FitFactor News

Youth Apt to Put on the Pounds During Summer

Doctors worry that today's kids, dubbed "Generation Xbox," aren't getting enough physical activity to keep them healthy. And a recent study out of The Ohio State University found that summer -- when youth should be swimming or riding bikes or chasing lightning bugs -- is the time kids gain the most weight.

It's not just the fault of TV, computers and video games, though that's a big part of it. The growth of single-parent families, as well as two-parent families in which both parents work, means parents have less time to spend on leisure activities, such as a walk to the park.

Organized sports can be costly. Parents may worry about their children playing outside by themselves. And there's fast food on every corner and junk food in most kitchens. So what's a parent to do?

Begin by considering these age-appropriate fitness tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics:

• **Infants and toddlers:** Exercise programs or classes are not recommended for this age group. Infants and toddlers should learn to enjoy outdoor activity and unstructured exploration -- always under proper supervision -- including walking in the neighborhood, unorganized free play outdoors, and walking through a park or zoo.

• **Preschool-age children (4 to 6 years):** Free play should be encouraged, with emphasis on fun, playfulness, exploration and experimentation. Appropriate activities might include running, swimming, tumbling, throwing and catching. Parents should reduce reliance on strollers and cars, and preschoolers should begin walking tolerable distances with family members.

• **Elementary school-age children (6 to 9 years):** Encourage free play, as well as walking, dancing or jumping rope. Organized sports (such as soccer or baseball) should have flexible rules and short instruction time, allowing free time in practices and focusing on enjoyment rather than competition.

• **Middle school-age children (10 to 12 years):** Focus on activities involving family and friends. Organized sports can begin to focus on skill development, as well as strategy. Weight training can be started in this age group, with proper supervision, stressing proper technique, light weights and high repetitions.

• **Adolescents:** Identifying activities that are fun and include friends is crucial for long-term participation. Activities can include individual fitness (such as dance, yoga or running), active transportation (walking, cycling), household chores, and competitive and noncompetitive sports. Weight training may continue, with longer sets, heavier weights and shorter sets, as the child reaches physical maturity.

Parents can create healthy habits and be positive role models to ensure plenty of physical activity for the entire family during the summer and throughout the year.

McClatchy Newspapers
More FitFactor News

FitFactor to Celebrate Nickelodeon’s World Wide Day of Play
FitFactor will celebrate Nickelodeon’s World Wide Day of Play on 29 Sept 07 and launch the new FitFactor year. This will be a great opportunity to plan fun family fitness events at your base and celebrate being active. The 2008 FitFactor program will be available to adults – including staff and parents - who want to join the youth and Get Up, Get Out and Get Fit. We will have fun base challenges and healthy competition planned during the year, so get ready! More info to come.

FitFactor Closing in on 13,000th Participant
Air Force Services FitFactor initiative has surpassed last year’s total of registered participants (12,614) and is well on the way to reaching 13,000th youth registered in just the second year of operations. FitFactor has more than 12,800 registered youth at the time of printing. We are on pace to reach the AF goal of over 15,000 youth registered by the end of Sept. Minot AFB registered the 10,000th FitFactor participant - Kayla M., age 6, in May; Eielson AFB registered the 11,00th participant – Jessica C, age 7 and Lackland AFB registered the 12,00th youth – Brian S, age 12 in June. Who will register the 13,000th FitFactor participant!? Congratulations to these bases and we encourage all bases to keep registering those youth!

101 Days of FitFactor Summer Fun Coming to a Close
The 101 Days of FitFactor Summer Fun will be ending on Labor Day and August is the last month that bases will be able to increase their chances of winning the Pump Up the Participation Challenge, enter the youth Photography and Essay contests and nominate FitFactor super staff and best practices.

Base PUMP UP THE PARTICIPATION Challenge
FitFactor challenges each base to increase their FitFactor youth/teen participation rates! Bases will compete in their command to see who will have the largest percentage increase in youth FitFactor participation rates this summer! Have your youth log more points! Encourage youth who have not logged any points to get started! Top bases in the PUMP UP THE PARTICIPATION challenge will receive monetary recognition that will benefit the FitFactor Youth Program at your base!

FitFactor Youth/Teen Photography and Essay Contests
Youth are encouraged to take and submit photos of FitFactor activities happening on their base and/or write and essay about their experience with the FitFactor program. Let us know why they enjoy FitFactor, how it has changed their habits, and why it is important to make healthy choices. Top entries will receive monetary awards for their base Youth Programs FitFactor initiative. Winning photos and essays will be posted on the FitFactor website! Entries are due 24 Aug 07. See the Official Rules for more details.

FitFactor SUPER STAFF Nominations and Best Practices
FitFactor wants to know about the SUPER STAFF at your base and the Best Practices with 6-8 year old youth! Flight Chiefs, Youth Programs staff, Families and Youth should nominate staff member(s) that really make the FitFactor program special, implement exciting activities, generate youth interest and is an overall FitFactor Superstar! Nomination and Best Practice forms are on the admin website and are due NLT 24 Aug 07.

All Questions regarding 101 Days of FitFactor Summer Fun should be directed to David at DSN 664-6427 or affitfactor.wf@pentagon.af.mil Thanks and let’s have a fun safe FitFactor summer!
FITFACTOR BASE HIGHLIGHTS

Here are some innovative FitFactor ideas shared by Youth Programs staff that you can try at your bases! Send us your ideas and we will publish them in the next newsletter!

AMC Offers Special FitFactor Promotion
Exciting news! AMC has developed an awesome summer recruitment promotion in an effort to increase FitFactor enrollment. All AMC youth enrolled in FitFactor are eligible to win additional incentives during the last three months of the 2007 AF FitFactor Program. This promotion runs from Jul - Sep 07 and each AMC base has guaranteed winners. Cool prizes include one iPod Nano, three iPod Shuffles, and thirty iTune Music Cards per base...to be used as monthly and grand prizes. Shannon Dauber, AMC Family Member Programs Specialist organized this special promotion and AMC registrations have been increasing ever since. Way to go Shannon and AMC FitFactor!

Grand Forks offers a Youth Tennis Camp
The next Grand Slam winner may be coming from Grand Forks AFB. This summer GFAFB offered a youth tennis camp that had the parents and participants raving about the experience. Youth learned the basic tennis swings and game fundamentals through a series of drills and practices. Coach Spud ran the successful event.

Moody AFB Teens Enjoy Parasailing Event
Moody AFB Youth Programs recently had an exciting summer fun teen event to cool down in the summer heat. Teen's enjoyed a day of Parasailing Adventures on the water and earned FitFactor points. A huge perk to living near the ocean!

Air Force Services wishes you a safe and fun summer season!
12 Months, 12 New Healthy Habits
The MSN Health and Fitness web page details twelve Healthy Habits that you can implement (one each month) to make a difference in your lifestyle. The FitFactor newsletter will highlight these 12 steps throughout the course of the year. However, if you cannot wait and would like to see the entire list, you can visit:


The first thing to remember about living a healthier 2007: You have the entire year to establish new, positive habits. It doesn’t have to be accomplished all in January. “Everything happens in small changes,” says Gregory Florez, CEO and president of First Fitness, a personal training company based in Salt Lake City. “Most people fail on their diet and exercise goals by looking too far ahead.” That’s why your best strategy for a healthy and happy New Year is to take it one month at a time. If you establish one positive habit each month, by Dec. 31, 2007, you will benefit from a dozen upgrades to your personal health. The result will be energizing on both the physical and mental levels.

“Don’t worry about how out of shape you might be. Commit to doing something different this month and you will feel a sense of accomplishment at the end of the 30 days.” The idea is think small changes for big dividends. Here is the eighth of 12 healthy habits you can adopt for 2007.

Positive Relationships are Important for Good Health

New habit: Work on an important relationship.

The skinny: Psychology researchers have discovered that most people are happy or not happy for reasons beyond their income levels. Researcher David Myers at Hope College in Michigan said the typical American is happy when engaged in “close, supportive relationships.” This includes marriage and friendships.

Action steps: Concentrate on the positives and work to avoid negative interactions. University of Washington marriage researcher John Gottman, for instance, says that every negative action or comment in a relationship requires five positive actions to offset the emotional damage. Make it a point in the next 21 days to stick to the positive in one targeted relationship. If that goes well, you can always repeat the process with another relationship next month.

Try to broaden your social networks, meet new people and make new friends. It may be more difficult as we get older but there are always opportunities for social interaction with people with similar interests. Many local community activities are readily available where you can explore an interest and establish new connections, such as nature clubs, book clubs, school courses, church groups and sports leagues. Relationships play a vital role in maintaining good health.
FitFactor Youth Healthy Snack Recipes Posted on the Web

As part of the FitFactor Winter Promotion, Youth were encouraged to send in their favorite Healthy Snack Recipes. We received some delicious suggestions from all over the world! The list of Healthy Snack Recipes can be viewed from links on the FitFactor admin site and the FitFactor Youth and Teen Home pages. Click on this link to view all of the tasty treats: [http://www.afgetfit.com/healthyrecipes.aspx](http://www.afgetfit.com/healthyrecipes.aspx)

Here is a sample from one of our future chef’s!

**FRUIT PIZZA** - Monique, Age 9, Spangdahlem AB

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<th>Ingredients</th>
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<td>Sugar cookie dough crust - pre-baked and cooled</td>
<td>Combine cream cheese and confectioners sugar until well blended. Spread on cookie dough crust. Top with your favorite fruit. Slice into wedges and serve.</td>
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<td>8 oz. pkg, fat free cream cheese, softened</td>
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<td>1/2 cup confectioners sugar</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 cups sliced fruit (choices: kiwi, strawberries, oranges, pineapples, peaches, blueberries, raspberries)</td>
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**PEANUT BUTTER COCONUT APPLES** - Jenna, Age 13, Beale AFB

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<th>Ingredients</th>
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<tr>
<td>Apples</td>
<td>Cut apples in slices and remove the core. Dip each apple slice into lemon juice. Dry apples on a paper towel. Spread peanut butter on apple slices and roll in shredded coconut. Chill before serving. Eat and Enjoy!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon Juice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peanut Butter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shredded Coconut</td>
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Speaking of Healthy Snacks….AETC is currently working with the base establishments that serve food (clubs, bowling centers, etc) to identify healthy items on the menu (healthy heart type meals) and indicate that they would qualify to be a FitFactor meal and so the youth could get points (25 per meal) if they eat that selection. An incredible partnership, especially if we could get a little FitFactor logo included on the menu next to the selection. Sam Kyle, AETC Family Member Programs Specialist is working with the base clubs to get this done. Way to go Sam and AETC!

This is a really cool program!

**Kyra - Age 10, Osan AB**

Thank you Kyra for the kind words and we are glad you enjoy FitFactor. Have a great summer and keep logging your FitFactor points!

Share your FitFactor stories and photos with us! Send them to: affitfactor.wf@pentagon.af.mil