



# Obese kids pose dilemma for many doctors today

CHICAGO (AP) — Many children are not being adequately treated for weight problems because many pediatricians and other health workers lack expertise in helping them slim down, a survey suggests.

Though faced with an increasing number of overweight children, many pediatricians and nurse practitioners say they need more training to overcome weight-loss obstacles including a lack of patient motivation, insurance and parental involvement, according to the survey.

The eight-page survey involved 940 pediatricians, pediatric nurse practitioners and dietitians nationwide. Several reports about it are published as a supplement to the July issue of Pediatrics.

The 1999 survey is part of an effort by the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau to examine the growing problem of obesity in children and to assess how doctors are dealing with it.

National data indicate that about 14 percent of children aged 6 through 19 are severely overweight, a near-tripling since the 1960s.

"A lot of pediatricians around the country don't feel confident that they know how to treat this problem — so they don't (treat it)," said Dr. William Dietz, who chaired a committee, convened by the bureau, that initiated the survey.

"It is a hard problem to treat," especially if doctors don't start addressing it until their patients become obese, said Dietz, director of the division of nutrition and physical activity at the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Most survey participants said weight problems

in children are a serious medical issue, patients at risk for chronic diseases including diabetes and heart ailments later in life. The problem is that many may be inadequately addressed, said St. Louis University's Dr. Sarah Barlow, one of the researchers.

"It's a very sensitive topic for pediatricians to bring up. They worry about offending the parent," and causing self-esteem problems in a child, she said.

More than a third of pediatricians and dietitians and about half of dietitians said they didn't initiate treatment in overweight children with no other related medical problems. And most said they didn't initiate treatment in youngsters who didn't want to control their weight.

Dr. Elena Fuentes-Afflick, a San Francisco pediatrician, said it's not unusual to see patients' weight balloon from visit to visit as their parents swear to you that they're not eating fast-food and that they're exercising.

"This is clearly not a medical problem that gives them a pill and it will go away," Fuentes-Afflick said. "It's much more complicated. The whole family has to be involved. It's a very frustrating problem and there is no magic bullet."

More than a third of pediatricians surveyed said they had low proficiency in behavior management techniques to help patients lose weight. 25 percent said they lacked expertise in getting parents to help their children lose weight. Nearly 20 percent said they were ill-equipped to help patients become less sedentary.

# Pataki: WTC site to have no commercial development

NEW YORK (AP) — Relatives of World Trade Center victims welcomed Gov. George Pataki's promise that there would be no commercial development on the footprints of the 110-story twin towers.

"I'm very happy with that stand," Joseph Maurer, who lost his daughter in the attack, said Sunday. "I don't think anything should ever be even thought about being built where Tower 1 and Tower 2 stood. ... That to me is like sacred ground."

Pataki told a gathering of about 400 victims' family members Saturday that there would be no commercial construction on the land on which the towers stood.

"We will never build where the towers stood," he said. "Where the towers stood is hallowed ground."

Former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, who also spoke at the ceremony, said his vision is of "a soaring, dramatic, beautiful memorial that draws people there 100 years, 150 years, from now."

The size and location of the monument to the more than 2,800 victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist

attack has been a contentious issue, with some family members originally wanting the entire 16-acre trade center site to become a memorial. Each tower occupied about 1 acre.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who did not attend Saturday's ceremony, has suggested a small, graceful memorial might be preferable to a large one.

Saturday's remarks from Pataki were the clearest signal yet that the site of the towers could be left without commercial development.

"We're happy to hear him address the twin towers, but that's not all of what the families want," said Bill Doyle, who lost his son in the Sept. 11 attack. "We'd like as much acreage as possible."

A committee of victims relatives that is advising the Lower Manhattan Development Corp. released a draft of its vision for the World Trade Center site last week. The panel would like to see a memorial complex that includes a visitors' center, a museum about the attack, a children's area, an eternal flame and a private area for victims' families.

## Switch

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that our two universities are partners in competing for Texas in the national arena of knowledge," Faulkner said. "It's very important to realize that the past of Texas was built to a

large degree on her physical assets. The current economy is to a much greater degree dependent on brain power and knowledge, and that doesn't have to be Texas."

Bowen added that in accomplishing these goals, both schools face many of the same financial and recruiting prob-

lems associated with being a state university.

Both presidents enjoyed visits so much that Bowen joked about staying in Austin a bit longer.

"I think I'll just stay Austin," Bowen said. "I'll be about you [Faulkner] stay College Station] for a week."

## Stamps

Continued from page 1

is printing millions of 3-cent stamps to help people use up leftover 34-cent stamps.

The stamps also can be purchased at post offices, online at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop) or by calling toll free 1-800-STAMP-24.

The increases affect only domestic mail. The international letter rate of 60 cents for the first ounce to Mexico and Canada and 80 cents to other countries remains unchanged.

Besides costs from the anthrax attacks and the Sept. 11 terrorism, mail volume has been declining in the soft economy, reducing income for the agency that does not receive taxpayer funds for

normal operations. However, Congress approved \$675 million for damage and to help for sanitizing government mail.

In an effort to cut costs, the post office is new construction and reduced staff by 1,000 year and another 8,000 this year.

The agency also sought changes in the law that governs its operations in an effort to get more flexibility in changing rates and offering new services. However, the House Government Reform Committee rejected proposed legislation by a 6 vote last week.

Following that defeat the Mailers Council, an organization of the mailing industry, urged President Bush to create a commission to evaluate the post office and make recommendations for change.

## EMDSS

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future storms.

"There is great uncertainty where the storm might make landfall and how much it might intensify," Lindell said. "The NHC has a pretty good probability of being right when they are forecasting within about 24 hours, but local decision makers need to know what's going to happen 30 hours in advance so they can issue an evacuation alert."

EMDSS is being built in order to address these problems.

"Sometimes [the decision makers] cannot even access relevant information [from the various weather service organizations]," Lindell said. "Our program is going to compile the

most recent data on specific storms from these organizations and historical data on similar storms.

"With this data we can provide probability numbers on how much the current storm is likely to intensify and where it is going to strike in an easy user-interface for the decision maker. They'll be able to see the display with the information they need. All they have to do is point and click."

Prater added that the actual evacuation logistics will also be taken into consideration.

"We're going to include detailed Geographic Information System maps in the database so that local authorities can guide residents to faster alternate routes," Prater said. "In large urban areas, residents often are unaware of the back roads."

"Furthermore, nobody knows how much it costs to evacuate. We are going to collect that over the next four years. Our program, decision makers will be able to weigh how much it will cost their citizens to evacuate versus the probability the storm will intensify. It will make landfall in their area. How expensive it will be. How necessary it may become."

Lindell and Prater will travel to Brazil in August to promote practical uses for the EMDSS, Lindell said.

"We will be presenting a proposal for the use of EMDSS when dealing with landslide volcanoes in heavily populated areas. Right now there is an urgency and an interest among decision makers in using technology to help more people to safety."

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Two men escape from Cameron County prison

BROWNSVILLE, Texas (AP) — Two men escaped from Cameron County's maximum-security detention center near Olmito on Sunday through an opening in their cell's plumbing that led to the roof.

The escapees were identified as Jose Luis Mendoza, 29, of Brownsville and Benjamin Leal, 18, of Harlingen.

Leal is charged with two counts of aggravated kidnapping and one count of aggravated

assault, county officials said. Mendoza was awaiting trial for charges of auto theft and some misdemeanor drug charges.

The escape was the first from the new jail since it opened late last year.

Capt. Rinaldo Rodriguez said he could not offer detailed information about the breakout for fear other inmates would imitate the route used.

"The pods in the facility are almost identical to each other," he said in a story in Monday's edition of The Brownsville Herald. "They (inmates) have nothing but time to think about how to get out of there. Our job is to figure out how to keep them in."

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