

## Live Outside the Box Challenge

This spring and summer **Live Outside the Box**. Challenge your children and yourselves to live outside the box for at least two weeks. That's right, reduce your time in front of TV, computers (except for school/work) and video games. Record on a calendar the activity you did each day instead of watching TV, as well as the time you did spend at the screen. The following week try to reduce the screen time and increase the activity time from the week before. You will be amazed at how much you can get accomplished and how much fun you can have without TV. If you really want to challenge yourselves try to be completely screen free for two weeks!



- Here are a few ways to help your family live outside the box.
1. Walk to the library to get a book.
  2. Wash the car.
  3. Clean out your closet. Donate to charity.
  4. Learn to use a compass.
  5. Go inline skating or walking.
  6. Play Frisbee.
  7. Play charades.
  8. Build an obstacle course in the backyard.
  9. Hide the remote control.
  10. Invent a new game and teach it to your family and friends.
  11. Act out a story.
  12. Walk to school/work.
  13. Plan your TV viewing. Watch or record your favourite show then turn the TV off.
  14. Find fun "active" ways to celebrate special occasions.
  15. Add physical activity to your vacation plans.
- For more ways to live outside the box this summer visit [www.liveoutsidethebox.ca](http://www.liveoutsidethebox.ca)

## Feature

### Childhood obesity: What parents can do.

Childhood obesity rates in Canada are climbing. In 1981 one in ten children were overweight, by 1996 one in four children were classified overweight. (Boys: 33% are overweight, including 10% who are obese. Girls: 26% are overweight, including 9% who are obese.)

Obese children get a head start on health problems such as diabetes and heart disease, often carrying these problems into an obese adulthood. If this trend continues, obesity may soon top smoking as the nation's most preventable cause of death.

The reasons for a child's obesity are complex. But the most common factors combine too much screen time — including television, computers and video games — with too much junk food. The best solution is to reduce your entire family's intake of both. (continued on page 2)

### Free things to do in Saskatoon

- **Meewasin Valley.** Did you know that "Meewasin" is the Cree word for beautiful. Take the family for a beautiful walk, bike or hike of the Meewasin Valley paths along the river bank. Check out the many interpretive stations as you go.
- **Playgrounds and Paddling pools and Spray Parks.** City of Saskatoon operates 44 free playground programs from June 29–Aug. 23. Playground program leaders plan and supervise activities to entertain children of all ages, while the adjoining paddling and spray pools offer a kid-sized opportunity to cool off and beat the heat. Children ages 2 to 12 can drop in for games, music, drama, special events, arts and crafts, water play, and storytelling!
- **Be Creative.** There are many physical activities that are free to do with family and friends right close to home.

## Childhood Obesity: What Parents can do. (continued from page one)

### Good for everyone

Don't single out the overweight members of your family for lifestyle changes. Eating healthier foods and getting more exercise is good for everybody. Children tend to mimic their parents, so it pays to be a good role model. If you don't want your children eating French fries, don't eat them yourself. Play basketball with the kids after dinner, or take a family walk. Organize family outings that involve physical activity — such as bike riding, skating or hiking.

### Parents have control

Parents are the ones who buy the food, cook the food and decide where food is eaten. Even small changes can make a big difference in your family's overall health.

- When buying groceries, choose fruits and vegetables over convenience foods high in sugar and fat.
- Always have healthy snacks from the 4 food groups available.
- Limit sweetened beverages, including those containing fruit juice. These drinks provide little nutrition in exchange for their high calories. They also can make your child feel too full to eat healthier foods.
- Select recipes and methods of cooking that are lower in fat. For example, bake chicken instead of frying it.
- Put colourful food on the table: green and yellow vegetables, fruits of various colors, and brown (whole-grain) breads, rice and pastas. Limit white carbohydrates: rice, pasta, bleached bread and sugar (desserts).
- Sit down together for family meals. Make it an event — a time to share news and tell stories. Eating in front of the television fosters mindless munching. Families that eat together eat healthier.
- Limit your children's recreational screen time to fewer than two hours a day.
- Encourage children to help with meal preparation.

### Don't make it a battle

Parents often must balance on a tightrope between giving too much and too little attention to their child's obesity. Because many overweight children already feel bad about themselves, you should make sure they know you love them unconditionally.

Offer healthy food to your children, but don't force it on them. Avoid fad diets. In many cases, simply maintaining a child's present weight is good enough — providing the opportunity for the child to grow to his or her potential.

### Worth the time

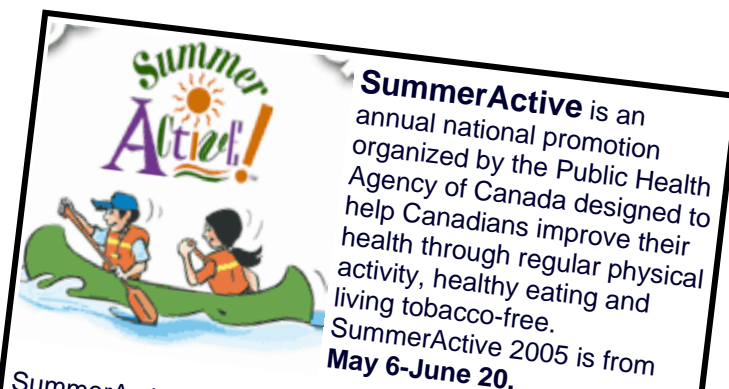
Many families feel they don't have the time it takes to prepare healthier meals and exercise more. Shopping, cooking, sharing a meal and cleaning up do take longer than zipping into the drive-through lane at a fast-food restaurant.

But the dangers of childhood obesity are real, and they are starting to take a toll. Helping set your kids on the path to a healthy future is one of the most important things you can do for them. Your investment in time will pay big dividends throughout their entire lives.

- Article adapted from MayoClinic.com

**Check out these websites for local summer programs and activities.**

[www.saskatoon.ca/org/leisure/index.asp](http://www.saskatoon.ca/org/leisure/index.asp)  
[www.usask.ca/kines\\_community](http://www.usask.ca/kines_community)  
[www.ymcasaskatoon.org](http://www.ymcasaskatoon.org)  
[www.ywcaskatoon.com](http://www.ywcaskatoon.com)



SummerActive helps Canadians take their first steps to becoming more physically active and spreads the word that **active living, healthy eating, and living smoke-free** are all important parts of a healthy lifestyle. It offers leader and individuals the chance to access helpful healthy living information and resources. This year's campaign will also highlight how **participation in sport activities** can help you achieve health benefits and feel great!

Each year, hundreds of SummerActive events, programs and activities are organized by community leaders across the country in communities, sport and recreation centres, schools, workplaces, public health facilities and other community settings. Check out what events are going on in Saskatoon and area. Register your activity online and be eligible for prizes.

[www.summeractive.canoe.ca](http://www.summeractive.canoe.ca)