

ADS REVEAL OBESE PARENTS ARE LIKELY TO HAVE OBESE CHILDREN: THEY EMULATE WHAT THEY SEE



Two new ads are stressing that obese parents are most likely to have obese children and that to ensure that our children do not inculcate unhealthy eating and other habits we must first fight parental obesity. A recently released study says that it is normally assumed that watching unlimited television, leading sedentary lives, not exercising and eating unhealthy food were the prime causes of obesity – the truth is that having obese parents is a bigger risk factor than the normally accepted ones. The researches concludes that if obese parents lost weight and reached a better weight, childhood obesity would lessen by half. The ads are from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota. The ads say that your children are watching you and imitating your unhealthy habits, lying buying junk food at the store and eating huge quantities of junk food. In one ad, seeing his dad bring a platter full of fast food, he says, one day I will eat twice as much as Dad. The tagline says, "Today is the day we set a better example for our kids," says the tagline. The ads shame parents into knowing that what they are doing is selfish and wrong. It embarrasses the parents and makes them think again about what their eating and buying habit could do for their children. Ads that shame people are not really what ads should be and many people have called the ads offending and insensitive. While it is true that fat people should not automatically be assumed to be unhealthy. Some fat people are actually healthier than skinny people. However, such fat people are an exception more often than not being fat raises your risk of cardiac disease, orthopedic problems, hypertension, diabetes and this could also negatively impact your finances – it is something no parent would want for their children. There are fat people who exercise and eat healthy food, but the people who are shown in the ad, certainly do not belong to that category. They are the type of people who need to take a hard look at themselves and set things right because their kids are watching them. Experts also say that the obesity epidemic can be brought under control if the government addresses social justice issues and makes healthy food affordable to all and through grain subsidies and by providing facilities to safe and affordable exercise options. People who say that such ads are not good and shaming people is not right and offends sensibilities must understand that we do not have time on our side. We cannot wait for the perfect ad that does not shock and yet informs. The military said that one in four Americans is overweight for military service. Childhood obesity could also have staggering implications for economy and society – if the ads hurt sentiments, so be it, but obesity has to be brought under control, the future of our children is at stake.