



TIFFANY

ANDY

ANNA

JACK

THE LEHMANS



THE PRESSURE IS ON. THE STAKES ARE HIGH. THE WORLD IS WATCHING. WHICH OF THESE FAMILIES WILL WIN OUR ANNUAL CHALLENGE? AND WHAT CAN THEY TEACH YOU ABOUT GETTING FIT? READ ON TO FIND OUT. **BY MICHELE BENDER**

FamilyCircle.com

Visit our site now—and for the next six months—to win prizes, read personal blogs from Tiffany and Peggy, see behind-the-scenes videos, get bonus advice from all our experts and cheer everyone on. Go to familycircle.com/healthyfamily2012



PETER

PEGGY

AMANDA

MICHAEL

THE AVAGLIANOS

You have the power to get your family off the couch and into their sneakers. You also have what it takes to help them not just eat healthier—but actually enjoy doing so. Sound impossible? It's within reach if you follow our **Healthy Family Challenge**. For the next six months, we'll inspire two broods to battle their biggest obstacles to eating better, exercising and more. By detailing their every get-healthy move, we'll show your clan how to do the same. Oh, and did we mention the monthly prize giveaways? Meet our two families and the experts who are about to whip them—and you—into better shape!





» THE LEHMANS



THE PARENTS

TIFFANY, 39,

mortgage
underwriter

ANDY, 45,
building engineer

THE KIDS

ANNA, 9

JACK, 6

HOME

Des Moines, Iowa

CURRENT STATS

Tiffany, 250 lbs and 5'3"
Andy, 257 lbs and 6'2"

GOAL FOR ANNA

Quit looking to food as her
comfort and reward

GOAL FOR JACK

Eat more veggies and
less fast food

WHY THEY'RE READY FOR THE CHALLENGE

Though Tiffany logs all her food and four weekly workouts on SparkPeople.com, 100 pounds stand between her and a healthy weight and lower blood pressure. "I've dieted on and off for years, losing about 10 pounds each time," says Tiffany. "Then something comes up, like a stressful day with our son, who is autistic. I overindulge and the weight comes right back!" And she's not the only Lehman tipping the scales, something that hit her when she saw last year's holiday photos. "Sure, we all had smiles on our faces, but I was surprised to see how much space we took up in the picture," Tiffany says.

BETTER-HEALTH HURDLES

★ **Eating turns into a free-for-all.** "This is one of our biggest weekend challenges," says Andy. "We don't plan for lunches. Most of the time we go for the easiest route like frozen pizza or fast food, or we have a tiny snack and then gorge ourselves at dinner. We also indulge in beer and wine on the weekend!"

★ **Portion sizes are a problem.** "I love the taste of food and want to keep eating," says Tiffany. "We never measure anything."

★ **We're foodies.** "When people ask, 'What's your favorite food?' my reply is 'Yes!' because we love

everything," explains Tiffany. Topping the list are wine, cheese, bread, desserts and rich meals like steak.

THEIR FIT FUTURE

★ **Lighten up by 165 pounds.** "That's 50 for me, 100 for Tiffany and 15 for Anna," says Andy. (Their son doesn't need to slim down.) "I'll be 40 in January and I refuse to spend the next 40 years making the same mistakes I made in the first 40," Tiffany insists.

★ **Teach their children well.** "We need to change bad habits we've instilled in our kids, like rewarding with food," reveals Tiffany. "My daughter says, 'I was really good at the grocery store. Can I have ice cream?' Or my son asks for McDonald's if he's his school's Superstar of the Day."

★ **Make fitness a family affair.** Being active isn't a problem for Tiffany, who loves running, weight training and boot camps, or Andy, who walks a lot for his job and does isometric workouts at home. "But I want us to exercise as a family every weekend," Andy says. "It would be a fun way to get healthy—things like playing outside, going to the park or riding our very dusty bikes together."



COACH'S CORNER

"Even the best advice isn't helpful if it doesn't fit into your life," says **Stephanie Karpinske, R.D.,** author of *Read Before Dieting: Your 4-Step Plan for Diet Success*. "The Lehmans need tips tailored to their

lives." We asked Karpinske to guide them through their six-month makeover and give them some of the knowledge they need to accomplish their goals.

HER FAMILY PLAN → "Helping the Lehmans make time for healthy eating will be my priority. They need a go-to meal plan, a kitchen stocked with basics for super-quick recipes and snacks, and a weekly menu that includes 'emergency dishes' for those too-tired-to-cook nights."

Through her Urbandale, Iowa-based company, SK Health Communications, Stephanie Karpinske develops recipes and writes for supermarkets and food companies.

[STEPHANIE'S TIP] Replace brown or white rice with quinoa. "You'll get five times the fiber versus white rice and nearly 50% more protein than brown rice," says Karpinske.



WIN IT!

Both families got **Flogg Daily food and fitness journals** to track their habits. Go to familycircle.com/journal for a chance to win one! See rules, page 171.



» THE



WHY THEY'RE READY FOR THE CHALLENGE

"At work, three people in one day asked when I was due," says Peggy. "I said, 'Fifteen years ago, I'm just fat!'" She's also concerned about Peter, an insulin-dependent diabetic who has hypertension and sarcoidosis, an inflammatory disease. "He needs to change his lifestyle before complications set in," she says. Peter is also focused on change. "When I finally accepted the fact that I had diabetes, it hit me that I needed to control my eating and exercise so I could decrease the medications I hate taking," he says. The Avaglianos also want to help their kids. "They don't have poor self-image, and I want to make sure they never do," says Peggy. "Getting in better shape is the key."

THE PARENTS

PEGGY, radiologist
PETER, set designer,
both 45

THE KIDS

MICHAEL, 17
AMANDA, 15
(Christina, 20, and
Katie, 18, aren't
participating because
they're away at college.)

THE PETS

Nicki (a Siberian husky),
Krammer (a golden
retriever training to be a
seeing-eye dog),
Minnie (a cat) and
an unnamed goldfish

HOME

Egg Harbor City,
New Jersey

CURRENT STATS

Peggy, 191 lbs and 5'4"
Peter, 285 lbs and 6'

GOAL FOR MICHAEL

Lose the weight he's
gained since quitting
football due to an injury

GOAL FOR AMANDA

Drop those extra pounds
and increase her
flexibility

BETTER-HEALTH HURDLES

★ **Excuses never end.** "We always find a reason—an upcoming graduation party or birthday—why now isn't the best time to get healthy," says Peggy.

★ **We're in a recipe rut.** "We're busy, so I make the dishes that I know even if they're not the healthiest," she says. Think tortellini Alfredo or chicken Parmesan. "I'm Italian and I like my pasta along with heavy, creamy sauces," says Peter.

★ **On-the-run eating leads to poor choices.** "If I'm working on a show, it

AVAGLIANOS

means several weeks of 12- to 13-hour days,” says Peter. “I end up grabbing food at the convenience store, or coworkers and I order in.” When Peggy works late or the kids have band practice, dinner consists of take-out pizza or fast frozen meals.

THEIR FIT FUTURE

★ **Discover fat-free fun.** “We need family entertainment that doesn’t revolve around food,” says Peggy, who hopes to find physical activities that they can enjoy five days a week. “Before we had kids,” adds Peter, “Peggy and I did charity

events like the MS 150 bike ride. I’d like to start doing those things again.”

★ **Pare down Peter’s prescriptions.** “I hate taking my diabetes medication,” says Peter. “I’d love to drop 50 pounds in six months to a year and reduce my insulin intake as a result.”

★ **Find satisfying food swaps.** “I want us to have the knowledge to make healthier choices on the go,” says Peter. “This includes meals we can prepare in advance and bring with us and details on the best take-out choices.”



CHALLENGE #1 Are you getting all the servings of fruits and veggies your body needs every day? Watch our families try to hit the mark when we put them to the test.



COACH’S CORNER

“I try to figure out how to motivate people to make changes within their comfort zone,” says **Elizabeth Fassberg**, a New York City-based registered dietitian.

She’ll be helping the Avaglianos transform their behaviors and build health awareness.

HER FAMILY PLAN → “I want *them* to make the decision to change certain things rather than me telling them,” explains Fassberg. “I’ll have them discover what’s in the prepared foods they eat by looking it up online or checking the food label. When they see the high calories, carbs, sodium, saturated fat and sugar, *they’ll* make the decision to cut down. I won’t have to tell them.”

Elizabeth Fassberg, R.D., is president and founder of Eat Food, a company that designs custom nutrition programs for businesses, organizations and individuals.

[ELIZABETH’S TIP] Drink seltzer flavored with a splash of citrus juice in place of soda or juice alone. “It’s a waste of calories to sip sweetened drinks,” says Fassberg.