

# Nutrition For Children and Teens

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# Objectives

1. Name three warning signs that a teenager may be engaging in a fad diet
2. Name three examples fad diets
3. Define a healthy eating pattern for a child/teenager
4. Understand the use of Health At Every Size for kids and teenagers



# Total Health

- Health is complex – many factors are involved.
- Some factors are not able to be controlled
- Consider all factors when exploring ways to improve health.



# Background

- We are born intuitive eaters
- We learn diet culture which can inhibit our ability to continue to be in tune with intuitive eating
- Diet culture infiltrates our lives and relationships
- Diet culture can lead to disordered eating and eating disorders



# Parental Concerns and Thoughts

- Internal battles (body shaming, “am I okay with my child's body?”)
- How do we help kids stay neutral about food and body?
- Do not express judgment and remain neutral (one is not better than the other) which is easier said than done!



# Behaviors in Childhood

- Children do not always have the language at young ages to express food concerns
- We learn diet culture which can inhibit our ability to continue to be in tune with intuitive eating



# Fostering the IE Relationship

- As a parent, it is difficult to feed kids. Every child/person is going to express their intuitive eating journey differently
- Keep food and meals positive



# Fostering the IE Relationship

- Keep in mind your own reactions to what frustrates us
  - When we have a big reaction to something, it is going to charge up the response
  - Parental reaction is going to cause a reaction in the child
- No two kids are alike (different likes, aversions, preferences)





# Feeding a Child or Teen

- How parents can support normal eating: Pleasure, enjoyment, safety around food, children feeling heard around their food choices
- Our worries can turn into a problem that does not even exist!



# Adolescence – Growth and Needs

- Changes during adolescence
  - Rapid growth and development
  - Physical changes
  - Emotional changes
  - Social and cognitive changes
- Changes with eating
  - Increased appetite related to rapid growth
  - Increased nutritional needs at baseline when growing
  - Normalizing changes on the growth chart



# Path Away from Diet Culture

- Ironical that we need to talk about IE in kids?
- Quickly conditioned out of us
- Harms/risks of dieting and eating disorders
- Weight stigma and diet culture and why a weight-inclusive approach to feeding children is key



# Social Media

- There is an implied message that if you do this the right way, kids will have wide variety, perfect nutrition, and will have a great attitude about food – this rests on the belief that there is only one definition of “good nutrition”
- Solid evidence around the more that we don’t pressure/remains neutral, the more likely kids are to try/eat more foods
- Health has so many different looks



# Gentle Nutrition Suggestions

- Make family meals a priority. Use mealtimes for connecting!
- Iron and calcium are two nutrients that are important as adolescents grow and develop
  - Ask your teens to think of some foods they enjoy that can give them these nutrients
- Allow your teen access to all types of foods
  - Offer meals that include food from all food groups
  - No foods are good or bad – all foods give us nutrition
- Monitor for changes to your teen's thoughts regarding food/body
  - May become focused on changes during puberty



# Activity and Movement

- Help your teen explore movement options that they enjoy
- Exercise is not a way to earn food or burn food
- Consider the term "Joyful Movement"
- Movement can:
  - Help strengthen mood
  - Improve mood
  - Boost confidence



# Activity and Movement

- Red Flags
  - Comments on "needing to work out" following eating or prior to eating
  - Hyper-focused on activity
  - Feeling "guilty" for missing a workout



# Fad Diet

- Becomes popular for a short time
- Not a standard dietary recommendation
- Makes unreasonable claims for weight loss
- Can be marketed as a "lifestyle" instead of a diet





# Fad Diet

- How to spot a fad diet:
  - Promises a quick fix
  - Promotes "magic" foods or food combinations
  - Implies that food can change body chemistry
  - Excludes or severely restricts food groups or nutrients
  - Has rigid rules that focus on weight loss



# Popular Diets in Plain Language

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1. Intermittent fasting | 1. Calorie restriction with time limits                                    |
| 2. Weight Watchers      | 2. Calorie restriction through a points system                             |
| 3. Keto                 | 3. Calorie restriction with a side of brain fog                            |
| 4. Noom                 | 4. Calorie Restriction with "psychology" and inaccurate anti-diet messages |
| 5. Optavia              | 5. Calorie restriction in the form of bars and shakes                      |



# Why Diets Don't Work

- Not sustainable long-term for most people
- Promote weight cycling
- Lead to an increased risk for disordered eating
- Alters a healthy relationship with food
- Set point theory



# Known Risks Associated with Weight Cycling

- Increased cardiovascular disease risk
- Decrease circulating leptin levels
- Adjusted RMR
- Increase in ED risk
- Rapid adipose tissue growth



# Recognizing Sneaky Diet Culture

- Using thinness as a marker of health
- Placing blame on BMI/weight for health concerns
- Depicting certain foods as "good" or "bad"
- Anxiety and obsession about food and health
- Cutting/counting calories vs. listening to the body



# Recognizing Sneaky Diet Culture

- Skimping on macronutrients
- Elimination diets
- Detoxes and cleanses
- Manipulate eating to shrink the body
- Exercise to shrink the body



# What is H.A.E.S. ?

## Continuously evolving approach to weight-centered treatment

- Promote size-acceptance
- End weight-discrimination
- Lessen the cultural obsession with weight loss and thinness



# H.A.E.S. Principles

1. Respect
2. Critical Awareness
3. Compassionate Self-Care





# Respect

- Celebrates body diversity
- Honors differences:
  - Age
  - Race
  - Gender
  - Ethnicity
  - Sexual orientation
  - Religion
  - Class



# Critical Awareness

1. Challenges specific and cultural assumptions
2. Values body knowledge and lived experiences



# Compassionate Self-Care

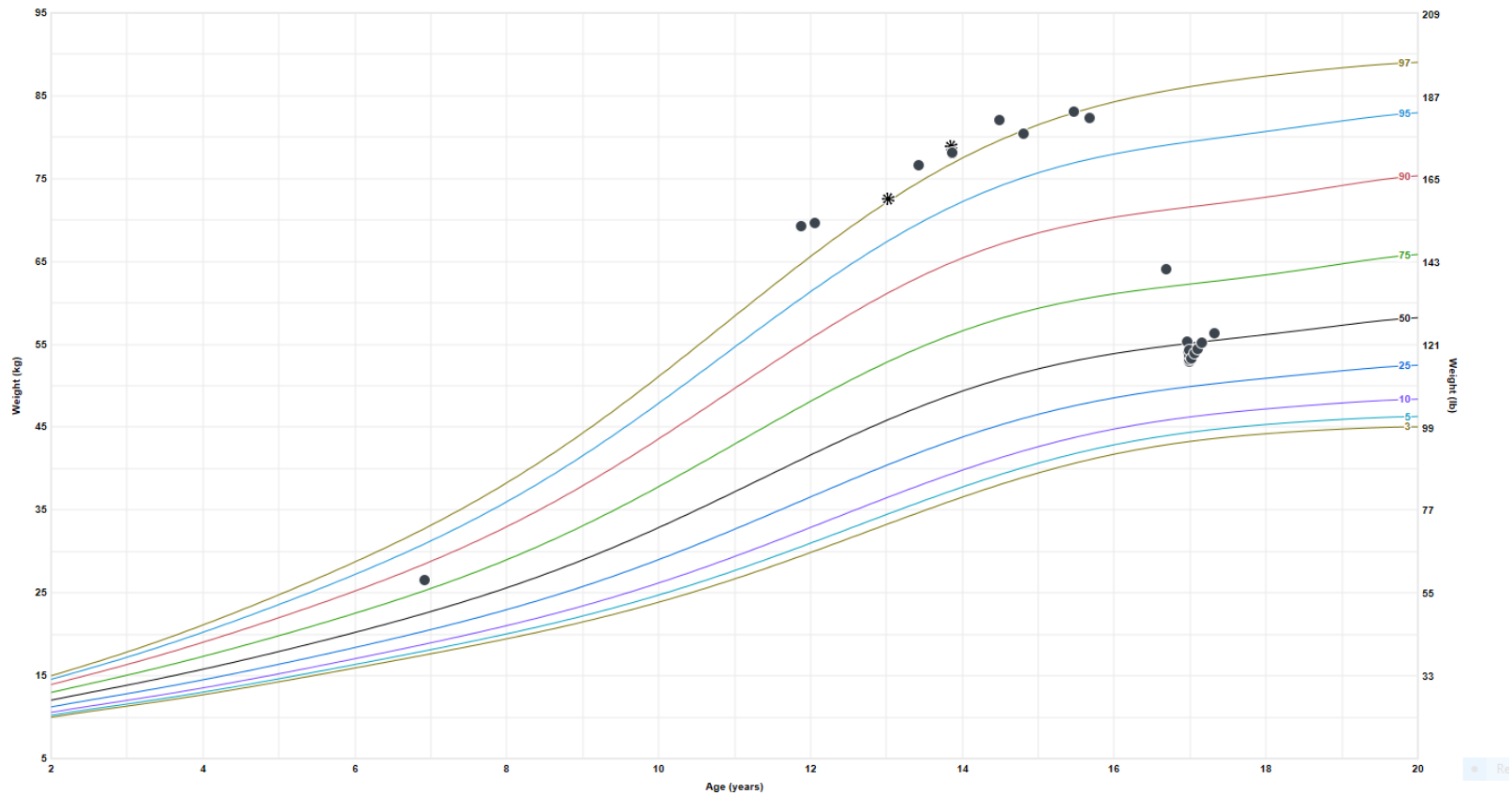
- Finding joy in one's body and bring physically active
  - "Joyful Movement"
- Eating in a flexible and attuned manner
  - Honoring hunger cues
  - Being able to eat regardless of the situation
- Valuing pleasure in eating
  - Respecting social cues that frame eating options



# Case Study – M.O.

- 16-year-old female at time of admission (February 2021)
- PTA: growing consistently above the 90th percentile
- Began restricting to one microwave meal per day (less than 500 kcal)
  - Exercise: 2-3 times/week (running and workout videos)
  - Did not enjoy this exercise
- 60-pound weight loss x 1 year
- LMP – weight: somewhere around the 80th percentile
- In the ER:
  - Physical Symptoms: early satiety, cold intolerance, constipation, fatigue, dizziness, and light-headedness
- Admitted at the 44th percentile for both weight and BMI





Akron Children's Hospital

# Follow-Up Questions

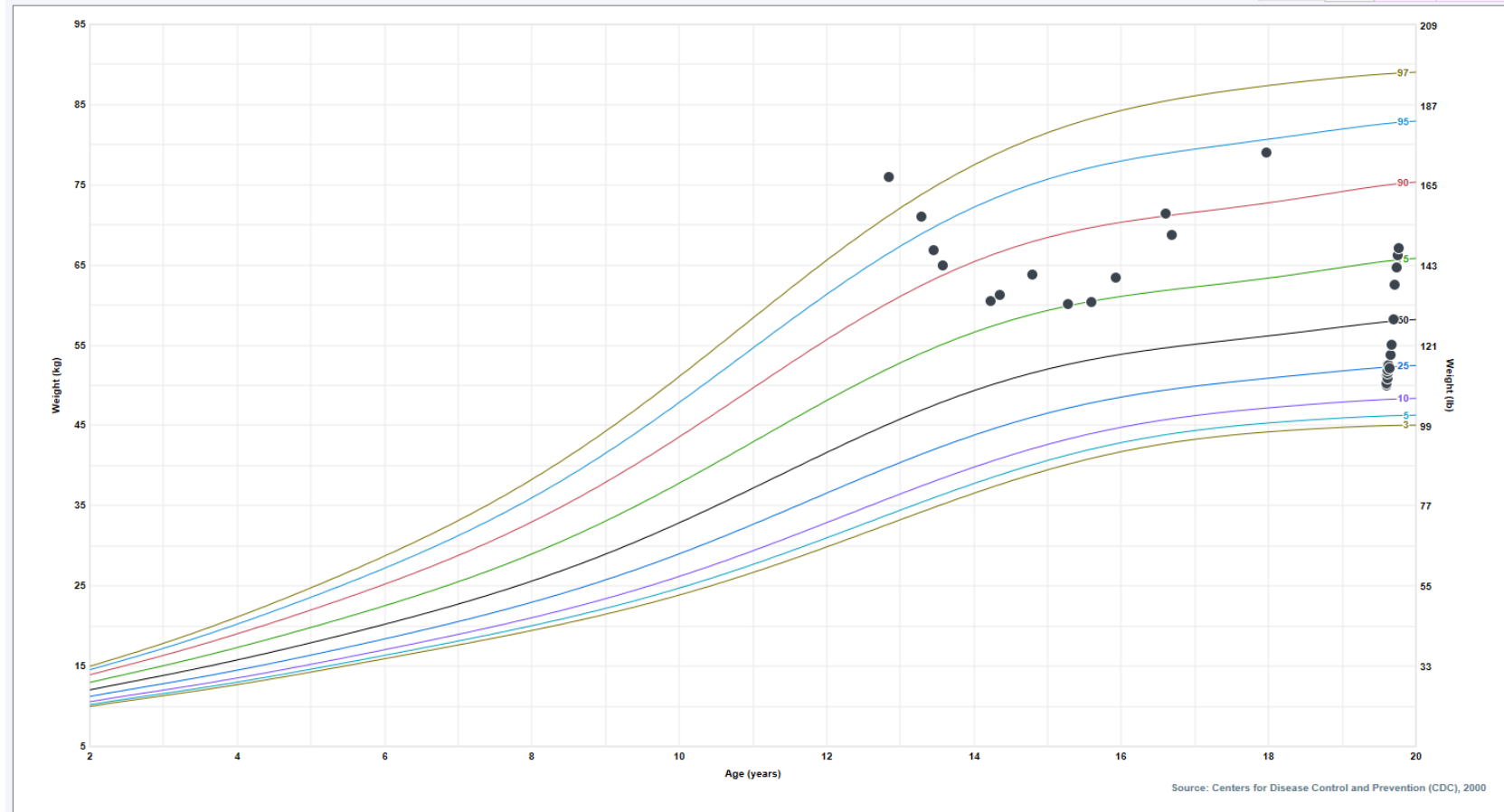
1. The 44th percentile is within the normal range for weight and BMI.
  - Is this healthy for this patient?
  - How do you know?
2. Where do you think M.O. needs to end up on the growth chart?
  - How do you know?



# Case Study – E.W.

- 19-year-old female admitted July 2021
  - Bradycardia
  - Malnutrition
- Physical Symptoms:
  - Cold intolerance, blue nails, fatigue, abdominal pain, chest pain, and decreased energy
- Irregular growth chart – no consistent curve
- Restricting intake to 584 kcal/day
- Struggling with her eating disorder for over 2 years prior to admission
- Admitted at the 17th percentile for weight and 2nd percentile for BMI







# Follow-Up Questions

1. Where do you think E.W. felt her best?
2. Where do you think she needs to end up on the growth chart?
3. How do you know?
4. What was the goal of E.W.'s treatment with our team?
5. How did we support her once she is weight recovered?



# How to Determine "Goal Weight"

- Your healthiest weight is the weight you settle at when you are:
  1. Nourishing your body with a variety of foods
  2. Having regular periods without the use of birth control
  3. Coping with stress
  4. Getting adequate sleep
  5. Moving your body joyfully
  6. In children and adolescents: following their growth curve



# Fostering Positive Body Image

- Accept your genetic blueprint
- It is hard to reject the diet mentality if you are unrealistic/overly critical of body size and shape



# Fostering Positive Body Image

- Respect your whole self
- Be compassionate toward your body
- Ditch the scale
- Respect every **body**



# Reframing Language

## Avoid

- Overweight
- Weight gain
- Healthy/Unhealthy
- Too Much/so much/all that food
- Big/fat/chubby

## Incorporate

- In a larger body
- Weight recovery
- Food is Food – all foods provide nutrition
- What he/she needs
- Strong/nourished



# How Should I Feed My Child?

- Structured meals and snacks
- 3 meals per day, 1-3 snacks per day on a schedule
- Multiple components at meals and snacks
- Mixture of carbohydrates, proteins, and fats
- No restriction of food groups
- Extra meals/snacks for physical activity

