

## 2016 KACO Posts

### January

#### Winter Time Doesn't Need to be Sedentary Time

We all know how winter can be in Kentucky...gray, gray, gray! Families almost uniformly report that physical activity is difficult and that screen time balloons when the weather is bad. Help your families identify strategies that they can use to be physically active. And beware trying to solve the problem for them. Safety, personal preferences, time constraints, local resources and physical abilities all determine what activity strategy will be most successful and sustainable. Remember that it doesn't need to always be vigorous activity. Even walking the dog, housekeeping and going shopping in town get you moving!

### February

#### Cookbooks for Success

Looking for some good ideas to help your patients cook healthier foods? Check out some of these great cookbooks for healthy alternatives.

CHOPCHOP Cookbook- <http://www.chopchopmag.org/cookbook>. This is the champion book to the magazine that promotes kids and adults cooking healthy foods together.

SPARKPEOPLE Cookbook- <https://recipes.sparkpeople.com/cookbook-order.asp>. This book is by Kentucky mom, Meg Galvin, and is chocked full of good ideas for families.

The SOUTH BEACH DIET Quick & Easy Cookbook- <http://tinyurl.com/zaxgjf7>. The South Beach Diet can be a little crazy in Phase One, the very low carb two-week initial phase, but after that, South Beach Diet is actually a very solid heart-healthy program. This cookbook is the most practical and easy-to-understand member in the series.

### March

#### Spring Break Strategies Close to Home

Spring break is such a needed time to counteract winter doldrums. As you venture out, think about using our amazing [Kentucky State Parks](http://parks.ky.gov/) <http://parks.ky.gov/> at this time of year. People often forget the joys of hiking before the trees leaf out and obscure views of our mountains, lakes and rivers. Not to mention that you also avoid bugs by hitting the trail early. Some favorite early season places to head? Check out Red River Gorge/Natural Bridge, Big South Fork Recreation Area, Land Between the Lakes or Mammoth Cave. All are amazing early season!

### April

#### Don't Drink Your Calories

It is easy to forget how many calories you can rack up and never fill up. One 12 oz sweet drink (including juice, sports drink, lemonade, sweet tea, soft drink) will cause you to gain 10-12 pounds of fat per year if all other things are held steady. Encourage refillable water bottles and water in general for the lowest cost and healthiest refreshment option.

### May

#### Family Gardening

Want to get your kids to eat their vegetables? Have them help you grow them. When kids grow or prepare food, they are much more likely to eat it. And honestly, they don't often know where food even comes from. Try asking them some simple questions like "Where does a French fry come from?" or "What is spaghetti sauce made from?" You may be stunned! Even if it is just a container garden, go for it. It is an impromptu science project and a lesson that will pay dividends for a lifetime.

### June

#### Eating Out

Does it really make a difference to eat at home or school as opposed to eating out? Yes it does! The average meal eaten out is higher in fat and sodium and has, on average, 40% more calories than a meal eaten at home. If you are forced to eat out, consider:

- 1) Limiting eating out to less than 3 times per week.
- 2) Make your selection BEFORE you enter the restaurant in order to protect against impulse "biggie sizing" or 2-for-1 deals.

- 3) Avoid eating in the car.
- 4) Check out the following book "[Eat This Not That for Kids](http://www.amazon.com/Eat-This-Not-That-Kids/dp/160529943X)" <http://www.amazon.com/Eat-This-Not-That-Kids/dp/160529943X>
- 5) Install an informative app for those inevitable post soccer or baseball drive through trips: 'LoseIt!' or 'My Fitness Pal'.

## **July**

### **Mindfulness Isn't Just for the Yoga Set!**

A recent wave in obesity treatment and prevention is mindfulness. Really enjoying your food and being present when you eat helps you avoid those incidental calories. Furthermore, food and mealtime can be so much more than a biologic function. It is a time to reconnect to our world and our minds and bodies.

If you are looking for a nice resource on the importance of mindfulness, check out Jan Chozen Bays' "[Mindful Eating: A Guide to Rediscovering a Healthy and Joyful Relationship with Food](http://thecenterformindfuleating.org/Jan-Chozen-Bays)" <http://thecenterformindfuleating.org/Jan-Chozen-Bays> .

For health care providers in the Lexington area, a great resource is Family Practitioner John Patterson's [Mind Body Studio](http://www.mindbodystudio.org/) <http://www.mindbodystudio.org/>

## **August**

### **Family Meal Time**

Life is so busy that we often miss one of the great joys of life, eating meals together. Even research shows that family meal time promotes healthy eating and mental health. Preparing food together, discussing the day and cleaning up together enhances the family dynamics in a positive way. It's also a great opportunity to practice those motivational interviewing skills we all should be using with patients: use some open questions with your teens, listen more than speak and reflect what you hear. It takes time, but family mealtime is worth the effort!

## **September**

### **In Celebration of Healthy Hunger-Free Kids**

It's been several years now since the enactment of the [Healthy Hunger-Free Kids](http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/healthy-hunger-free-kids-act) (HHFK) Act that changed the composition and preparation of school breakfast and lunch. What do we know? First off, and despite what the media and politicians say, there is no more waste today than there was ten years ago. Kids waste food, it's terrible but it's no different. We also know that since HHFK, kids are exposed to more healthy foods, eat more of them and have a fighting chance to get foods that are simply not available in many, especially lower income, households.

## **October**

### **Chocolate Milk: Friend or Foe**

So, whither flavored milk? Is it a crutch that needs to be banished with juice or is it the panacea for picky eaters? Well, the truth, like most things in life, is somewhere in the middle. I am certainly not on the dole from the American Dairy Association, but I tend to be a pragmatist in this one. Yes, I would prefer kids to drink low-fat white milk (skim, fat free or 1%) in schools, but if the choice is juice or no milk at all, I would prefer a low-fat, low sugar flavored milk be available for kids. Like artificially sweetened drinks, flavored milks are a second best choice to water and white milk. But, I also feel that to win a war, you sometimes have to move on from less critical battlefields.

## **November**

### **Counting Leaves: The Nature Movement**

It's getting that cool, crisp feeling in the air. The leaves are turning and it's time for one of Kentucky's most beautiful seasons. Looking for strategies to get kids outside? Check out these activities from our friends at Leave No Child Inside of Greater Cincinnati: <http://lncigc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/LNCI-OUTDOOR-GUIDE-2012Final-singlepage.pdf>

## **December**

### **Not Happy Holidays for Everyone: Food Insecurity and Obesity**

It is a great paradox. Children with the least access to food have the highest rates of obesity. Obesity and food insecurity ravage our lowest income neighborhoods. On first blush, it does sound like it does not make sense, but reframe the question a bit. If you don't know where your next meal may come from, you eat when and where you can. And when, healthy foods spoil more quickly and are relatively more expensive than prepared foods and junk food, it is no surprise that kids in poorer neighborhoods suffer from more obesity. Eastern Kentucky has the highest per capita prevalence of fast food restaurants in the country and a meager network of places to buy fresh produce. As pediatricians, we need to remain vigilant for our families suffering from food insecurity. We also need to know our local resources for referral when we find those families in need.