidemic. The government has introduced many healthy initiatives such as [Healthy Canteens](#), [Around Australia in 40 Days Walking Challenge](#), the [Healthy Active Ambassador Program](#), [National Children's Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey](#), a new [Healthy Weight website](#), the [Active After-School Communities Program](#) and the [Active School Curriculum](#). These have had some success but none have really made a huge impact in preventing increasing obesity levels.

We can promote healthy eating and physical activity till the cows come home, but if people aren't into doing something, there's no way it will take off. Like any change, there is an element of discomfort or a pain point and that's where the problem lies.

How do we get people interested?

We need to approach the issue by looking at what happens at home - the foods we eat, the activities we do and the attitude that we have. It's like any process of change, you need to have a positive mind-set to have any chance of success. When I speak of mind-set I'm referring to the course of action, rules and ideals you have at home to create success.

Teamwork has always produced the best results, so the family needs to play the healthy lifestyle game as a team. It all starts with the parents/adults taking on a leadership role and setting good examples by:

- Becoming educated about healthy living.
- Teaching the whole family about healthy living by making it fun.
- Increasing activity – encouraging not forcing family members into becoming more active.
- Becoming active together – going for walks, rides or playing games together.
- Not always using food as a reward.
- Cooking healthy meals together.
- Promoting “active commuting” – walking to school, to the shops etc when appropriate.
- Reducing the amount of sedentary activity time – watching TV, playing computer games etc.

Childhood obesity is a problem, but the situation can be reversed. The greater the interest you show in your children's diet and exercise regimens, the more influence you will have over them. In time, your children will understand the purpose and strategies necessary for a healthy life.

By implementing simple, effective strategies and becoming more health conscious we can put right the frightening statistics of obesity, not only in our children, but as a global “call to action”. Think how rewarding it would be to save the lives your children.

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Spot light on Bruce Murphy

Bruce has a great attitude, good sense of humour and definitely knows how to mix business with pleasure to get the most out of life. He trains to keep himself fitter and to have more energy to do the things he loves most.



What hobbies, sports or interests do you have?
Golf and eating out.

What special feats or accolades have you achieved from training at McAllister's?
I have more energy.

Why do you train at McAllister's?
To keep up my fitness and the company/ partnership.

10 Turbo Questions

1. What's your favourite song?
Hey Jude – The Beatles
2. What's your favourite childhood TV show?
Didn't have TV as a child
3. What's your favourite movie?
Blues Brothers
4. What's your favourite food?
Spaghetti
5. Where's your favourite holiday destination?
My house in Sorrento
6. What is the best piece of advice you have ever received?
To invest in the share market – gambling
7. What's your favourite thing to do on a rainy day?
Staying in bed with a good book
8. What really annoys you?
Negative people and ignorance
9. If you could possess a superpower, what would it be?
To cure all illnesses
10. Whom/What inspires you?
Nelson Mandella – Never give up and forgive easily

What's on

Pedal "N" Punch

Pedal "N" Punch is for anyone who wants to add an extra session to their routine or wants to up the intensity in their training, or just loves being motivated while working in a group environment. A thoroughly challenging, but extremely enjoyable workout.



Saturdays - A six-week intensive 45-minute bike and boxing class. We run two time slots one at 9am for the person who wants to get the day started and the other at 10am for those that enjoy a little extra time sleeping in.

Starting 11 August - 15 September at 9 and 10 am.

Package \$72.00 or \$17.00 per single session

Monday nights - A six-week intensive 30-minute bike and boxing session. A time-efficient workout that's guaranteed to give you a kick-start to your week.

Starting 20th August at 7.00 pm

Package \$60.00 or \$15.00 per session

Thursday nights

Starting 20th September at 7.30 pm

Package \$60.00 or \$15.00 per session

For more information click www.mcallistersfitness.com.au/page3.php

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