

Talking with Family Members and other adults who spend time with your child

Talking about weight issues can be a very sensitive topic for some people. Asking a caregiver to change what they are doing can be viewed as a criticism. Your child's health is one of your top jobs as a parent, however, and that may include having to do and say some things that make you uncomfortable! Here are some tips to help you:

1. Please remember, we don't advise young children to lose weight. The aim is to adopt a healthier lifestyle. For young children we like to see them keep their weight the same as they continue to grow taller. **NO DIETING!!!!**
2. Let family members know that you and your child are working on having healthier habits. (Never single out your child as having a problem. Emphasize the health changes and that you are wanting to become healthier.)
3. Build your own script:

A. Start with a fact...

"Grandma, Casey and I are working on having healthier habits."

"I've noticed it is hard to find clothes that fit Janey."

"Justin is having a hard time keeping up with other children his age."

"The doctor and the dietitian/nurse have pointed out that Jeremy is gaining weight faster than most boys his age."

Your fact _____



B. Add your feelings...

"I am concerned about his health."

"Diabetes runs in our family and I'd like to help her avoid that if I can."

"I'd like to help keep her from becoming overweight."

"I've struggled with my weight and I don't want him to have that struggle."

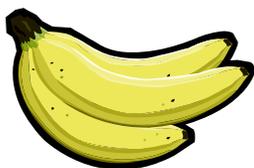
Your feelings _____



C. Ask for help...

"I could use your help on this. When you are with her, could you offer her fruits or veggies for a snack?"

"I'd like to help he have a healthy future. I may need your help as well since he spends a lot of time with you. Would you be willing to help him..."



- fill in the blank, but be specific:
- get outside more
- drink less pop or juice
- eat fruit instead of ice cream for dessert
- watch less TV

Your needs _____

D. Add your appreciation:

“Thank you for your help.”

“I’m glad you’ll help us with this.”

“Janey will appreciate this later!”

“I really appreciate your support.”



Your thanks _____

You may find it helpful to write what you will say in advance.

Here is a sample:

“Mom, I’ve decided that Melissa and I are going to work on healthier habits. I’d like to help keep her from becoming overweight. I could use your help on this, since she does spend time with you while I am at school. Would you be willing to help her by offering her vegetables or fruit for a snack in the afternoon? I really appreciate your support! Thank you.”

4. Once you have enlisted your extended family members’ help, offer to provide them with a list of meal and snack choices that you would recommend. If your child is a preschooler, enlist their help in creating the list. They can draw pictures of the foods and help you include choices they are willing to eat.
5. After this line of communication is open, keep everyone involved updated. When you see something positive happening, share it:
“Thank you for giving Melissa grapes and strawberries for a snack. Those are two of her favorite fruits.”
“I noticed Sam’s jeans aren’t quite as hard to snap lately. They are fitting better. Thank you for your help.”



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