



The Skokie Community 2015 Childhood Obesity Report *Skokie Department of Public Health*

“Goal: To prevent obesity through development and support of community policies and programs promoting healthy lifestyles.”

Why focus on childhood obesity?

Fast Fact:

1 in 3 Skokie children is overweight or obese and 1 in 6 is obese.

Preventing childhood obesity is a priority of *The Skokie Community 2012 Health Plan (www.skokie.org)*. Obesity is a common problem in Illinois; the Illinois Alliance to Prevent Obesity estimates that more than 31% of children and 62% of adults are overweight or obese in the state. Most concerning is the dramatic increase in childhood obesity since 1990, because being overweight or obese as a child increases the likelihood of chronic diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and early death. **Children who are overweight are likely to have excess weight as an adult.**

Measuring childhood obesity in Skokie

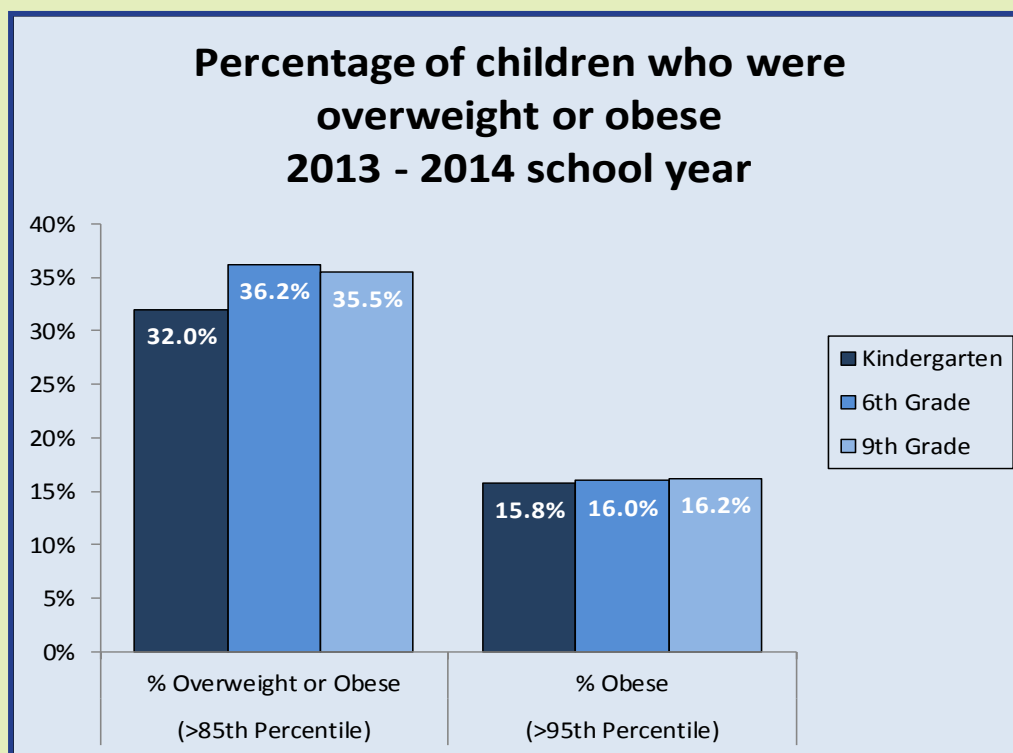
In order to address childhood obesity in the Village, we needed to know the scope of the problem. The Skokie Health Department began by reviewing records in school districts 68, 69, 72, 73, 73½, and 219. Using a tool developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), health department and school staff gathered height and weight data from the school physical forms that are required for kindergarten, 6th grade, and 9th grade. From this data, a Body Mass Index was calculated. **No personal information was collected from student records.**

NUMBER OF SCHOOL HEALTH FORMS REVIEWED	
Grade	
Kindergarten	525
6 th Grade	636
9 th Grade	1,104
Total	2,265

What is Body Mass Index?

The Body Mass Index (BMI) is a reliable estimate of body fatness in most children and teens. It is a number that can be calculated from measured height and weight. Overweight or obese children have a BMI greater than 85% of children of the same sex and age. Obese children have a BMI greater than 95% of children of the same sex and age.

What are the findings?



The school physical forms of Skokie children in kindergarten, 6th grade and 9th grade show that **one in three children is either overweight or obese** and **one in six is obese**. These numbers are similar to what is seen across the United States.

Overweight or obese children have a **BMI greater than 85%** of children of the same sex and age.

Obese children have a **BMI greater than 95%** of children of the same sex and age.

What are the next steps?

Our goal is to create a plan to address childhood obesity in Skokie, using a variety of approaches. We are determining what policies, programs and education efforts are currently being offered by community partners such as the schools, healthcare system, park district and library. Many health departments and communities across the country are working on this issue and have developed models for action which can be adapted to meet the needs of Skokie. The department will work together with schools and other community partners to implement the programs that are developed as a result of this process.

