

To the Editor, The Post and Courier
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Lean Team

Thank you, Drs. Edward Morrison and Ann Kulze for keeping the obesity message alive. Our children today are likely to have a shorter lifespan with a third having diabetes during their lifetime.

The obesity crisis is a very real threat to our health. The problem is big, complex, and challenging needing many players to come together. The foods our children eat and drink at school is important but it is only one factor. It is time for consensus and action.

The Lean Team, a partnership between MUSC's Adolescent Medicine and the Charleston County School District, share the goal of the prevention and treatment of childhood obesity through individual, family, and community change. As program coordinator, I am happy to report a spirit of cooperation and dedication among city and school officials, educators, parents, and students to find solutions.

I'm proud of being a dietitian who has come out of retirement to be part of the solution. We know that to lose weight we must eat fewer calories and exercise more. We must change our attitude and overcome the barriers of time, energy, money, safe places to walk, readiness for change, etc. What is your excuse? Everyone needs inspiration, education, and encouragement to make decisions for health. The individual must be surrounded by families, schools, and communities that make health a priority. All of us must embrace change – eat more fruits and/vegetables, turn off the TV, stop drinking sugared beverages, eat at home, and take a walk.

The Lean Team invites everyone to walk the Arthur Ravenel Bridge at 9 am on Saturday mornings. We meet at the gravel parking lot, just past the Cigar Factory on East Bay. We began on Nov. 17 as two medical students, a doctor, and a dietitian. We are now joined by over 120 people including students, teachers, school nurses, community leaders, and families who share the belief and passion that we can indeed do better. We've walked 1,676 miles and are finding solutions one bite, one step at a time.

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