

# Childhood Overweight in North Carolina

## Overview

More than 30 percent of North Carolina children, between ages 2 and 20 are overweight or at-risk of becoming overweight. North Carolina percentages are among the highest in the nation for childhood overweight.

### Overweight Statistics, NC-NPASS 2005 (North Carolina Nutrition and Physical Activity Surveillance System)

- Seventeen percent of North Carolina children (2 – 18 years old) are overweight according to their BMI-for-age:
- Fifteen percent (14.6 percent) of children ages 2-4 (14.9 percent in 2004),
- Twenty-five percent (24.5 percent) of children ages 5-11 (23.8 percent in 2004) and
- Twenty-seven percent (27.3 percent) of youth ages 12-18 (27.2 percent in 2004).
- An additional 16 percent are at-risk for becoming overweight.

### According to the 2005 YRBSS (Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System):

- 46 percent of middle and high school students were physically active for a total of 60 minutes or more per day on five or more of the past seven days.
- 50 percent of students reported that they were not enrolled in physical education class at the school.

Data Source:

<http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/yrbss/>

### 2005 CHAMP (Child Health Assessment and Monitoring Program)

- Sixty-six percent (65.7 percent) of children were breastfed for any length of time.
- Only 26 percent of children consumed three or more servings of fruit (25.6 percent) or vegetables (25.8 percent) per day.
- Only 28 percent (27.6) of children were physical active at least 60 minutes a day.
- Forty-four percent (43.7) of children spend two to four hours a day watching television.
- Thirty-five percent (34.8 percent) of children eat fast food at least once a week.
- Twenty percent (19.9 percent) of children drink sweetened beverages such as soda, sweet tea, fruit punch or sports drinks three times or more a day.

Data Source: <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/champ/2005/topics.html>

## Definitions

- Body Mass Index (BMI) is a number that shows body weight adjusted for height. Overweight classification and BMI measurement for youth ages 2 to 20 are different from those of adults. BMI or BMI-for-age for children and teens must be calculated according to both age and gender.
- Children or teens with a BMI greater than the 85<sup>th</sup> and less than the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile for their age are considered at-risk for overweight.
- Children or teens with a BMI greater than or equal to the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile are considered overweight.

## BMI-for-age charts

BMI for children and teens (2 to 20 years) is plotted on gender specific BMI-for-age charts. These charts are available at:

[http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/growthcharts/bmi\\_tools.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/growthcharts/bmi_tools.htm)

## Consequences

- The most immediate consequence of being overweight is usually psychological and may lead to feelings of depression and a low self-esteem. Overweight children experience a much greater level of stress than do healthy weight children.
- Overweight children are also more likely to suffer from Type II diabetes, asthma, obstructive sleep apnea, orthopedic problems and are at a higher risk for becoming overweight or obese adults.
- Poor nutrition and lack of physical activity set children on a path to future health and medical problems that will likely reduce their quality of life and shorten their lifespan.

For more information please visit  
[www.EatSmartMoveMoreNC.com](http://www.EatSmartMoveMoreNC.com)

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