

TLC fast forwards picture to show fate of obese children  
By Mike DeCinti

Flipping through the channels the other night, I came across an interesting show on the cable channel TLC (The Learning Channel.) Whether it's fixing a hole in your drywall, picking out a better outfit to wear, or horror stories from the nation's emergency rooms, TLC has always been a favorite station of mine. So the other night I stumbled upon a new program titled "Honey, We're Killing the Kids." The show looks at regular families who, for lack of a better term, are fat. The parents are fat, the kids are fat, and they don't appear to be slowing down. They usually have poor eating habits, very little exercise in their lives, and to top it all off, the kids (as you may have already guessed) are not very disciplined. Put all of those things together and you have a volatile combination. That's where this show comes in.

The host of the show, Dr. Lisa Hark is a renowned medical nutritionist who tries to develop a plan for these families so that they can start eating better, exercising, and respecting themselves more. Each plan she designs differs between families, but they almost all revolve around making better choices with your food, activity level, health and your life. The kicker is each show begins with the parents being shown a computerized depiction of what their kids will look like as they age to 40 years old. If you've seen the show you know that for the most part the images are shocking. The kids almost always continue to balloon out of shape, looking unhealthier as the years peel by. The interesting thing is most of the kids grow up to look just like the parents standing there watching this video. Which makes me think all the parents really need to do is look in a mirror to figure out how their kids will turn out.

Unfortunately we don't have to turn on TLC to see this. Just look out of your car window or down the aisles of Wal-Mart. We are a fat society, and we're getting fatter with every generation. According to HealthNews.com "it is estimated that nearly three out of four obese 18-year-old men will develop Type 2 diabetes in their lifetime. And 35 percent of 18-year-old women who are simply overweight will contract the disease. If left untreated, Type 2 diabetes can lead to complications such as heart disease, stroke, blindness, kidney disease, nerve problems, and foot or limb amputation." In a recent Healthy Body Healthy Mind.com report, most people have heard of diabetes, but truly don't understand how dangerous this common condition is. "And due to the obesity epidemic, more children are developing the disease. However, the complications of diabetes can be prevented. Lifestyle changes, like changing the diet, and adding exercise can help many patients with diabetes slow down the negative effects of the disease or even reverse them entirely."

Now the article you have just read is hopefully the first in many that I will now be writing for The Robesonian regarding health and fitness related issues, and obviously some of them may be more serious than others, but I will do my best to provide you with useful information that can hopefully help us all live a healthier life. So whether you end up watching this program, or just looking across the dinner table, please know that a healthy lifestyle begins with the simple decision to make better choices. Make one today.

Mike DeCinti  
Marketing Director, Lumberton Radiological Associates, P.A.