

Getting Kids on the Move to Better Health

OSF HealthCare Newsroom

Shelli Dankoff – Media Relations Program Manager

The statistics are alarming. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the percentage of children and teenagers in the United States classified obese has more than tripled since the 1970s. While there are signs that rates have slowed, childhood obesity remains an epidemic with more than 12 million children in the U.S. considered obese.

What's driving the trend? For many, it's a simple matter of eating too much and moving too little, with kids preferring technology and screen time to outdoor play.

Just like with adults, overweight children can be setting themselves up for an increased risk of chronic health conditions.

SOT Dr. Kurt Bloomstrand – Emergency Medicine Physician, OSF HealthCare

(If you're more active weight loss happens, again, heart risk, stroke risk, blood pressure. But those who don't do that we see all of the risk factors go up - their weight goes up and so we really want them to get out and about :15)

Dr. Kurt Bloomstrand is an emergency medicine physician with OSF HealthCare. He recommends meeting children and teenagers where they are to get them active – with technology. Dr. Bloomstrand says that was one of the advantages of the Pokemon Go phenomenon that started a few years ago.

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(It was a good way of getting kids out and about in the community walking around and exercising. It still incorporated their video game feeling that they want but it got them out about moving. So different apps like that they're out of the market that you can use to encourage your kids to get out and about and play or just have them mow the yard, or have them go get the mail, just a little things to get them out about :24)

Dr. Bloomstrand also recommends making health and fitness a family affair. Have your children join you on walks or working around the yard, even the youngest ones can pick up sticks.

Learn more about making family fitness fun [here](#).