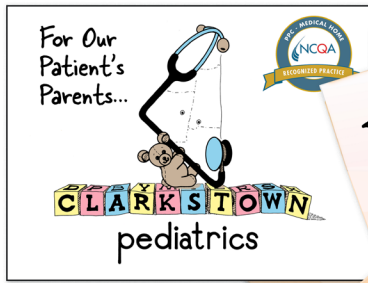


Spring 2023



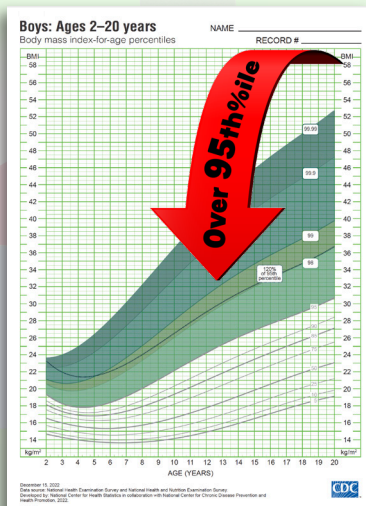
PARENT LETTER

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# Be Proud of Your Body, Always!

## Let's talk about weight in a health focused way...



This is a BMI chart updated by the CDC in December 2022. Green areas were extended to show the overweight and obese ranges

We are against body shaming and bullying. We know children and teens often feel ashamed of their bodies if they are overweight. Everyone should be proud of themselves and their bodies no matter what size or shape.

Weight is a sensitive topic for most of us so let's talk about weight in a **health** focused and not weight focused way. No-one should blame anyone for being obese. It is caused by so many genetic, social, environmental, and emotional factors. And weight gain increased dramatically throughout the COVID pandemic. Experts predict that 51% of the world (more than four billion people) will be obese or overweight by 2035! So the majority of humans on the planet will be overweight. Wow!

So why do we even discuss weight? Does mentioning it just make kids feel bad about their bodies? Does our focus on healthy weight lead to more eating disorders? (We don't think so.) We discuss healthy weight because of the health problems which obesity causes. Our goal is to make kids healthy not skinny. High blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and liver disease are occurring at earlier ages.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has published a new policy statement on the treatment of obesity. It recommends less "watchful waiting". "Don't worry they'll grow out of it" isn't working. And there is good evidence that obesity treatments are safe and effective.

We have written articles about treating obesity in the past ("The Quarantine Fifteen" Pandemic Weight Gain in Children and Teens on our website). Take a look at [www.myplate.gov](http://www.myplate.gov) and [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org). We will gladly refer your child to a nutritionist or dietician. We encourage programs to get kids exercising more. And, for sure, less screen time!

We are screening our obese patients over age 12 for prediabetes, high cholesterol, "fatty liver" disease and high blood pressure. We may ask an endocrinologist to help us decide about *semaglutide* or *metformin* class medications. Bariatric surgery is to be considered for severely obese (BMI over 40) patients that just can't get their weight down after trying everything else.

So it's Spring, get out and enjoy. Be proud of your body!

[www.clarkstownpeds.com](http://www.clarkstownpeds.com)

by Doug Puder, MD