about

NUTRITION AND ACTIVITY in Fairfax County

what you need to know...

Childhood obesity is a growing epidemic that is linked with high blood pressure and diseases such as diabetes. It is also linked with social and emotional problems such as being bullied and depression.

There are healthy behaviors that combat childhood obesity — eating five servings of fruits and vegetables every day, getting regular physical exercise, and limiting the amount of time spent watching TV and playing video games.

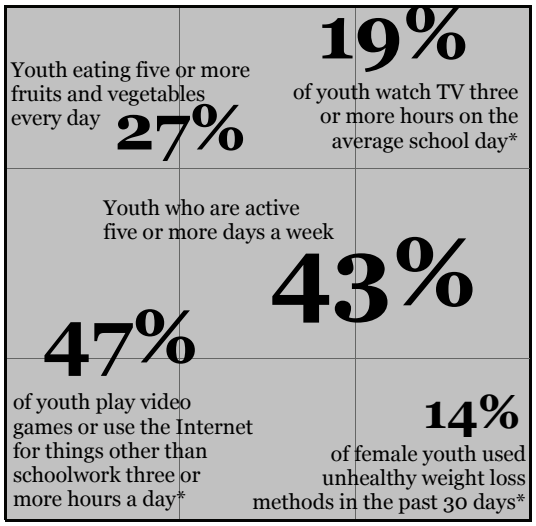
Of sixth–graders surveyed in Fairfax County, 53% are physically active for an hour a day five or more days a week, but only 36% of 12th-graders get that same amount of exercise.

Of sixth–graders, 34% eat five servings of fruits and vegetables every day, but only 24% of 12th-graders do.

Good health is not about losing weight, but about maintaining a healthy weight in a healthy way. Although 10% of youth reported using unhealthy methods to lose weight (fasting, diet products without a doctor's care, vomiting/laxatives), it is more common for girls (14%) than boys (6%)*.

Over half of youth (52%) watch three or more hours of TV, or play video games or use the computer for things other than schoolwork on an average school day.* Reducing the number of hours spent on screen time gives a child more time for activity and other interests.

Fairfax County youth self-reported behavior



Youth Survey results for 8th, 10th, and 12th Graders

what can you do?

be active

- Set a good example and get up and *move!* Walk whenever possible and move more around your house.
- Enroll kids in sports teams or lessons.
- Ask your kids what activities they enjoy and explore new physical activities.
- Make family time active time with games, biking, walking, dancing ...

reduce screen time

- Increase Energy OUT.
- Set and enforce rules to reasonably limit screen time.

Energy OUT = **Energy IN**
Calories Burned ***Calories Consumed***

Energy BALANCE
Weight Control

eat right

- Make healthy food choices at the grocery store — fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, fat-free and low-fat milk products, lean meats and fish, beans, eggs, and nuts.
- Compare nutrition labels and choose foods that are lower in fat and calories.
- Know how much is a serving size of the food you eat.
- In restaurants, eat smaller portions, choose foods lower in fat and choose healthy substitutions. Avoid supersizes.
- Calories come from what you drink as well as what you eat — it *all* counts.

Source: adapted from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention We Can!

who can help?

Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs

Fairfax County Public Schools
Office of Food and Nutrition
www.fcps.edu/fs/food/serve/lunchmenus.shtml

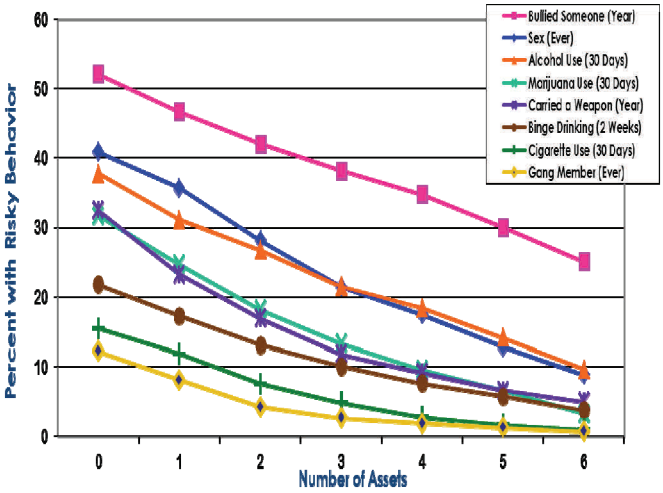
Fairfax County Health Department
703-246-2411 | TTY: 711

Fairfax County Park Authority
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks

Fairfax County
NCS
Neighborhood and Community Services
Countywide Service Integration and Planning Management

THREE TO SUCCEED

Thriving in Fairfax



Three to Succeed is based on the Youth Survey analysis that shows having **just three assets** dramatically **reduces risk behaviors** and **promotes thriving youth**.

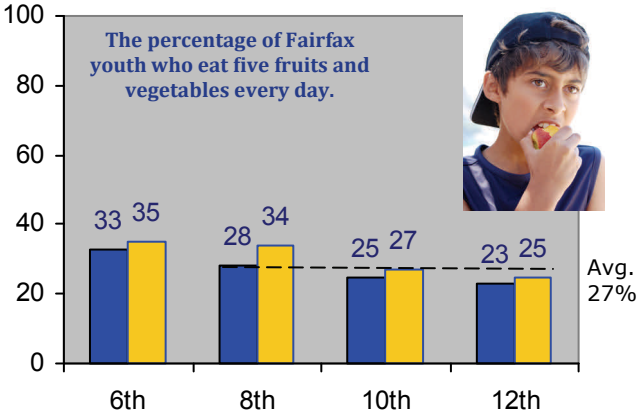
Assets are strengths in young people, their families, friends, schools and communities that help them thrive in health, in school, in daily life, and in a safe environment. The more assets a person has, the fewer risk behaviors they report and the Youth Survey shows that every asset makes a difference.

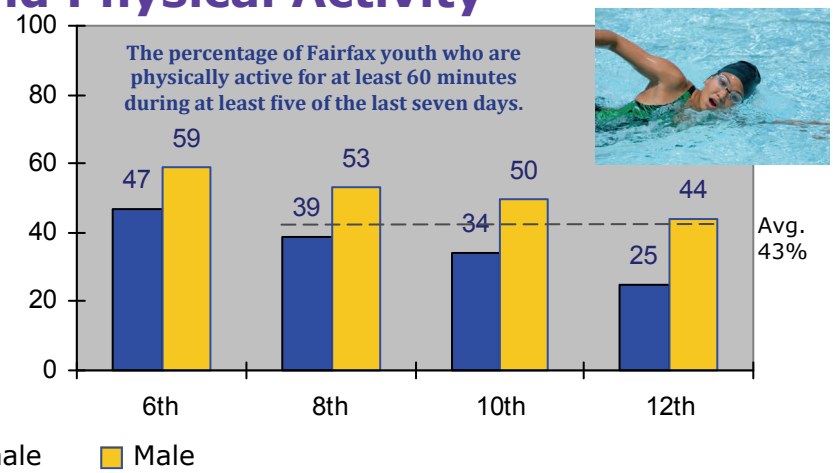
Young people in Fairfax County report positive influences from the people and other assets in their lives, though there are disparities that make it more challenging for some to thrive. Take action to be an asset in any young person's life and help build a stronger, more positive community that benefits ALL children.

Assets

Having High Personal Integrity	Having Community Adults to Talk to
Performing Community Service	Participating in Extracurricular Activities
Having Teachers Recognize Good Work	Having Parents Available for Help

Nutrition and Physical Activity





The Fairfax County Youth Survey was administered in the fall semester of 2014.
*Data on screentime and unhealthy weight loss are from the 2013 results.

websites *for more information*

Fairfax County Youth Survey
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey

Fairfax County Prevention System
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/prevention

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—*We Can!*
www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/

9-5-2-1-0 for Health
www.vdh.virginia.gov/ofhs/prevention/heal/95210/

Healthy People 2020
www.healthypeople.gov

National Alliance on Mental Illness
www.nami.org

A publication of Fairfax County, Va., and Fairfax County Public Schools

related factors

Youth who get an hour of physical activity on five or more days a week are less likely to experience depressive symptoms.

- 2013 Fairfax County Youth Survey

Regular physical activity can reduce your risk of depression and help you sleep better. Doing aerobic or a mix of aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities 3 to 5 times a week for 30 to 60 minutes can give you these mental health benefits.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

To request this information in an alternate format, call the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, 703-324-4600, TTY 711.

September 2015