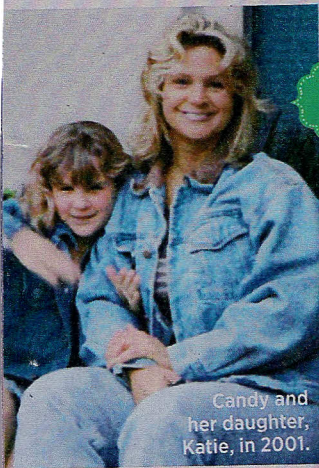


“I lost 75 pounds!”

Candy Fairchild-Krelnikov, 44, grew to love exercise so much that she made it her job. Learn her shape-up secrets.



Candy and her daughter, Katie, in 2001.

BEFORE
200 lb

After a move to a new town in my late 20s, I packed on pounds as I turned to food for comfort. When my 5-year-old daughter drew a stick figure of me wearing a giant muumuu, I knew I needed a change.

START FIND WHAT WORKS

My quest to shape up hit many dead ends, and in 2002 I was at my heaviest weight, so I decided to give my local Curves a shot. The gym's 30-minute circuit routine fit into my schedule and I loved the sense of camaraderie among the regulars. I signed up on the spot.

STEP 1 MOVE MORE

Seeing the scale slowly go down inspired me to add more activity into my life, and I started walking with a pedometer. If I hadn't hit my daily goal of 10,000 steps by 7 P.M., I took my dogs out for a stroll until I reached that number.

I recorded weight-loss triumphs in a journal. It helped put setbacks in perspective and served as a reminder of how far I'd come.

STEP 2 START SMALL

I made tiny changes instead of totally overhauling my eating habits. Instead of a full salad for lunch, I added a side of greens to my usual burger. Eventually, I started craving more fresh food and less junk.



STEP 3 BE CONSISTENT

My go-to breakfast was a small bowl of bran cereal with almond milk and a homemade protein shake. Sticking with the same meal took the guesswork out of how to start my day on a healthy note.

NOW
125 lb

In 2006, after hitting my goal weight, I decided to open a Curves club. I love being able to help women improve their fitness and feel as strong and confident as I do.

My stick-with-it SECRET

Set up a help line

I owe much of my maintenance success to my support group: the women I work out with. We use our cell phones to check in, so if I'm craving sweets and am about to overdo it on dessert, I'll call or text one of them. Their advice ("Sprinkle cinnamon on apple slices!") quickly puts me back on track. It's comforting to know that encouragement is always close at hand.

