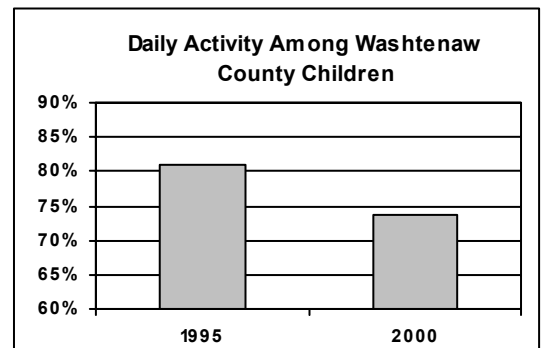
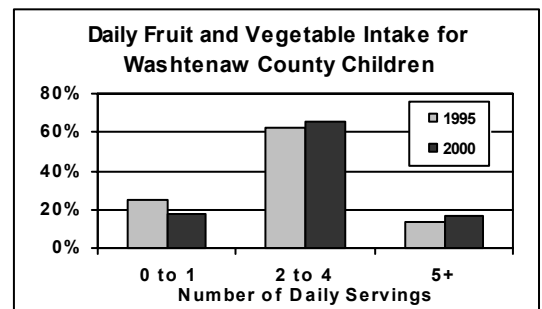
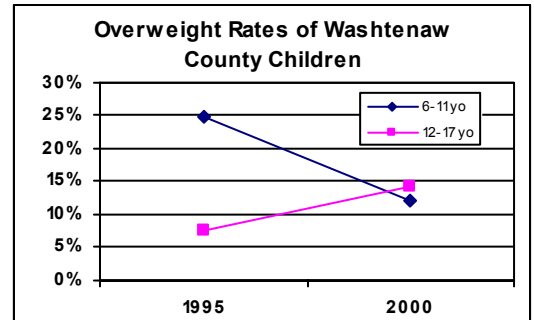


The health problem

- The rate for overweight adolescents has doubled from 1995 to 2000 (see graph).
- Overweight children are at a higher risk for developing health problems such as Type II diabetes, high blood pressure, improper bone growth, and sleep apnea.
- Overweight children are also more likely to become overweight adults.
- Only 16.5% of children in Washtenaw County are eating the recommended 5 fruits and vegetables a day. Children are less physically active (see graph).
- African American children in Washtenaw County are more likely to not exercise than their white counterparts.



Source: WCPHD, HIP Survey 1995 & 2000

The benefits

Eating healthfully and exercising 5 days a week promotes health in a variety of ways:

- Builds and maintains healthy bones, muscles, and joints
- Helps control weight, build lean muscle, and reduce fat
- Increases self-esteem and lowers stress and anxiety
- Increases likelihood that children will stay in school and have high academic achievement
- Decreases the likelihood that children will smoke or use illicit drugs

African American Children

- Encourage and reward physical activity. Plan physical activities where all family members can be active.
- To encourage physical activity, children should have both structured and unstructured time for exercise everyday.
- Collect toys and games that promote physical activity.
- Television watching and computer time should be limited to no more than 2 hours per day.
- Cook more meals at home and eat together as a family. Be aware of portion sizes.
- Decrease consumption of sweetened beverages to limit calories and prevent cavities from forming.
- Healthy eating includes having enough fiber in your diet through whole grains, fruits, and vegetables; eating 5 fruits and vegetables a day; cutting down on sugars, fat, and salt; and eating healthy snacks.
- Parents should be role models for eating healthy and for physical activity.



Washtenaw County Public Health Department: Washtenaw County data and community organizations: <http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org>

American Heart Association: tips on engaging in a more physically active lifestyle: <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=1200013>

Center for Disease Control: Tips and start guides for becoming physically active: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/index.htm>

Sources:

1. Healthy Eating Expert Panel: Meetings on November 19, 2003 and March 31, 2004
2. Moving in a Healthy Direction: Washtenaw County Health Improvement Plan Progress Report, Dec. 2001
3. Physical Activity in Washtenaw County, Washtenaw County Health Department, January 2003. http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/public_health
4. Centers for Disease Control, Physical Activity and Health. <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/index.htm>