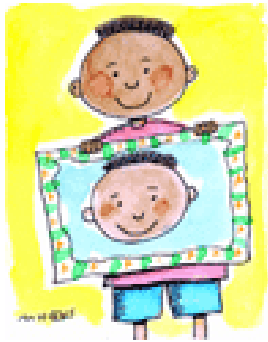


# Your Child's Emotional Well Being.....

Your child's emotional health is an important piece of his or her medical health. Paying attention to how he or she is feeling is an important and often challenging part of parenting.

Children feel that social and emotional aspects of their lives are the most difficult part of being overweight. Overweight kids are often teased and the victims of name-calling at school, and sometimes at home. Unfortunately, most children start to believe the negative comments people say about them. Children who are overweight, especially those who are very overweight, can have low self-esteem

and may be depressed. In addition, children who are experiencing feelings of depression or low self-esteem, may be more likely to become overweight.



1. *How can I tell if being overweight is causing a problem for my child?*

You can ask yourself the following questions:

- Does your child feel sad, embarrassed or upset about his or her weight?
- Do others tease your child about his or her weight?
- Are your child's activities limited because of his or her weight?
- Does your child sneak food?

2. *How can I help my overweight child?*

It is very important to let your child know how much you love them, no matter what their weight or size. Overweight children need support, acceptance, and encouragement from their families.

- Focus on your child's health and positive qualities.
- Be a good role model for your child. Focus on making healthy eating choices and physical activity part of your family's daily routine.
- Eat meals as a family.
- Take walks, play a sport, ride bikes together!



3. *Does my overweight child need counseling?*

The answer to this question varies from child to child. Your child's pediatrician may recommend counseling to help your family learn new ideas and strategies to help your family make healthy changes. You may also request counseling yourself or discuss your concerns with a Social Worker.

In order to change patterns of behavior, many people need the help and support of counseling. Counseling or therapy can help motivate kids to change their lives for the better and can help kids and parents with ideas to help reach important goals.

Family participation in a child's weight loss efforts and counseling is valuable in helping kids and families reach their goals.

