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# Indiana State Department of Health

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As a health care practitioner, how many times has this scenario happened to you? Jimmy, who is 6 years old, comes into the clinic for a well-child check. He has no immediate illness. However, you can see without even reviewing his health record that Jimmy is overweight for his age and height. His mom reports she tries to offer Jimmy different fruits and vegetables and asks for help on how she should approach new foods with him. Or, 10-year-old Nancy presents to the emergency room with a laceration on her arm that is easily treated. You note that Nancy and her mom are overweight but they are eating some fruit. This gives you an opportunity to praise Nancy and her mom for eating a healthy snack. Or, you note that Fred, your high school aged son's friend, engages in no physical activity and instead spends his time playing computer games. You also know that his parents are smokers and are overweight. In talking with Fred's parents, they seek your advice about how to encourage Fred to get some physical activity into his daily routine and they both indicate they are ready to quit smoking but need some guidance on how to do that.

These are very real, every day situations that provide you great opportunities to encourage some positive health changes. You also recognize parents and caregivers struggle themselves with being good role models to our young people. Among adults, Indiana ranks 10<sup>th</sup> in the nation in obesity, and this is beginning to reflect in our youth. According to the 2005 Indiana Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 15 percent of our high school students are overweight, and another 14 percent are at risk for being overweight. Indiana ranks second in the nation for the number of people who smoke. Twenty-seven percent of Indiana's adult population smoke, and nearly 11 percent of our teenagers smoke on a daily basis.

Knowing these facts and witnessing people like Jimmy, or Nancy, or Fred, you may often wish that you had some resource to suggest to these parents and neighbors. Now you do.

To help families learn more about healthy eating, the need for physical activity, and ways to stop smoking, the Indiana State Department of Health unveiled the new Families section on the INShape Indiana Web site. The Families section can be found at [www.INShape.IN.gov](http://www.INShape.IN.gov) and then select the Families link at the top of the page. The site includes practical tips that your patients, your neighbors, and maybe even you can use to eat more healthy foods. There is also information on resources to help you, to include some physical activity into busy schedules, and to stop smoking. The Web site also includes handouts that can be printed and distributed to patients in clinics, in waiting rooms, and handed to friends and neighbors. The Families section on the INShape Indiana site is designed to appeal to the whole family, so parents and teens will be inspired to adopt new healthy habits.

I encourage you to visit the INShape Indiana Web site and to also refer patients, neighbors, family, and friends to the site.

For a healthier tomorrow,

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State Health Commissioner

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