

Help Healthy BR Save the Children

Obesity is a catalysis for disease that is sweeping over the country with vengeance. It is consuming people of all ages, races and socioeconomic classes. According to the 2010 Trust for America's Health Report, Louisiana ranked as the fifth highest state in the country for obesity. In 2009 the CDC Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System reported that 64.9 percent of Louisiana adults were overweight or obese. If the percentage of overweight or obese Louisiana adults was that high, what do you think is happening to the children in Louisiana? Height and weight was taken on approximately 13,000 Louisiana children (2-19 years old), during the 2008-2009 school year and the School Based Health Centers in Louisiana discovered that 47.54 percent of the children were overweight or obese. Of that percentage, 28.98 percent of the children were considered obese. The U.S. Conference of Mayors kicked off The Mayor's Healthy Cities Initiative to battle the vast increase of obesity in America. Baton Rouge Mayor-President, Melvin "Kip" Holden started Healthy BR to encourage change in the city, but needs the help of the community to make healthy improvements on personal levels, especially with the children.

Obesity can create an array of health problems and the cost of child obesity-associated illness has increased during the past two decades from \$35 million to \$127 million. Children shouldn't have to deal cardiovascular disease because of obesity nor should parents have to out live their children who have been struck by an obesity-associated illness. Healthy BR has put programs in place to buckle down on childhood obesity, but the programs do no good if parents aren't reinforcing them at home. The city must work together to save the children and Healthy BR is making the effort to educate parents on how to accomplish this goal. The 5-2-1-0+10 Curriculum is a prime example of a great program that can only be effective if it is enforced by parents.

The 5-2-1-0 is a national children's health message designed to target childhood obesity. It was founded by the national organization, Let's Go!. The numbers can be broken down like this: five or more fruits and vegetables a day, two hours or less of recreational screen time, one hour or more of physical activity, and zero sweetened drinks. Healthy BR uses the 5-2-1-0+10 Curriculum, which incorporated 10 hours of sleep to the list of healthy habits for children. The curriculum can be taught in schools, however parents are the only ones that can actively enforce the lessons.

Healthy BR makes the program simple and easy for parents to enforce with multiple sources of information provided on its website. Parents can find everything from flyers to informational breakdowns of each section to worksheets for the children. Being a busy parent can make it hard to keep up with your child's health habits, which is why Healthy BR provides log sheets like the physical activity log and screen time log to help parents keep record. Information on food portions, healthy snacks and super foods can also be found on the website. Parents can use the beginner weight circuit to get children started

on their physical fitness along with the 5-2-1-0+10-goal recorder to keep them engaged and eager for progress.

With programs such as the 5-2-1-0+10 Curriculum being carried out by parents, Baton Rouge has the power to decrease the amount of overweight and obese children. The city will thrive on happier healthier children with brighter futures that can go off to college and watch their parents grow older. The 5-2-1-0+10 Curriculum is just one of many answers to the stale obesity problem, but nevertheless obesity is still a problem that is heavily affecting the children. This curriculum gives Baton Rouge the opportunity to fight childhood obesity, but only if the parents are committed to making the effort for change. Join the movement today to make Baton Rouge a healthier community.

More information about Healthy BR

Launched in 2008, Healthy BR is the Mayor's Healthy City Initiative that identifies and coordinates efforts aimed at healthy eating and an active lifestyle into a unifying community commitment to better health. Mayor-President Melvin "Kip" Holden founded the movement to communicate, coordinate, and collaborate Baton Rouge's health priorities. A Community Health Needs Assessment was used to establish the city's health priorities and involved more than 40 partner organizations. Healthy BR used the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's triple aim approach and found the city's priorities to be: obesity, overutilization of emergency departments, HIV, and mental health.

The goals of Healthy BR are: to raise awareness within the community of the problem and the services available, to motivate community members to make healthy choices and to join the movement to make Baton Rouge a healthier community, to increase the number of visitors to health-related resources on any city web site, to increase media outreach through community events and www.Healthybr.com, to increase awareness of www.Healthybr.com and the partnering organizations, and to increase utilization of available resources to promote healthy eating and active living in Baton Rouge.