



Technical Editorial Writing Sample

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There is no denying that America has a weight issue. Even more pressing is how it has affected children. Why is it important to address obesity and overweight in childhood?

A study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found in 2003–2004, 26.2% of children aged 2–5 years, 37.2% of children aged 6–11 years, and 34.3% of adolescents 12–19 years of age are currently overweight or at risk of becoming so. Childhood obesity has been associated with an increased risk for type 2 diabetes, the metabolic syndrome, orthopedic problems, sleep apnea, and menstrual irregularities. In addition, being overweight during childhood may bring about irreversible biologic changes that adversely affect metabolism.

Furthermore, research indicates that obesity that develops in childhood often continues into adulthood in part because obesity-promoting habits continue. To make matters worse, obese and overweight children are also at a higher risk for obesity related disorders later in life. For example, adults who were overweight in childhood have been shown to have higher levels of lipids, blood pressure, and fasting insulin and therefore, are at an increased risk for coronary heart disease compared with adults who were thin as children.

In short, the consequences of childhood obesity are significant for both the present and the future. Failure to address this growing problem could result in severe socio-economic problems for the United States and its healthcare system. In fact, some scientists are suggesting that pediatric obesity may eventually

shorten life expectancy in the United States by 2 to 5 years by mid-century. While the economic cost is relatively small now, the future costs of obesity arising not only from increasing medical expenses but, also from reduced worker productivity may become a crippling economic burden.

What information do you feel is essential knowledge about weight issues for parents raising children?

Children are bombarded and tempted by ads of junk foods almost everyday. They even have to deal with unhealthy food choices while they are at school. In the end however, parents must take responsibility for their children's welfare by promoting a healthful lifestyle. That means parents must set a good example when it comes to food choices and physical activity. In addition, parents must also be able to recognize when one form of behavior could become a problem.

For example, clinical studies in school-age children have linked television and video viewing as causes of childhood obesity. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has issued national guidelines for parents to limit their children's total television time to no more than 1 to 2 hours of quality programming per day for children 2 years of age and older. Researchers believe television and its relationship to weight gain is probably influenced by several factors such as less physical activity, commercials promoting junk foods, and increased calories through snacking. By the way, television time also extends to computer use as well.

That's right. A recent study found computer use was also related to weight gain in preschool children.

Although it is difficult and at times may seem like an uphill battle, parents must ultimately be responsible for when, what and how their children eat. They must also know when to say “go outside and play.”

What can retailers do to make this issue more of a concern to their clientele?

Retailers can promote health and wellness for the family. They can also educate their customers about healthier food choices through brochures, newsletters and the company’s web site.

Retailers can sponsor community-based efforts that promote walk-a-thons, biking and other physical activity events. By promoting and encouraging fun, physical activities, retailers can promote their products as well as enhance their image in the community.

Finally, retailers should work with manufacturers in having special sales and promotions aimed at kids.

Mainly, people look to weight-loss products or exercise to benefit their physical appearance. While this is all well and good, please explain some of the disease-related risks with being overweight.

Obesity has been shown to be a major risk factor for hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, type 2 diabetes, coronary artery disease, stroke, gallbladder disease, musculoskeletal disorders, and certain cancers, as well as all-cause mortality. Not exactly your blueprint to longevity. Furthermore, adult obesity and its complications appear to increase the risk of obesity and its complications in children through nongenetic influences, a phenomenon termed perinatal programming. For example, a recent study found that maternal hyperglycemia during pregnancy strongly predicted BMI in children at 5 to 7 years of age.

What do you believe are the most healthful ways of losing weight and keeping it off? (Diet, Exercise, Supplementation, etc.) Which is most important and why?

Certainly eating right is important when losing weight. Even the right supplement may give you a boost. However, if you are really interested in losing weight and keeping it off then you have to exercise.

According to the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) successful, long-term weight loss requires regular physical activity. There is just no getting around it. All the great and latest diets and magic pills cannot replace regular physical activity when it comes to healthy weight management. Research has shown that dieting alone may be an effective short-term weight loss strategy, but it does not influence long-term weight-loss outcomes. No doubt, healthier attitudes about eating and exercise are associated with weight loss but, people who are genuinely interested and enjoy exercise tend to keep the weight off much longer.

So, don’t waste your time and money on the latest infomercial craze. Find something you like to do and develop a routine. You will find maintaining a healthy weight will be that much easier.

What natural products have shown promise in the area of weight loss?

Several natural products have shown promise in the area of weight loss.

Conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) is a cluster of closely related compounds derived from linoleic acid (an omega-6 fatty acid), one of the two families of essential fatty acids which we must eat regularly for good health. Human and animal studies indicate CLA may allow you to increase lean body mass at the expense of body fat.

HCA (hydroxycitric acid) is an extract of *Garcinia cambogia* and is a close relative of citric acid, the agent that gives citrus fruits their characteristic tart flavor. Researchers suggest several mechanisms of action may be responsible for HCA’s ability to promote healthy weight loss.

The multiple benefits of **green tea** even include weight loss. Scientific evidence points to an increase in fat oxidation as green tea’s main mechanism of action.

Glucomannan is a highly soluble dietary fiber with substantial swelling capacity, absorbing up to 200times its weight in water. Research shows this soluble fiber can safely help suppress appetite when taken prior to meals.

The weight-loss sector has been a hot commodity in the natural products industry for some time, which makes it susceptible to imitators and product formulations with little scientific backing. What should retailers look out for when choosing weight-loss products? What type of variety would you suggest retail stores carry?

If any one category best describes me-too products in the dietary supplement industry it is the weight-loss and diet sector. The increasing numbers of obese and overweight Americans plus the high failure rate of many diets equals big business for weight-loss products.

Today, it seems like everyone has a weight-loss supplement for sale. Trying to sift through all the sales jargon to separate the good weight-loss supplements from the bad ones can be difficult to say the least.

Nevertheless, with a little effort retailers can narrow down their choices by asking a few simple questions. One, does the product have strong scientific research to support its claims? Nearly every supplement you pick up today says that it's clinically proven and backed by science. However, when you do the research you'll find very little if any scientific evidence behind the product. It's not uncommon to find proven ingredients but, with microscopic doses in many weight-loss products. The me-too product often tries to cram every known weight loss nutrient into one formula without any regard for science or therapeutic efficacy. Which leads to the second question, is the product a trustworthy brand? When in doubt, go with a brand that has been on the market for a while and has a reputation for high-quality supplements.

As far as variety goes, retailers should offer products that address different aspects of weight-loss. For instance, some people like to use thermogenic supplements to increase metabolism and help burn more calories throughout the day. Others are simply overeating and natural appetite-control is what they are seeking.

In closing, retailers can help eliminate the confusion surrounding weight-loss supplements by combining a

variety of scientifically sound and reputable weight-loss products.

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