

# **Altheimer Sherrill High School 2005–2006 Assessment of Childhood & Adolescent Obesity**

## **Combating Obesity in Arkansas**

Obesity is a major health problem that frequently begins in childhood and adolescence. Children who are overweight usually have too much body fat. Children with too much body fat have higher risks of health problems than those who are a healthy weight. Overweight or at risk children are more likely to become overweight or obese adults. Obesity may lead to diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and many other problems. Underweight children may also have health problems.

Act 1220 of 2003 made Arkansas the first state in the country to promote comprehensive measures to address the epidemic of childhood obesity. Act 1220 requires public schools to screen all students for obesity by annually assessing body mass index (BMI). Schools are then required to report these results to parents to inform them if their child has a health risk. The Arkansas Center for Health Improvement (ACHI) obtained data from schools to create individual, confidential Child Health Reports for parents.

To complement these efforts and help schools understand the scope of health risks associated with obesity among their students, ACHI has created a school report on childhood and adolescent obesity that presents BMI assessment data collected for each school's students.

## **Altheimer Sherrill High School**

Altheimer Sherrill High School, a public secondary school located within the Altheimer Unified School Dist. in Jefferson County, serves students in grades 09-12. Prior to the beginning of BMI measurements, Arkansas Department of Education data systems indicated a total enrollment of 142. On the day children were measured, 10/05/2005, BMI was assessed for 89 students.



## **Altheimer Unified School Dist.**

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## Definition of Body Mass Index

BMI is calculated by the following formula: 
$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{Weight in pounds}}{(\text{Height in inches})^2} \times 703$$

Because boys and girls grow and develop at different rates and based upon the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, BMI percentile for children is calculated individually for each child based upon gender, age, height, and weight. It is then used to categorize children according to whether they are underweight, healthy weight, at risk for overweight, or overweight. A higher BMI indicates greater risk for having or developing obesity-related health problems. Health care professionals group BMI percentiles to identify underweight and overweight children as follows:

<b>Overweight:</b>	BMI greater than or equal to 95th percentile
<b>At risk for overweight:</b>	BMI between 85th and less than 95th percentiles
<b>Healthy weight:</b>	BMI between 5th and less than 85th percentiles
<b>Underweight:</b>	BMI less than 5th percentile

A BMI assessment is a screening tool only. An individual child's BMI should not be considered a final indicator of whether or not a child has a weight problem that requires attention. Further evaluation of a child by a health professional is the recommended next step for a child who is classified as at risk for overweight or overweight. However, aggregate child BMI assessments are an excellent indication of the extent of the current problem of childhood obesity in schools, school districts, and the state. Overweight or at risk children are more likely to become overweight or obese adults. These results may warn about potential future health problems due to adult obesity.

## BMI Classifications for Alzheimer Sherrill High School

The BMI classifications for male and female students in each grade in the school are presented in Table 1. The classifications for the students are shown graphically in Figures 1 and 2.

**Table 1: BMI Classifications\* for Students by Grade in Alzheimer Sherrill High School (2005-2006)**

Grade	Males			Females		
	N	Healthy or Underweight	At Risk for Overweight or Overweight	N	Healthy or Underweight	At Risk for Overweight or Overweight
9	13	61.5 %	38.5 %	11	54.5 %	45.5 %
10	5		N/A	18	44.4 %	55.6 %
11	5		N/A	14	35.7 %	64.3 %
12	13		N/A	10	50.0 %	50.0 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>72.2 %</b>	<b>27.8 %</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>45.3 %</b>	<b>54.7 %</b>

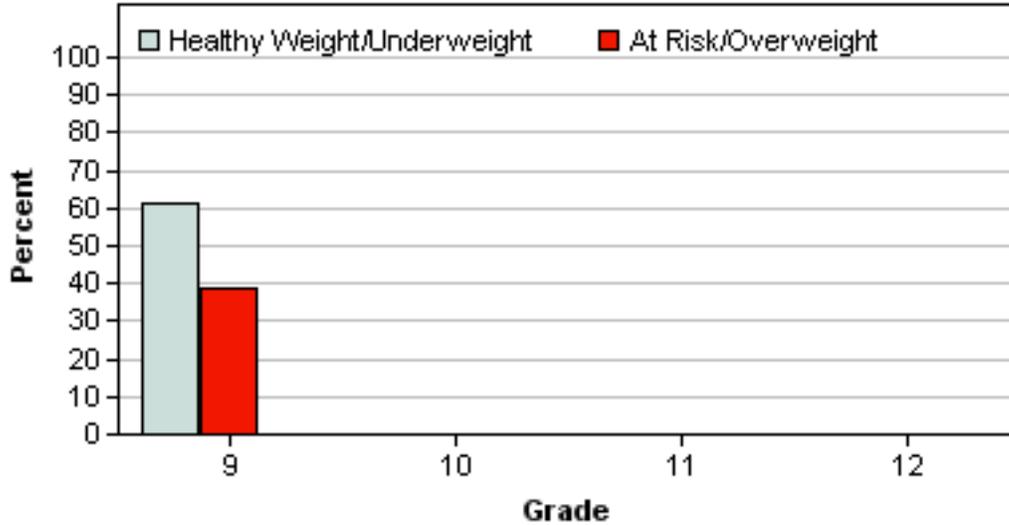
N/A = not available

\*Due to government recommendations on reporting sensitive health information, BMI categories have been combined as noted because of small numbers of children in individual categories.

Overall BMI classification results for Altheimer Sherrill High School show:

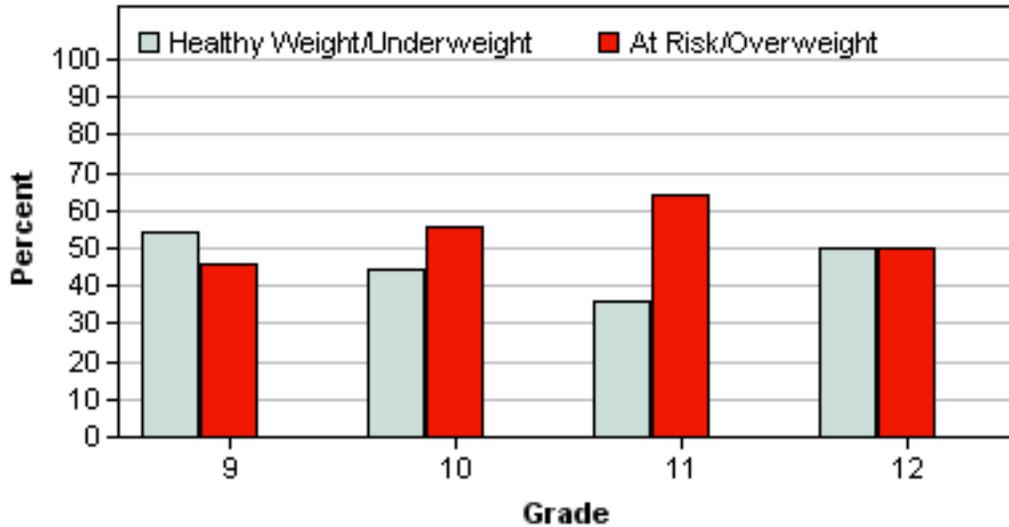
- approximately 12.3% of all children measured were in the at risk for overweight category, and
- approximately 29.0% of all children measured were identified as overweight.

**Figure 1. Percentage\* of Males Healthy/Underweight, At Risk for Overweight, and Overweight**



*\*Due to government recommendations on reporting sensitive health information, BMI categories have been combined as noted because of small numbers of children in individual categories.*

**Figure 2. Percentage\* of Females Healthy/Underweight, At Risk for Overweight, and Overweight**



*\*Due to government recommendations on reporting sensitive health information, BMI categories have been combined as noted because of small numbers of children in individual categories.*

**Additional Resources**

For a resource guide that provides information for schools, parents, and communities, go to [www.healthyarkansas.com](http://www.healthyarkansas.com) or go to [www.achi.net](http://www.achi.net) for helpful links for fighting childhood obesity.



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