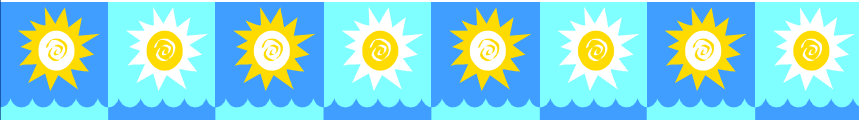


## On-Line Resources

- The Healthy Kids Coalition has many resources, tools and information that can be downloaded. To learn more: <http://www.tippingthescales.net>
- The [Centers for Disease Control](#) offers a BMI calculator for children and adults. The CDC offers additional information concerning health and wellness. To learn more: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/index.html>
- The Food Guide Pyramid offers great resources for parents and children concerning healthy eating and active living. To learn more: <http://www.mypyramid.gov/kids/index.html>
- Additional sources can be found from the following documents: [Parents & Caregivers Resources](#) and [Children & Youth Resource](#)
- If you would like some more information about the Northern Virginia Healthy Kids Coalition please contact Whitney Strand at [whitney.strand@inova.org](mailto:whitney.strand@inova.org) or 703-698-2564.



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Articles in this newsletter are not a substitute for the care and advice of medical professionals. When you have a question or need medical advice, diagnosis or treatment, consult your physician.

This newsletter is produced by Inova Health System in conjunction with your faith community. If you prefer not to receive this newsletter, please notify the appropriate personnel in your faith community.

Inova Health System is a not-for-profit healthcare system based in Northern Virginia that consists of hospitals and other health services, including emergency- and urgent-care centers, home care, nursing homes, mental health and blood donor services, and wellness classes. Governed by a voluntary board of community members, Inova's mission is to improve the health of the diverse community it serves through excellence in patient care, education and research. Inova provides a healthy

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# For Your Health

## The Northern Virginia Healthy Kids Coalition

The health of American children is deteriorating at an alarming rate. Diseases and health conditions normally only diagnosed in adults are now being seen in children. Diabetes, elevated cholesterol and high blood pressure are becoming a more common diagnosis in this age group. Reversing this unhealthy trend has become a major priority among health professionals.

Health officials are attributing this unhealthy trend, in part, to the current rates of childhood obesity in our country. Unfortunately, overweight or obese children are not limited to only the diseases and health conditions listed above. More and more children are now being diagnosed with Asthma, Sleep Apnea, Arthritis, Heart Disease, Cancer, and Depression.

It has been reported that 1 out of 3 children in the U.S. are overweight or obese. In Virginia, in 2007, it was reported that 31% of our children are overweight or obese. In Northern Virginia 16.5% of our children are overweight or obese. Children that remain overweight or obese are at a greater risk of becoming overweight or obese as adults if changes are not made now.

With the rates of childhood obesity continuing to rise we are also seeing a rise in health care costs. It was reported in 2003 that the health care cost attributed to obesity in Virginia was over \$1.6 billion. The cost to care for someone who is overweight or obese continues to rise. Based on the 2008 healthcare statistics, it has been estimated that if obesity rates continue to rise at the current rate, by 2018 the state of Virginia will spend \$6.7 billion alone on costs attributable to obesity. We need to take steps now as a community to develop ways of preventing this from occurring.

There are community-based associations that you can partner with to address childhood obesity. Associations like the Northern Virginia Healthy Kids Coalition are reaching out to families, communities, schools, organizations, and other health agencies to develop ways of reducing the rates of childhood obesity. Their goal is to see that the children of Northern Virginia change their health behaviors now while they are young—a time when these changes can be made more easily.

## The Coalition

The Northern Virginia Healthy Kids Coalition was established in 2005 to bring communities and organizations together to help the children of Northern Virginia improve their health. The Coalition has partnered with local schools, health departments, and other health organizations to spread the word concerning childhood obesity.

The mission of NVHKC is to engage the Northern Virginia community in collaborative, family-focused efforts to promote better health through energy balance for children of all ages.

With this mission in mind the Coalition started Tipping the Scales for Better Health Campaign to spread the 9-5-2-1-0 message.

- ✓ 9 hours of sleep per day
- ✓ 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day
- ✓ 2 hour limit on screen time per day
- ✓ 1 hour of physical activity per day
- ✓ 0 sugar-added beverages per day

## The Statistics

In 2007, the Northern Virginia Healthy Kids Coalition with the support of Inova Health System commissioned a study in Northern Virginia among children 2-18 years of age. The results from the study are as follows:

- Over 100,000 are either overweight or at-risk of becoming overweight
- 16.5% are overweight (an estimated 66,100 children)
- 9.9% are at-risk (an estimated 39,700 children)
- 286,000 do not eat enough fruits and vegetables
- 227,000 do not engage in moderate or vigorous exercise on a daily basis
- 232,000 spend four or more hours per day in front of a TV or computer screen

## The Message: 9-5-2-1-0 for Health

These five daily habits can help children live healthier lives and maintain a healthy body weight.

### 9- Hours of sleep

We all need at least 7-9 hours of sleep every night to wake refreshed and ready for our day. It is important for children to get at least 9 hours of sleep or more for proper physical and mental development and a strong immune system.

### 5- Servings of fruits and vegetables

Fruits and vegetables are loaded with vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and phytochemicals that children need to grow healthy and strong. Ensure 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day by serving fruits and vegetables for snacks and at meal times. Be a good role model to your children by eating fruits and vegetables daily.

### 2- Hours or less of screen time

Children that spend more than 2 hours a day in front of the television or computer are at a greater risk of becoming overweight or obese. Children are more prone to eating greater amounts of junk food while watching television or playing video games resulting in possible weight gain. It is best that you limit the amount of screen time by allowing your child to choose specific shows or games they want to view or play the most. Provide books, games, or puzzles for your child to enjoy.

### 1- Hour of exercise

Your child needs at least 1 hour of physical activity per day to help maintain a healthy weight and suppress overeating. Take your children on walks or to the park, play outdoor games with them, or get them involved in organized sports. Remember to be a good example for your child by being physically active at least 5 days a week.

### 0- Sugary beverages

Are your children drinking sodas and juice on a daily basis that are loaded with sugar? Sugar from these beverages can suppress the immune system and contribute to more doctor visits and missed school days. To reduce this effect try replacing the sugary beverages with water, 100% juice, or low fat milk.