COUNSELING THE OVERWEIGHT CHILD

**Step # 1: Engage the Patient/Parent**
- Can we take a few minutes to discuss your health and weight?
- How do you feel about your health and weight?

**Step # 2: Share Information**
- Your current weight puts you at risk for developing adult diseases in childhood such as heart disease and diabetes.
- I would like to share the growth chart with you (BMI-for-age percentiles) so you can see your present weight status.
- What are your thoughts on this?
- Refer to CHDP Kaiser Poster/handout

Is there one of these healthy practices that you would like to work on?

If patient/parent is receptive to discussion ask:
* What do you think is contributing to your unhealthy weight?*

**PROCEED TO STEP # 3**

**Step # 3: Make a Key Advice Statement**
- I would strongly encourage you to....
  - See reverse side for tips to support chosen behavior change.

**Step # 4: Arrange for Follow-up**
- Let’s set up an appointment in ____ weeks to check how things are going.

If patient/parent is **not receptive**:
- Determine whether patient is a candidate for in-depth assessments (e.g., lab tests as per 2007 AMA Recommendations).

If lab tests are ordered, consider setting up a follow-up appointment to discuss results.

* This is one way to initiate a conversation about weight and health.

Adapted from ‘Brief Focused Advice’ Kaiser Permanente ©2004
Prepared by Nutrition Sub-Committee of the Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) Program, December 2008
Tips for Encouraging Behavior Change

**Get Moving**
At least 1 Hour of Physical Activity a Day
Tips:
- Schedule outdoor time: plan family walks, outings to the park, or bike rides
- Be active indoors: dance, vacuum, make beds, play balloon volleyball
- Sign up for activities through the YMCA, Parks and Rec Dept, schools and community centers (reference – resource guide)

**Pull the Plug**
Limit Screen Time (TV, Computers & Video Games) to 1 – 2 hours a day
Tips:
- Remove TV and computers from children’s bedrooms
- No TV for children under 2 years
- Turn off TV during mealtimes

**Drink Well**
Limit Sweetened Beverages
Tips:
- Decide what drinks are available in your home
- Offer water or non/low-fat milk instead of juice or soda
- Mix 100% fruit juice with water and limit to:
  - 4-6 oz. for 1-6 years
  - 8-12 oz for 7-18 years

**Eat Smart**

**Eat More Fruits & Vegetables**
Tips:
- Offer fruits for snacks instead of chips, cookies, and candy
- Choose frozen or canned vegetables if fresh are not available
- Cut up fruits and vegetables so that they are ready to eat

**Eat Less Fast Food**
Tips:
- Order the smallest size food/beverage
- Prepare homemade meals in advance to avoid the temptation of fast food
- Avoid “extras” like cheese, bacon, and mayo

**Eat Breakfast Daily**
Tips:
- Stock kitchen with easy to grab breakfast items (fruits, mini bagels, cheese sticks, yogurt)
- Check if the school has a breakfast program
- Eat breakfast with your child

**Limit Portion Size**
Tips:
- Serve food on smaller plates (Note that a child’s stomach is the size of his/her fist)
- Keep serving dishes off the table
- Split an entrée or take half home when eating out

Adapted from CHDP/Kaiser Permanente ‘Little changes. Big rewards.’ poster ©2008
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