



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Stop Obesity Early

Trends in Obesity Among Participants Aged 2-4 Years in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children — United States, 2000-2014

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[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Helping young children grow and maintain a healthy weight through diet and physical activity can result in better health outcomes later in life.

Dr. Heidi Blanck is a researcher with CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. And she's joining us today to discuss the importance of children's weight early in life. Welcome to the show, Heidi.

[Dr. Blanck] Thank you.

[Dr. Gaynes] Heidi, how many children in the U.S. have obesity?

[Dr. Blanck] Childhood obesity is a big problem in the U.S. We have about 13 million kids struggling with obesity; that's about one in six.

[Dr. Gaynes] Is obesity more common in any particular group of children?

[Dr. Blanck] Our children are all at risk for obesity but we know children living in low income families are at higher risk.

[Dr. Gaynes] What health problems can be caused by obesity?

[Dr. Blanck] Children with obesity can struggle from things like joints and bone problems; breathing problems, like asthma; and more bullying and stigma from their peers.

[Dr. Gaynes] Heidi, what are some factors that contribute to obesity among young children?

[Dr. Blanck] There're many factors that lead to obesity. We know both the community factors, parenting practices, and our own behaviors can impact obesity. Some of that includes having daily consumption of sugary drinks; not eating enough fruits and vegetables; too much sedentary time, like watching screens; and not having good sleep habits.

[Dr. Gaynes] What can parents do to help their children maintain a healthy weight?

[Dr. Blanck] Parents, caregivers, coaches, and others that spend time with kids can really help encourage nutritious behaviors, like eating fruits and vegetables; having things like flavored and plain water to avoid sugary drinks; providing healthy snacks at playtime; and encouraging physical activities, even walking the family dog.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about childhood obesity?

[Dr. Blanck] Listeners can go to cdc.gov/obesity.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Heidi. I've been talking today with Dr. Heidi Blanck about the importance of children's weight early in life. Remember, it's important for caregivers to provide and encourage children to eat nutritious meals with plenty of fruits and vegetables, avoid sugary drinks, have rules for screen time and bedtime, and engage in enjoyable physical activity.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.