

Weighing Kids in Schools ... should we?



In the news or social media you may have learned that there are more overweight children now than there were in the past. In trying to help all children grow well, many have put a focus on children's weights. It is important, however, that the focus be on the health and wellness of the whole child instead.

Take the focus off body weight, size and shape and put it on HEALTH and WELLNESS

Why take the focus off weight?

- **All students need to be physically active and eat well to be healthy regardless of their body weight.**
- Weighing kids in school can do more harm than good.

What can happen when a child is weighed at school?

- Children are often teased about their weight. Weighing a child at school can increase the amount of teasing that may already be happening.
- Regardless of a child's body weight, the child could be pressured to try harmful diets. This can lead to disordered eating.
- Being weighed at school can be humiliating, scary and shaming for the child. There are many factors that impact body size that are beyond a child's control.

Research shows that school programs better promote the health of students if they include:

- physical activity: both sport and non-competitive active play
- less time spent sitting
- supportive healthy eating environments
- practices appropriate for all cultures
- low or no cost to participants
- family involvement
- other school programs and initiatives that support the health of the child



Written by the Public Health Nutritionists of Saskatchewan with support from Saskatchewan Health Regions (2015). For more information, contact Melanie Warken, RD, at melanie.warken@fhr.ca. For more nutrition posters, visit www.fhr.ca/DidYouHearUs.htm.

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