After Surgery, President Bill Clinton Calls for Better Child Nutrition

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by John Leggio

Here at the Food Bank, we work to improve child nutrition because we know kids' food choices can have lifelong health effects. Last week, at a press conference in Harlem, former President Bill Clinton said he learned that lesson the hard way.

Former President Bill Clinton speaking at the Food Bank's 2009 Can-Do Awards Dinner; photo by Tran Dinh

After surgery for blocked arteries at NY Presbyterian-Columbia University Medical Center, President Clinton "weighed in" on the childhood obesity epidemic while speaking for the Alliance for a Healthier Generation.

"The root cause of this was habits that I acquired in my childhood," Mr. Clinton, who also had a quadruple bypass operation in 2004, said.

Mr. Clinton (who spoke at our 2009 Can-Do Awards Dinner) also gave a shout-out to First Lady Michelle Obama for her "Let's Move" campaign, which will tackle the obesity epidemic by helping families make healthy food choices, improving the quality of school food, encouraging exercise and increasing food access.

We're working to meet similar goals through programs like CookShop, which encourages the development of healthy diets among New York City students and their families, as well as community outreach and advocacy on issues like universal school meals.

With work like ours — and similar efforts from a dynamic duo like the former president and the current first lady — maybe we can protect more children from the outcomes of poor nutrition.