

Introduction

Childhood obesity has plagued our nation. According to the Centers of Disease control and prevention, Childhood obesity has more than doubled in children and quadrupled in adolescents in the past 30 years. This issue of childhood obesity needs to be addressed. Where to begin... PARENTS.

It is hard to imagine that parents are a huge reason why children have become obese. Not all parents are to blame of course, but parents are able to help their children and prevent the disease.

I am Stavroula Antonopoulos. I am an aspiring dietician, and I once was an obese child. In this video, I will address some questions that are common among parents that involve childhood obesity.

QUESTION 1

If there are limited resources available to our community, how can I provide my family with healthier options?

From my knowledge, there are some places at a distance that provide healthy options, such as, fresh produce and lean meats. If you are able to dedicate some of your time every other week or so to make the trip, do it! You can stock up on fruits,

vegetables, and meat. If you stick the food in the freezer, it will last longer, and it will maintain most of its nutrients.

If traveling to the nearest market isn't possible even once in awhile, try to portion your foods. Protein the size of your palm, carbohydrates the size of your fist, and try to make half of your plate compromise with half vegetables.

Onto the next question...

QUESTION 2

How does what my husband and I eat impact my child's diet?

This is probably the most common source of childhood obesity because children can be easily influenced by their parents' eating habits.

From experience, I remember that I used to feel in competition to eat more or faster than my dad. My mom used to always tell me that my dad ate a lot and ate fast so I wanted to beat him. A huge reason why I was obese was due to me eating in competition to my father.

Also, parents might have a tendency to eat bigger portions naturally than children because they require more food to

function. It is important to create a distinction in this so that the child does not feel the need to eat more. It is also important to portion your child's food in order to avoid this.

QUESTION 3

The next question is....

How can I still cook ethnic cuisine, but make it healthier for my child?

Growing up in a Greek family, foods that contained heavy creams, butter, and potatoes and meat were huge staples.

Over the years, my grandma tried to make the food healthier for us by using olive oil instead of butter or limiting the amount of creams and potatoes. I have noticed that since then, all of her meals have been lighter but still authentic.

For example, if your ethnic foods contain a lot of rice, use brown rice instead of white rice. It is important to use whole grains instead of refined grains. They allow your metabolism to work harder in order to digest it, and they provide more fiber.

Conclusion

Childhood obesity rates do not need to continue to rise. If parents help in even the smallest of ways, such as portioning food and trying to get more nutritious food options on the table. Childhood obesity could be like a fad of the past.

Thank you for tuning in! I hope I was able to motivate parents like yourself to assist your children and families toward a healthier lifestyle.