

"Fit Kids" group pushes healthier lifestyle for children

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Lawton_Southwest Oklahoma leaders want today's kids to live longer than their parents. They say too many of today's kids are too fat. They don't eat right and don't move nearly enough. The "Fit Kids of Southwest Oklahoma" group's goal is to lengthen life spans and promote healthier lifestyles-- especially among children.

But they say there's no magic bullet. It's going to take a concerted effort from lots of different entities, such as hospitals and health departments. They want to end the childhood obesity epidemic by making healthy eating and activity a way of life--not a project.

"We've imprisoned ourselves and our children within walls of inactivity," said Dr. Ben Cooper, Comanche County Memorial Hospital. "We don't move. We don't walk. We can't even get out in the backyard and play up and down the alleys like I used to."

"All that relates to an increased cost of health care," said Keith Reed, Comanche County Health Department. "These are all precursors to medical conditions down the road, that will result in people seeking additional medical care that they might have been able to avoid."

Organizers say their ultimate goal is to get projects going and to get a \$4 million grant request submitted to Centers of Disease Control and Prevention.

There will be a countywide "Wellness Challenge Expo" at the Comanche County Fairgrounds on January 14 to kick off a yearlong program. There will be fitness evaluations and blood screenings, as well as talks by health professionals.