



*At the Doctor's Office*



## Positive Offices<sup>1</sup>

Using the following guidelines can improve patient care in your office. To create a positive office environment, review these guidelines with your medical and administrative staff.

### **1. Create an accessible and comfortable office environment.**

- Provide sturdy, armless chairs and high, firm sofas in the waiting room.
- Provide sturdy, wide examination tables, bolted to the floor to prevent tipping.
- Provide a sturdy stool or step with handles to help patients climb onto exam table.
- Provide extra-large examination gowns.
- Install a split lavatory seat and provide a specimen collector with a handle.

### **2. Use medical equipment that can accurately assess children with obesity.**

- Use large adult blood pressure cuffs or thigh cuffs on children with an upper-arm circumference greater than 34 cm.
- Have extra long phlebotomy needles and large vaginal specula available.
- Have a weight scale with adequate capacity (greater than 400 pounds).

### **3. Minimize children's and parents' fears about weight.**

- Weigh children only when medically appropriate.
- Weigh children in a private area that allows for confidentiality.
- Record weight without comments.
- Ask children and parents if they wish to discuss weight or health.
- Avoid using the term "obesity". Children and families may be more comfortable with terms such as "difficulties with weight" or "being overweight."

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<sup>1</sup> From *Medical Care for Patients with Obesity (updated 2007)*; NIDDK Weight Control Information Network <http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/medical.htm>

