

## FOR THE HEALTH OF IT

# Shed pounds for yourself ... and others

**A**re you starting to realize you need to lose a few pounds? Have you been feeling a bit sluggish because you have camped out on the couch for much of the winter? Do you like to help others, but don't feel you have the time or resources? Here's an idea to help yourself and others: Consider joining the Pound for Pound Challenge, Lose Nationally, Feed Locally.

The Pound for Pound Challenge, sponsored by Feeding America, General Mills, NBC's *The Biggest Loser* and other partners is encouraging overweight folks who have decided to lose weight to register with the challenge and for each pound a participant pledges to lose, 14 cents — enough for one pound of food — is donated to help local **food banks** fight hunger.

Locally, Foodlink, the regional food bank that serves more than 500 human service agencies in the Genesee Valley and Finger Lakes Region, rescues and redistributes nearly 10 million pounds of food each year.

According to the Pound for Pound Challenge Web site:

- One in eight Americans struggles with hunger in America.

- 37.3 million Americans

(12.5 percent) live in poverty.

- 3.4 households of all U.S. households (3.9 million households) accessed emergency food from a food pantry one or more times last year and the numbers are growing.

- More than 9 million children are estimated to be served by Feeding America, more than two million of which are age five and under.

Pound for Pound Challenge, in its second year, is built around the success of *The Biggest Loser*, a reality show that challenges and encourages overweight contestants to shed pounds in a safe manner through diet and exercise.

There are no fad diets, and this challenge is not appropriate for those who are pregnant or if weight loss is not a healthful choice. As with any diet or exercise program, it is important to talk with your health care provider for guidance. Excessive weight loss is not allowed and only participants who are over 18 years old can register.

So, how do you begin?

First, talk with your health care provider to develop your goals and plan. If he/she is in agreement, then go to [www.pfpchallenge.com](http://www.pfpchallenge.com) to register. When you put in your information it is important to include your zip code. Feeding America uses the zip codes to know where to send the funds to a

food bank near you.

Friends and family who don't need to lose weight but want to support and encourage can also help by going to the PFP Web site and make a donation. Proceeds will go to Foodlink to help provide food for our area.

The Web site also has tips on how to lose weight in a healthy way, as well as links to exercise videos from *The Biggest Loser*. If you are a fan of *The Biggest Loser* you can also see updates on how many pounds have been pledged during each show.

So now you can do yourself a favor and get healthier and help those in need at the same time.

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