

## Helping Teens With Weight-Loss Goals

**H**elping teens achieve weight loss can be tricky business. They don't want to be treated like children, yet studies show they need your valuable support. In fact, they need you to lose weight with them. A recent survey conducted by Allstate shows that the children of overweight parents who lost weight were better able to take off pounds and keep them off than were those whose parents didn't lose weight.

"Parents can provide a safe environment for their children by role modeling and leading the whole family in support," says Samantha Gaspar, PsyD, clinical director of Wellspring, a weight-loss program for children and teens. That—not lecturing or authoritative measures—helps teens succeed.

Here are Gaspar's top tips for helping your teens lose weight:

- Open the lines of communication. Listen to your teens so you can understand their thoughts and feelings about losing weight. Be emotionally available.
- Provide a supportive home. Parents need to provide a kitchen filled with good foods, and it's best if everyone in the home follows the same healthy eating plan. And eating together as a family as often as possible fosters better communication and casual accountability.

For information about a book from Wellspring's founders or to learn more about Wellspring weight-loss programs available across the country, visit [www.wellspringweightloss.com](http://www.wellspringweightloss.com).

