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## Health Matters: How much of a role do friends play in your weight gain?

A new study gives the saying show me your friends and I'll show you your future a whole new meaning.

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A new study shows a close relationship between childhood obesity and social life. Doctors at the University at Buffalo's Division of Behavioral Medicine studied over 50 obese and non-obese boys and girls, ages nine to eleven. They were paired with a friend or unfamiliar peer and worked on a computer game to earn points for food or time with their friend or peer. Kids paired with strangers chose time when working for food was difficult or food when working for time became hard. The study, reported in The Annals of Behavioral medicine, also showed that children assigned to a friend continued to work for time instead of food. Researchers say the evidence proves that friendship may help promote social active lifestyles-- in turn reducing the likelihood of developing obesity.

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