



The Maryland State Medical Society

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SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL CHILDHOOD OBESITY AWARENESS MONTH

BALTIMORE, September 20, 2017 — One in 3 children in the United States are overweight or obese. Childhood obesity puts kids at risk for health problems that were once seen only in adults, like type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease.

The good news is that childhood obesity can be prevented. In honor of National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, MedChi and their affiliate Sugar Free Kids, encourages your family to make healthy changes together.

Sugar Free Kids Maryland is a diverse coalition working to protect Maryland children from type 2 diabetes, heart disease and tooth decay so they can live long, healthy lives. The coalition points to sugary drinks as the prime culprit these chronic diseases:

- Sugary drinks contribute more calories and sugar to our children's diet than any other single source.
- Sugary drinks contribute more calories and added sugars to our diets than any other food or beverage and daily consumption is strongly linked to higher childhood obesity and type 2 diabetes rates (Institute of Medicine, 2012).

There are other small steps that you as a family can do to help your child stay at a healthy weight:

- Make healthy meals: Buy and serve more vegetables, fruits, and whole-grain foods.
- Limit screen time: Keep screen time (time spent on the computer, watching TV, or playing video games) to 2 hours or less a day and get active outside. Walk around the neighborhood, go on a bike ride, or play basketball at the park.

“One in three Maryland children is unable to maintain a healthy weight,” said Sugar Free Kids Maryland Executive Director Shawn McIntosh. “There is no greater contributor to this problem in a child's diet than sugary drink consumption. Sugar Free Kids Maryland is committed to creating healthier drinking habits for children and giving them the best possible opportunity to live long, healthy lives.”

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. It is the largest physician organization in Maryland. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit www.medchi.org.