

# FitFacts®

## My Child Is Obese — Where Can We Get Help?

ONCE A CHILD IS DIAGNOSED AS “OBESE”, PARENTS NEED HELP IMPLEMENTING A STRUCTURED WEIGHT-MANAGEMENT PROGRAM BEYOND THE [AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS’ RECOMMENDATION OF 5-2-1-0](#) (FIVE DAILY SERVINGS OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES, TWO OR FEWER HOURS OF “SCREEN TIME”, ONE HOUR OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, AND ZERO SUGAR-SWEETENED BEVERAGES). HERE ARE SOME RESOURCES TO CONTACT FOR HELP.

### THE ALLIANCE FOR A HEALTHIER GENERATION — HEALTHIER GENERATION BENEFIT

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation is a joint initiative of the American Heart Association and the William J. Clinton Foundation. Committed to reducing rates of childhood obesity by 2015, the Alliance has several programs to help children and families, including the “Healthier Generation Benefit.” It is a collaborative effort among the Alliance, national medical associations, health insurers, and employers that provides the resources for families of obese children to receive an intensive obesity intervention. The program provides insurance coverage to pay for several visits with both a physician and a registered dietitian, both of whom have been given scientific-based resources to maximize the efficacy of the intervention. For more information, check out <http://healthiergeneration.org>.

### MIND, EXERCISE, NUTRITION, DO IT! (MEND)

[MEND](#) is a program for clinically obese children and their parents that is offered at several YMCAs across the country and, in many cases, paid for by health-insurance companies. The MEND programs last 10 weeks and meet twice per week. Both the child and parent must attend. The program combines healthy eating, regular physical activity and behavior change. For information about MEND, visit [mendfoundation.org](http://mendfoundation.org).



### OBESITY TREATMENT CENTERS AT CHILDREN’S HOSPITALS

Many children’s hospitals have weight-management programs for children who are obese, but who don’t have medical complications, and treatment centers for obese children with obesity-related health complications such as type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and other associated morbidities. Many of the weight-management programs for children who do not yet have medical complications are not covered by insurance.

Your pediatrician can also help you identify local programs. Unfortunately, many kids have limited access to resources to help them successfully overcome their struggles with weight and achieve a healthy BMI. However, with the impending healthcare reforms mandated by the Affordable Care Act and the growing understanding of what works when helping children achieve a healthy weight, the types of available programs are likely to grow.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[American Council on Exercise](#)

[American Academy of Pediatrics](#)

[Mayo Clinic](#)