Childhood Obesity – EAT WELL, MOVE MORE, LIVE LONGER

Just like a car, our bodies need to be kept in good condition to help them run smoothly. We need the right balance of food and regular physical activity to help us function properly. Try to follow these top 5 tips:

- Always make time for a healthy breakfast everyday.
- Eat more fruit and vegetables, aim for 5 A DAY.
- Reduce your sugar intake by limiting fizzy drinks and drinking more water.
- Eat a variety of foods and most importantly... enjoy your food!
- Be active everyday, walk whenever you can and get the kids out and about.

Being a healthy weight, eating a healthy diet and being physically active are vital in helping children grow into healthy adults.

Obesity is our most important long-term health challenge. Rotherham school surveys have shown that more than one in three children in Rotherham are classified as overweight or obese. This is higher than the national average and continuing to rise.

If we fail to reverse the rising tide of overweight and obesity, by 2050 three fifths of the people in Rotherham will be obese, the consequences for their health and for the NHS are extreme. We have a rising tide of diabetes, heart disease, strokes, and arthritis which are conditions which could be prevented by people being a healthy weight.

The NHS in Rotherham

NHS Rotherham are investing £3.5 million over the next three years to begin to tackle this very serious problem.

This includes investment in a range of services to support 2000 children, young people and families over the next three years to have a healthier lifestyle and healthier future.

In July 2008 NHS Rotherham became the first Primary Care Trust in the country to fund a group of young people to take part in the Carnegie weight management camp. The 38 children lost an amazing 30 stones in weight between them, improved their diet and fitness levels, learnt about the consequences of obesity and improved their self confidence and self esteem.

38 young people is of course just the tip of the iceberg, and that is why NHS Rotherham has invested this large sum of money to develop a range of high quality targeted obesity services, to improve health and wellbeing and to support many more people, in particular children, to eat well, become more active and have a healthier future.

Obesity services

Support services for Children, Young People and Families include:

- 'Carnegie Club', weekly weight management clubs, for children and parents to attend in the local leisure venues. These clubs will be rolled out across Rotherham from May starting in the town centre leisure centre.
- A Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT) of health professionals who will provide more specialist and individualised advice for families who require more specific one-to-one support. This will include a GP, a dietitian and a physiotherapist, among others to support children and their families.
- Carnegie Weight Management Residential Camp which will run again in summer 2009 for 50 young people.

What can parents do?

All parents are concerned about the health and well being of their children. However, unfortunately many don’t recognise their child is overweight or obese. Statistics shows that 70% of parents with overweight children think their children are normal weight, whilst 30% of parents with obese kids would define their child as “just right.”

The best way to lose weight is to eat healthier food and to exercise more. However, it is not always as simple as this but parents can play an important role to help their child do both.

Many parents are unsure how to provide support for their child to help them through their necessary lifestyle changes. For further information about attending any of the Rotherham weight management support services, please contact Carol Weir, NHS Rotherham Public Health Specialist, 01709 308870 or carol.weir@rotherhamcct.nhs.uk

The following websites also provide advice to help get you started.

www.nhs.uk/Change4Life www.carnegieweightmanagement.com