

## Fat Camp changed my life, says teenager Kristi Moffat

[Feb 26 2009](#) By Samantha Booth

REACHING her target weight means far more to Kristi Moffat than just being able to fit into a size 12.

The Scots teenager has shed nearly five stone in the last seven months after a stay at a fat camp last summer kickstarted her weight loss.

For Kristi though, her experience at the Wellspring UK camp didn't just help reduce the pounds - it has changed her life.

It's hard to believe looking at the confident, bubbly and attractive 17-year-old, but just a year ago Kristi feared even walking down the street because of the way people looked at her.

She wore dark clothes that hid her body and helped

her to blend into the background, shied away from social situations and refused to talk about her weight problem.

Now, after six weeks living in a log cabin last summer with daily walks, gym sessions and outdoor activities, Kristi is a different person.

She said: "I definitely think going to camp last year changed my life. I am really different now, much more confident, and everything in my life is better.

"It is great just being able to walk down the street without worrying about what I look like and who's looking at me.

"I can just relax and have a good time. I love buying clothes now too and being able to get fashionable items in a small size, rather than just buying things that wouldn't stand out, is great.

"I don't think I would have been able to go to college or on day releases, like I do now, if I hadn't gone to camp and lost the weight.

"I would have been too worried about what people might think of me.

"I was never able to talk about how I felt either, I just kept it all inside, but now I can."

Before going to camp Kristi weighed 15st 7lb, far more than the recommended weight for her 5ft 5in frame. She had grown up knowing she was different and was just nine when her parents, Patricia and David, first took her to a dietician.



For Kristi it had been hard living in the shadow of little sister Linzi, who is three years younger, naturally skinny and good at sports.

As Linzi shone, Kristi took comfort in food.

She said: "Whenever I felt bad, upset or just bored I ate, usually something like a Chinese."

Recent numbers indicate one in three children in Scotland is overweight and one in five obese.

And with experts predicting many of this generation of children may be the first to die before their parents, Kristi is not the only Scots youngster to struggle with a weight problem.

But after spending week after week over Christmas 2007 crying in her bedroom because of her weight, Kristi decided to look for help.

It was then that she discovered Wellspring UK on the internet.

The teen, from Musselburgh, East Lothian, said: "I was fed up with my weight and the way I looked so I searched on the internet for help.

"I saw the camp and was so determined to give it a try I printed it out and gave it to my parents to look at."

Wellsprings UK is the seventh branch opened by the American company, who have camps everywhere from Hawaii to New York.

Youngsters are placed into the hands of world experts specially trained to help obese kids change their body shape, eating habits and the way they think about food forever.

As well as a packed daily programme of calorie-burning activities like hiking, camping, canoeing and running, kids also get one-to-one therapy sessions and group sessions to help them understand why they overeat.

It comes at a price though as camp leaders demand sweat, tears and dedication. And, for Kristi's mum and dad, their daughter's six-week stay at the centre in the Lake District meant a \$5000 bill.

But as we reported in the Daily Record last summer, Kristi had the time of her life at camp and both she and her parents now agree her new-found confidence, not to mention slim figure, is worth every penny.

Kristi, now studying social care at Jewel and Esk College in Edinburgh, said: "Camp was just amazing - the best thing I have ever done.

"I would tell any teenager who is struggling with their weight to go if they can because it has made such an incredible difference to me.

"It was great too because I saw results really quickly and remember my mum coming down to visit and crying when she saw me.

"Having a lot of other young people around you in the same position also helped a lot.

"We shared how we felt with each other and encouraged each other to keep going. There was a strong bond between us and we still keep in contact through email and Facebook.

"We are trying to organise a reunion for sometime soon. I know some parts of camp were hard and I had to face up to every one of my fears, but that's what made it for me.

"I loved being outdoors so much and even though I was scared to do abseiling or caving to begin with, you were really encouraged to do it. When you did you felt fantastic."

The strict regime meant Kristi was allowed to call home only once a week for 10 minutes. And even though she missed family and friends, had to eat vegetarian food because she didn't like the low-fat meat options such as buffalo or venison, and was only allowed two Jaffa cakes as a snack, Kristi stuck to every rule during her stay.

She said: "I was terrified of putting on weight so totally played by the rules.

"Even on the odd time we were allowed into town, and other campers would get sweets and things from vending machines, I didn't because I was so determined to make it work.

"You can tell that they were the ones who weren't committed to the programme and they have gained weight again since leaving."

Kristi, on the other hand, left nearly four stone lighter and has gradually worked at losing another stone since. She avoids eating rubbish, only has low-fat food and fruit in the house and makes sure she walks for an hour at least three times a week.

And she has been overwhelmed by the compliments people have paid her.

Kristi said: "I get so embarrassed, but loads of people have told me how great I look or tell me how well I have done.

"I have been determined not to put weight back on so I watch what I eat and go walking. I am even hoping to wear a bikini when I go on holiday with friends this summer."

In fact, Kristi feels so strongly about the camp's benefits she hopes to go back next year as a leader so she can help other young people with weight problems.

She said: "When you are a big teenager you don't think there is any help, but there is and for me camp was the answer. I would love to go back because I know what they are going through and could help others by sharing my experience. It would be emotional, but worth it."

For more details about Wellspring Camps log on to [www.wellspringcamp.co.uk](http://www.wellspringcamp.co.uk)

KRISTI WEARS..

Red Ruched Halter Top s35, Star by Julien Macdonald; Leopard Print Emb Cardigan s45, Star by Julien Macdonald; Rocha John Rocha Jeans with Sailor Details s40, Red Herring Bracelets Leopard Print s6

Clothes from Debenhams, Silverburn, using the personal shopper service

Hair and make-up by Taylor Ferguson.