

MOMMY-BLOGGER FACE-OFF

Social workers in Ohio sparked debate when they took a third-grader from his parents because he was 200 pounds.

DO YOU THINK PARENTS ARE TO BLAME FOR OVERWEIGHT KIDS?

✓ NO

There are too many other factors

It's easy to point fingers at parents of overweight kids, but there are too many factors at play to blame them alone. Sometimes genetics predispose a person to be heavier, or medical conditions and prescriptions bring on weight gain.

Even in the best-case scenario, parents are raising kids in a culture where every activity that runs longer than an hour seems to require chocolate-chip granola bars.

On top of that, our food supply is full of empty calories, and it's hard to police everything your kids eat. I really believe it takes a village to raise a healthy child, and it's hard to build a village when healthy food is more expensive and everyone has a different idea of what's moderate and what's too much. I may not have Oreos in my home, but am I going to be able to keep my kids from eating them at a friend's? No way. Until we can all agree on what's best to feed our kids, there's no sense in making parents feel guilty. Sure, for inactive, overweight kids who have inactive, overweight parents, it could be a result of parenting. But for every child like that, there are also plenty who carry extra pounds for reasons that have nothing to do with how they're being parented—or fed.

—MIR KAMIN, WOULDASHOULDA.COM



✓ YES

Something is wrong at home when kids are overweight

Parents shoulder the lion's share of the blame for overweight kids. I don't say this lightly—I battled the bulge from a very young age. Unlike my two skinny siblings, I put on weight easily and had a penchant for all things starchy and sugary.

Seeing that, my parents worked hard to help me keep my weight in check. They put me on a diet in fourth grade, encouraged me to start swimming competitively, and eliminated "bad" snacks from the

house. They also made healthy dinners from scratch even though they worked full-time. Did I hate it? Sometimes. In a fit of resistance, I once stuffed three brownies in my mouth as my dad told me how many laps I'd have to run around the block to burn off just one. But it was never about my looks—my parents only wanted me to be healthy, and my whole family made compromises so that I could stay that way. So when I see an overweight child, I know something isn't happening at home that should be, and that's a shame. Now, I work to maintain a healthy weight, and I'm grateful that my parents cared enough to teach me proper eating habits.

—SARAH WELCH, GETBUTTONEDUP.COM