

## PREVENTION

### FAMILY ENJOYS BENEFITS FROM HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHOICES

The Planning Council Addresses Childhood Obesity by Marissa Spady, Nutrition Education Specialist

Dr. Tiffany Ford-Britt, a Suffolk area pharmacist, is thrilled with the impact The Planning Council's Childhood Obesity Prevention Program has had on her family.

Since implementing the exercise and nutrition components of the Program into their household, she has lost over 100 pounds and has become an independent health coach.

"Before the Program," Dr. Britt said, "we were a family on the go. That meant eating for convenience at fast food restaurants or consuming processed foods that were ready in 5 minutes or less. Though we did activities when convenient, we now make time for exercising as a family."

When she received the letter of invitation from The Planning Council, through her child's day care provider, about an opportunity to help her family lead a healthier life, Dr. Britt thought it was an answer to her prayers.

The Obici Healthcare Foundation awarded The Planning Council a grant for Obesity Assessment and Prevention, which addresses childhood obesity in licensed child care settings throughout Western Tidewater.

The Britt family worked with the Program's registered dietitian to establish goals that included enrolling in a 6-month membership at the Suffolk Family YMCA. According to Dr. Britt's experience, her children are "excited to work out and be healthy, because they now have parents who have become better health role models."

As the family changed its exercise and nutritional

practices, their children, Cameron, 6, and McKenzie, 3, learned the importance of making better food choices and being active. "Hopefully, these changes will impact us for the rest of our lives," Dr. Britt said.

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Participating families attend various educational activities, fitness programs, and receive one-on-one counseling from a registered dietitian. This Program offers families with children ages 2-5 across Western Tidewater opportunities to improve their knowledge of nutrition and physical activity behaviors.

In addition to serving preschool children, the Obesity Prevention Program helped 40 day care centers

make policy changes by helping them conduct self-assessments of their wellness practices and develop policies and practices centered on nutrition and physical activity.

The Program continues to welcome new child care programs and families. For more information, please contact the Obici Healthcare Foundation or Marissa Spady, [mspady@theplanningcouncil.org](mailto:mspady@theplanningcouncil.org).

*Cameron Britt, a participant in The Planning Council's Obesity Assessment and Prevention Program, prepares to enjoy a healthy, well-balanced meal.*



# Enjoy Healthy Dessert - Oh Yes You Can! by Jett Johnson

Can health conscious individuals enjoy guilt-free desserts? Yes!

As part of Restaurant Week 2014, restaurateurs were encouraged to participate in the first-ever Healthy Dessert Contest. Strict guidelines were established for their desserts to receive a "healthy" designation: less than 250 calories, less than 30 percent of those calories from fat and less than 60 percent from carbohydrates. Registered dietitians read the recipes and calculated the ingredients to make sure that the guidelines were met.

The three top award winning restaurants were Harper's Table (Blood Orange Sorbet with homemade Buttermilk, Pomegranate Seeds and Mint); Cedar Point Country Club (Chai Tea and Chardonnay Spice Poached Pear with frozen yogurt) and Suffolk BBQ (Cherry Cheesecake Parfait). Other healthy dessert entries were: Al Forno's (Basil Cream and Fruit Gelee); Amici's (Flourless Chocolate Cake); Baron's Pub (Broiled Banana Split); Constant's Wharf Grill (Holland Cobbler); Mason's Seafood and Chophouse (Strawberry Sorbet); The Plaid Turnip (Neapolitan Mousse Stack); and The Egg Bistro (Lemon Mascarpone Gelato).

With 33% of Suffolk residents overweight and 12% diagnosed as diabetics, it can be difficult to dine out or to even consider ordering dessert. What's remarkable about the Restaurant Week Dessert options - they appealed to both the diabetic and those

without current dietary restrictions who just want to eat healthy. These 10 restaurants "made the healthy choice the easy choice" and our citizens with health issues and physician's instructions had healthy options.

Healthy People Healthy Suffolk is not stopping with dessert. Currently, a registered dietician and a cardiac nurse are meeting with Suffolk restaurants and offering to review their menus. This free service will have the experts reading menus, calculating nutritional value and reporting to the restaurant owners what menu options can be advertised as "diabetic/cardiac friendly." Further, the cardiac nurse and the dietician will include those restaurants with the identified healthy menu options in a flyer listing that will be provided to patients when they are discharged from the hospital.

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*Jett Johnson is the Manager of the city-wide initiative, Healthy People Healthy Suffolk, which is managed by the Suffolk Partnership for a Healthy Community and funded by the Obici Healthcare Foundation.*



**At home and at work, please join the Obici Healthcare Foundation by making the Healthy Choice, the Easy Choice**

- Order the healthy dessert at participating restaurants.
- Offer whole fruit (not processed snacks) and share locally grown vegetables (instead of donuts) in your office break room.
- At your next business luncheon meeting serve healthy foods and, small portions (salads vs. sandwiches).
- Offer water/fruit infused water or unsweetened tea to drink.