

The Sports Doctor, Dr. Robert Weil, Challenges Obesity With “Kids Beating Obesity”

By Kirk Mango, September 28, 2011 at 7:00 am

“It’s an epidemic” are the words echoed throughout the media, and from experts, regarding the United States current affair with being overweight—or over-fat as I like to call it. And as a 32-year veteran in physical education, I can attest to the idea that this is and should be a major concern, as I have seen a definite change in the “size” of the average high school student over this time period.

Let me explain. When I think back, back even before I was a teacher, back to the days when I was in high school (and *no* that was not when dinosaurs roamed the earth as some of my students might say), I do remember seeing students that would have been considered over-fat, even obese. The fact that there were overweight high-schoolers has not changed; however, the number of them, along with the average fat % of high school students, does, from my perspective, look to have increased dramatically.

In fact, I might be so bold as to state that there seems to be a division, or gap, forming between those kids who are heavily vested in athletics, and those who are not (with regard to their body compositions), over the time frame that I have been teaching. There just seems to be a higher percentage of kids, and adults, who are not exercising enough and eating themselves into overweight oblivion.

Of course, my above statements are based on my limited observations of high school students where I teach, and have taught. However, CDC statistics over the last 25 years do seem to bear out much of my observations. You only need to take a look at the link provided [here](#), showing statistics and a U. S. map of changing obesity rates to see what I mean. (Make special note of how dramatically the obesity rates change as the map moves from year to year, from 1985 to 2010.)

It is these trends that have prompted both sports podiatrist [Dr. Robert Weil](#) and author Rick Osbourne (creator of "[Operation Pull Your Own Weight](#)") into action. Their [Kids Beating Obesity](#) program at WDCB radio seeks to make a difference in this troubling trend toward over-fatness through a variety of [podcast](#) interviews with professionals and experts on the topic. One of these interviews features the Assistant Surgeon General of the United States covering Region Five, Dr. James Galloway.

As a physical educator, it is heartwarming to see that my physical education colleagues and I are not alone in this uphill battle as professionals outside of our field are joining in. I commend both Dr. Weil and Mr. Osbourne for their intuitiveness in creating an opportunity for cultural change. The days of one or two days a week of physical education and throw out the ball type programs have come to an end. The consequences of which are too far-reaching to be ignored.