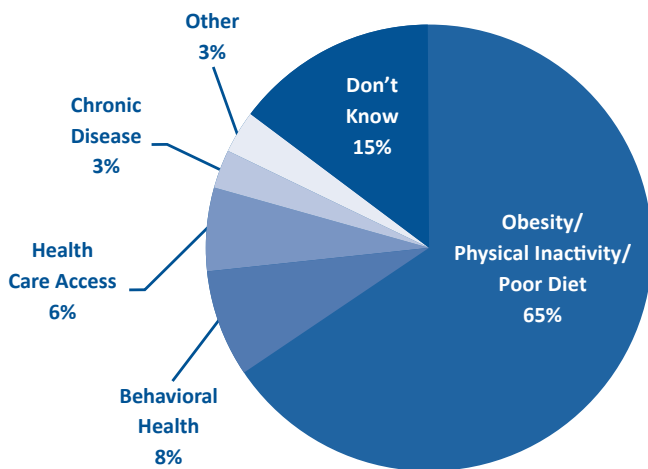


ALASKA OBESITY FACTS: No. 1 CHILDREN'S HEALTH ISSUE

OBESITY IS THE NO. 1 CHILDREN'S HEALTH ISSUE, SAY ALASKANS

Parents and other adults have many concerns about the health of Alaska's children. Yet nearly two-thirds of adults spontaneously identified overweight, obesity, physical inactivity and poor nutrition as the most pressing children's health issues.

ALASKAN'S CHOICE FOR TOP CHILDREN'S HEALTH ISSUE



Source: Alaska BRFSS, 2010¹

- The No. 1 children's health issue identified by Alaska adults is obesity, or obesity risk factors such as poor diet and lack of physical activity.
- Behavioral health concerns include suicide; depression; and drug, alcohol, and tobacco abuse.
- Health care access concerns include the inability to find a doctor or specialist for a child or inability for a child to receive preventative services like hearing screens and vaccines.
- Chronic disease concerns such as diabetes, heart disease, and asthma.

AN EPIDEMIC OF EPIC SIZE

“The impact of the obesity epidemic is reflected in a sobering national projection. Public health experts suggest, due to obesity, today's children will be the first generation to live a shorter life than their parents.”

Ward Hurlburt, MD, MPH
Alaska's Chief Medical Officer

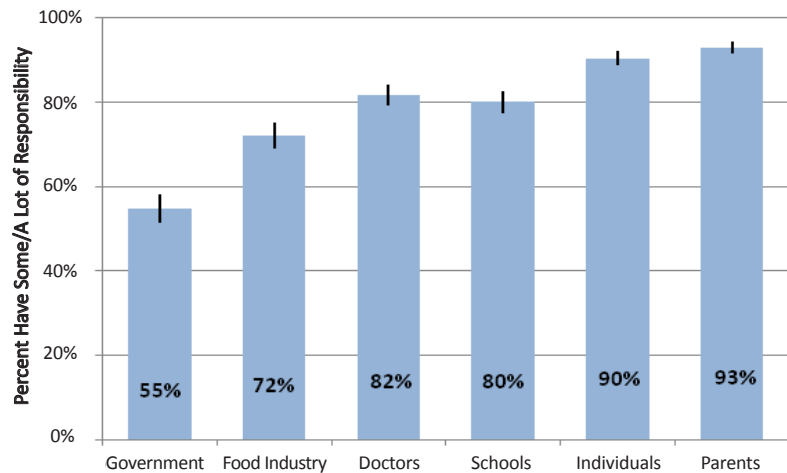
ALASKANS ARE RIGHT TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT OBESITY, PHYSICAL INACTIVITY & POOR NUTRITION

- In three statewide surveys of specific populations of Alaska children, between 35% and 40% of 2- to 5-year-olds were classified as either overweight or obese.^{2,3,4}
- Only 18% of Alaska high school students attended PE daily in an average week.⁵
- 49% of Alaska high school youth drank at least one sugar sweetened beverage every day.⁵
- For good health, students should be physically active for at least 60 minutes every day.⁵ Only 21% of Alaska high school students meet this criterion.⁵
- Nationally, one-third of obese preschool children and about half of obese school-age children become overweight adults.⁶
- Some medical conditions associated with obesity in adults have been diagnosed in obese children, including type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, fatty liver, sleep apnea, and musculoskeletal and psychosocial disorders.⁷

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ALASKAN'S OPINIONS ON WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ADDRESSING OBESITY

- In 2009, over 90% of Alaska adults said parents and individuals have some level of responsibility for addressing obesity.¹
- In addition, 80% of Alaska adults reported some responsibility lies with the schools, and 55% said the government has some or a lot of responsibility for addressing obesity.¹
- When asked how the government should address obesity, 79% of Alaska adults supported a government-funded obesity prevention media campaign.⁸



What Can Alaska Schools, Worksites & Communities Do?

- **Schools:** Restrict availability, portion size and marketing of less healthy food and beverages; provide all children with quality PE.
- **Worksites:** Provide programs for employees that improve diet and opportunities for physical activity.
- **Communities:** Establish community coalitions to promote environmental and policy change for active and healthy living.

What Can Health Care Providers Do?

- Assess all children for obesity risk, physical inactivity, and poor nutrition at least annually.
- Provide families with obesity prevention, physical activity and good nutrition messages.

What Can Individuals Do?

- Eat meals together as a family.
- Reduce consumption of soda and juices with added sugars.
- Eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins.
- Choose water and low-fat or non-fat dairy products.
- Limit television time to no more than two hours per day.
- Be more physically active.

What Can State Government Do?

- Help communities identify behaviors that increase the risk for obesity, physical inactivity and poor nutrition.
- Provide the public with education through a statewide media campaign to promote physical activity, good nutrition, and healthy weight.

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