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FAT BOUNCES BACK

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By Mark Hughes

AN AMERICAN-style fat camp to help overweight youngsters shed weight will return to Cumbria this summer.

Last year, 30 youngsters aged between 11 and 15 came from all over the world to the camp at Newton Rigg, near Penrith – the first of its kind in the UK.

Due to its success, organiser Wellspring UK, which also runs camps in California, Hawaii and New York, has decided to open the Cumbrian camp for a second summer.



Battling the bulge: Participants at last year's camp at Newton Rigg prepare for an expedition up Skiddaw.



Camp staff member Simon Frost chats to one of the children attending the summer camp. The camp at Newton Rigg is run for children with weight problems.

And, because of growing concerns about childhood obesity in the UK, the company says it expects a huge increase in the number of children at this year's event.

Between 60 and 90 children aged between 12 and 18 are expected to come from as far away as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to the Penrith camp.

Children can join the camp for four, six or eight weeks, costing £3,200, £4,700 or £5,700 respectively.

During their time there they will take part in activities such as abseiling, rock-climbing and canoeing.

Daily menus include three meals, two healthy snacks and unlimited foods such as fat free

yoghurts and salads.

Wellspring UK executive director Deb Sweeney Whitmore said: "Some might think weight-loss camp is a drastic measure to take.

"But in reality it allows young people to focus on their goals and make necessary changes to diet and lifestyle away from the distractions of a home environment.

"Attending a programme like ours promotes changes young people can carry with them through the rest of their lives.

"Last year, 30 youngsters came to our camp and lost a significant amount of weight – in some cases as much as 30lbs. More importantly, weight-loss continued or was maintained when they returned home.

"Wellspring UK isn't just about diet, we teach a cognitive behavioural approach where campers set goals and monitor themselves.

"These techniques are one of the most widely accepted approaches to long-term weight-loss success."

Worries about childhood obesity in Cumbria have continued to be highlighted this week after it was announced that a school uniform shop chain, with a branch in Carlisle, is stocking its biggest sizes ever to cater for overweight children.

The National Schoolwear Centre on Nelson Street, Denton Holme, has waist sizes up to 42in and blazer with a 52in chest. It is believed they have the biggest sizes of school uniform in the country.

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