



UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA

## Agriculture & Natural Resources

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION • SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

420 South Wilson Way, Stockton CA 95205-6299 Telephone: (209) 468-2085  
Fax: (209) 462-5181 Web: <http://cesanjoaquin.ucdavis.edu>



### NEWS RELEASE

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By Anna Martin  
Nutrition, Family and Consumer Sciences Advisor  
UCCE San Joaquin County

#### **Kids' BMI Calculators Help Identify Healthy Weights, Trends**

Parents of kids age two and up can now check a handy website every six months to help determine if their children's weight gains or losses are heading in the right direction. Scientists at the ARS Children's Nutrition Research Center at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas, developed the easy-to-use, online resource and based it on growth charts issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In just a few minutes spent at their computer, parents can easily calculate their child's BMI, or Body Mass Index, and put it into perspective by viewing the youngster's BMI percentile on a helpful graph. They can do this by simply enter the child's age, height, gender and weight at:

<http://www.kidsnutrition.org/bodycomp/bmiz2.html>

The BMI result, or score, is displayed, along with a full-color graph that shows the child's current BMI percentile, as well as helpful examples of how to interpret these results. With regular use, the graph allows parents to immediately spot a drift towards a percentile that may signal an unhealthy pattern of weight gain or loss. Links to information on how to help kids manage their weight, and a link to the free download of the Java software necessary to use the site, are also provided.

*For more information, contact [Joan B. Carter](#), (713) 798-6782; USDA-ARS [Children's Nutrition Research Center](#) at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX.*