



Staten Island Advance

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Camp provides fun, support for obese kids

Jennifer Sammartino

Parents can't pick up a newspaper or tune on the TV without hearing about the epidemic that is childhood obesity. But instead of barking statistics at you, we thought we'd offer a way to help your children.

Ever considered camp?

New Image Camp provides a balance of weight loss elements (healthy eating and nutrition education and exercise) with free weight training, treadmill workouts, hiking, self-esteem builders such as grooming, modeling, self-defense, and more.

The camp is "a normal summer camp environment with pools, tennis courts, a lake front," said Tony Sparber, director of the camps in the Poconos, in Florida and in California.

"There are a lot of activities," Sparber said. Campers participate in food planning and nutrition classes, cooking classes and more. Behavior modification is also part of the program, as is self-esteem building.

"They learn about nutrition and how to keep it going when they go home," he said. "They leave this camp in the best mental and physical shape of their lives."

The environment is fun, he said. There's no pressure and it's non-competitive.

"It's a low-stress environment -- everybody is there for the same reason," he noted.

Kids, who spend a minimum of two weeks and a maximum of eight weeks at camp, lose an average of 3 to 4 pounds a week, he said.

"It's not a fat farm," he continued. The camp is mainstreamed, with kids of all shapes and sizes. Some have to lose 10 pounds, others 100.

The camp will be hosting an open house at Camp Pocono Trails, Reeders, PA on Sunday. Tours of the facility begin promptly at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Please call (800) 365-0556 to respond, for more information and directions. ■

Jennifer Sammartino is the Health & Fitness editor at the Advance. Her column, Fitness notes, appears each Monday in the Health & Fitness section.

Parents should consider the following 20 weight loss rules for children, courtesy of the camp:

1. Consume an adequate amount of food to provide all the required nutrients.
2. Drink plenty of water (Minimum 6-8 glasses per day.)
3. Target slow, steady weight loss: 1 to 2 pounds per week.
4. Eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily to get enough fiber.
5. Exercise every day if possible.
6. Eat healthy snacks to curb hunger so that children are not too hungry at mealtime. This will help to prevent overeating.
7. Avoid extra fats and sugar as much as possible.
8. Eat at regular times each day. Do not skip meals so that energy is maintained.
9. Eat slowly.
10. Do not eliminate your favorite foods.
11. Get tempting junk foods out of the house.
12. Ask family and friends to offer support.
13. Do not be afraid to make special requests when dining out.
14. Do not eat in response to emotions.
15. If you over eat one day, eat less the next.
16. Remember all foods can fit into a healthy diet.
17. If you must have a rich dessert, share it with a friend.
18. Do not use diet pills or try crazy fad diets! They do not work!
19. Keep up-to-date on nutrition news.
20. Try new food products. You might find one that you enjoy eating.

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