

Obesity runs in the Guth family, so dad, Freddy, and mother, Audry, have always been aware of what they ate and how much they exercised, although making sure their youngest son Jesse followed suit was not always so easy. While the food in the house was nutritious, Jesse was eating compulsively, hiding junk food in the house and eating fast food outside the house. At 15 years old and 5'11", his weight had ballooned to 321 lbs.

#### Stomach Surgery Recommendation

Through his parents prodding, Jesse had tried nearly every type of diet and special program available. Jesse's mother, Audry, commented, "It was threats, it was bribes, it was scare tactics. Nothing worked. We were nagging instead of letting him take responsibility for his own weight." The day Jesse's therapist recommended bariatric surgery, Jesse's parents "freaked out", and decided to contact Wellspring Academies.

#### Getting Himself Ready to Attend Wellspring Academies

When information from Wellspring arrived, Jesse ripped the package to shreds, thinking, "I kept telling myself that I did not need help and I could do this on my own." When his weight exceeded 320 lbs, he was ready for help, "I finally accepted the fact that without a supportive environment like Wellspring, I could not do this. I rushed into my mother's bedroom and told her that I was ready."

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#### Taking Responsibility for Weight Loss at Wellspring Academies

Like many students upon arrival, Jesse was scared – scared to be living away from home, scared to meet new people, and scared to make the necessary behavioral changes for long-term weight management. Once he lost a few pounds, his attitude changed. He took responsibility for his weight and took control of the situation. "I think one of the keys to success of the program is that they don't spoon-feed you everything. The kids had to learn and own it," said Audry. Jesse certainly learned the keys to success, dropping 76 lbs. in less than 7 months at Wellspring Academies.

#### Continued Weight Loss Success at Home

While Jesse achieved remarkable results while at Wellspring Academies, his continued commitment to a healthy lifestyle led to an additional weight loss of nearly 30 lbs at home. Part of his success can be attributed to his awareness of what he eats. He also strives to find activities that motivate him, including a recent climb for charity up the CN Tower in Toronto – all 2,579 steps. His parents also see a change in their approach, "I say things differently. Instead of saying 'That's enough' I'll say something more positive" commented Audry, and that has helped Jesse maintain ownership of his newfound healthy lifestyle.



Jesse, after losing 76 lbs in 7 months at Wellspring Academies, and before (inset)

#### Healthy Bodies. Healthy Minds. Healthy Living.

His parents certainly have noticed not only a physical change in Jesse, with his total weight loss in excess of 100 lbs, but they also noticed improved self-esteem and self-confidence. Stated Audry, "It's a huge accomplishment. Anybody who has tried to lose five pounds knows how difficult it is to be able to lose 100. It's incredible. He's happier and more social."

Most important, Jesse is proud of himself and intends to "maintain his healthy lifestyle forever. I am now in control of myself and I have the confidence to fight through any obstacles that may stand in my way. I will never be that way again."