



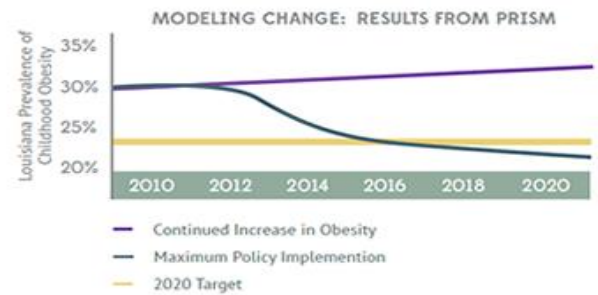
Aneisha Andrus, Area Nutrition Agent SNAP Ed
Vernon/Beauregard Parish

Awareness Month



Did you know? September is National Childhood Obesity Month. *National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month* provides a chance for all of us to learn more about this serious health condition.

Throughout the years, childhood obesity has continued to be a serious problem in the United States. Despite recent the decline in the prevalence among preschool- aged children, obesity amongst all children is still at an all-time high. According to the Center for Disease Control & Prevention (2017), about 1 in 6 (17%) children in the United States has obesity. In our state alone, more than 40 % of Louisiana children are overweight or obese. In fact, Louisiana has the 6th highest childhood obesity rate in the nation. The State's cost of childhood obesity associated illness increased from \$35 million to \$127 million over the past two decades according to the Pennington Biomedical Research Center (2011).



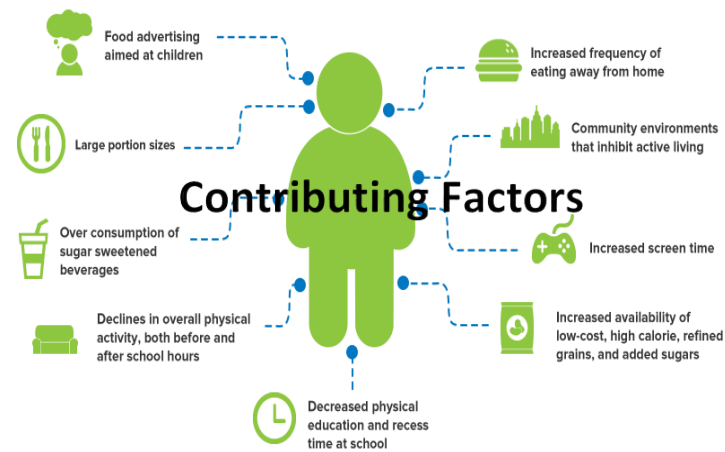
! Louisiana has consistently received a grade of "F" for childhood overweight and obesity in the LA Report Card on Physical Activity & Health for Children & Youth.

Due to several contributing factors, children with obesity have a higher risk of developing the following chronic health conditions:

- ✓ Sleep Apnea
- ✓ Asthma
- ✓ Type 2 Diabetes
- ✓ Hypertension
- ✓ Bone & Joint problems
- ✓ Social discrimination
- ✓ Emotional & Mental Conditions

Consequently, these health conditions can lead to weight-related health problems in adulthood. However, there is a good news. Childhood obesity is preventable. Addressing obesity starts at home but also requires the support of the community. To help reduce childhood obesity and promote healthy eating habits here are few suggestion:

- ✓ Be aware of your child's growth. By utilizing the CDC's Child & Teen BMI Calculator, you will be able to measure your child's Body Mass Index and screen your child for potential weight issues.
- ✓ Provide healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. For healthful recipes, visit ChooseMyPlate.gov or visit the LSU AgCenter website.
- ✓ Eliminate Sugary beverages and limit juice intake. Make sure water is always available.
- ✓ Be a Role Model. Eat healthy meals and snacks.



- ✓ Encourage your child to be physically active. Remember: The *2008 US Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* recommend that children and adolescents aged 6 to 17 years should have **60 minutes** (1 hour) or more of physical activity each day.
- ✓ Get involved in your child's School Wellness Council. Talk to school administrators about starting a Wellness Council if your child's school doesn't have one.

For more information on childhood obesity, please visit the LSU AgCenter website at lsuagcenter.com

