

## HEALTHY WEIGHT

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With an Improving Understanding of MCH grant, Family Voices IMPACT works to develop ways to improve health and wellness for all children and families, and to encourage partnerships between families and professionals for children's good health. [www.familyvoices.org](http://www.familyvoices.org) and [www.fv-impact.org](http://www.fv-impact.org). This digest is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—Health Resources and Services Administration—Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Division of Child, Adolescent, and Family Health UCMC21535.

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## Moving Towards Healthier Weight

What factors contribute to a teen's healthy weight?

- Increasing physical activity
- Decreasing screen time (TV, computers, cell phones, etc.)
- Eating more fruits and vegetables and fewer sweets
- Eating breakfast more often

A recent study in *Pediatrics* looks at these factors and how they might be affecting teen weight.

The good news is that the obesity rate seems to have stabilized—it's no longer climbing. According to this study, obesity rates rose steadily from 2001 to 2006, but changed very little from 2006 to 2010. These factors may be at least partly responsible for this positive change. Something is working!

## Differences between Boys and Girls in the Study:

- Boys were more physically active, but played more video games and watched more TV than girls did.
- Girls spent more computer time on social media,

homework, and Internet use than boys did.

- Girls ate more fruits and vegetables, but also more sweets and fewer breakfasts than boys did.
- Body Mass Index (BMI) percentiles were higher in boys than in girls. BMI is a ratio of height to weight.

These differences suggest that a different approach to promoting healthy weight may be needed for boys and for girls.

## The Take-Home Message?

Encourage teens to take those steps—move more, watch “screens” less, eat more fruits and vegetables, eat breakfast more often, and eat fewer sweets. Even small changes in these habits can add up!

Read the study here: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/132/4/606.full.pdf+html>

