
Help
stop
childhood
obesity
before it starts.



Our ambition
is to be the first major nation
to reverse the rising tide
of obesity and overweight
in the population
by ensuring that everyone
is able to achieve
and maintain
a healthy weight.

Our initial focus
will be on children:
by 2020,
we aim to reduce
the proportion of overweight
and obese children
to 2000 levels.

It's a race against time

If we carry on as we are, 90% of today's children could be overweight or obese by 2050. Changes have to be made now if we are to stem the rising tide of obesity.

The Government Office for Science's Foresight Report concluded that issues of modern day life, such as new technological progress, labour-saving devices, sedentary jobs and lifestyles and ample and abundant food, have over-stepped human evolution and make it increasingly hard to maintain a healthy weight. The report also suggests that if we don't take action now, our society will be consumed by a major public health problem matched only by climate change in both its scale and complexity. It goes on to suggest we are likely to face a financial cost to the NHS and the wider economy of £50 billion by 2050.

The Government recognises it has a significant role to play to counter the trend towards obesity, but is aware it cannot do it alone. That is why the Department of Health has developed Change4Life – to bring together a coalition, across society, of health and education professionals, third sector colleagues, community groups, supermarkets, food manufacturers and the media to address the issue in unison. Ultimately, people have to take responsibility for their own physical activity and diet, but the Government has an obligation to offer clear and effective information about food and exercise in the fight against obesity.

Following the evidence from the Foresight Report, the Government's drive to tackle obesity is targeting five key areas:

- Children: healthy growth and healthy weight
- Promoting healthier food choices
- Building physical activity into our lives
- Creating incentives for better health
- Personalised advice and support

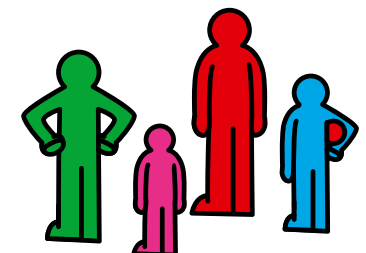


Worldwide
over
22 million children
under 5 are
severely overweight

The problem of childhood obesity is a global trend. In the UK alone there are 1 million obese children under the age of sixteen. Around the world there are over 22 million under-fives who are overweight. These soaring rates in obesity have led to an increase in childhood type II diabetes and will lead to more future cases of heart disease, osteoarthritis and some cancers (source: www.bma.org.uk).

The UK Government's goal is to be 'the first major nation to reverse the rising tide of obesity and overweight in the population'. Obesity is a complex issue and one that needs to be tackled by the whole of society. Cross-Government funding of £372m (over three years: 2008/09 - 2010/11) has been allocated for a range of initiatives, including creating healthy schools, workplaces and towns, and working with PCTs and Local Authorities on guidance for local action. With £65.9m invested in PCTs in England this year (2008/09), many excellent projects have already started which engage families, healthcare practitioners and the community.

The Change4Life movement will spearhead this ambitious work.



Change4Life
 is a society-wide movement
**that aims to prevent people from
 becoming overweight
 by encouraging them
 to eat well
 and move more.**

Obesity is now recognised as a worldwide problem which stretches across all ages and all socio-economic groups. Research, led by a clinical and expert review group, has guided the Change4Life campaign. It will target families with children aged 0-11, since with these families we have an opportunity to prevent the conveyor-belt effect of weight gain in childhood, translating into habits that lead to obesity in adulthood. Within these families, we will focus on those whose current attitudes and behaviour place them most at risk and those with the potential for greatest change. By 2020 we aim to reduce the proportion of overweight and obese children to 2000 levels.

Research tells us that many parents are unaware of the link between obesity and preventable illnesses, such as diabetes, heart disease and some cancers. It also tells us that people will only change their behaviours if they believe that everyone around them is changing too. For Change4Life to be successful it has to appeal to everyone, so we are calling on support and action from all quarters of society; that includes health and education professionals, charities, Government agencies, the media and stakeholders in the private sector. With this support we can influence huge areas of the population through a variety of different information channels, locations and events, making our message as relevant as possible to individuals.

3rd January 2009 – launch day

On 3rd January a major advertising campaign will begin on TV, on billboards, in the newspapers and online. The first few weeks of messaging will help to put the sensitive subject of being overweight in context. The approach will be sympathetic, not blaming the individual but highlighting the role of modern life (abundant food choices and sedentary lifestyles). It will also stress that we must start making changes now for the health of our children, and will highlight where help and support can be found.

By March 2009, the focus of the advertising is set to become more personal and show real people making changes to their lives – for instance, changing to sugar-free snacks, cutting back on fat, joining walking groups and generally being more active. All the advertising will be encouraging people to join in - like many others who have signed up in their community – to be part of this movement.

The public can join Change4Life at www.nhs.uk/Change4Life or by calling 0300 123 4567.*



Just 11.5% of parents with overweight or obese children recognise it.

Making parents more aware of the serious health implications of being overweight or obese is a vital objective of the Change4Life movement. So building awareness about what families can do to live healthier lifestyles is essential, without condemning existing habits or beliefs. Using evidence from the Department of Health's Expert Review Group, and insight that includes ethnographic research, we have worked steadily to identify realistic and achievable behaviours, in language that parents can relate to. One by one these behaviours can help to achieve long lasting changes to lifestyles. These include:

1. Sugar Swaps

Swapping sugary snacks and drinks for ones that are lower in sugar can make a huge difference to kids' calorie intake.

2. Meal Time

It's important for kids to have regular, proper meals as growing bodies respond better to routine.

3. Snack Check

Many snacks are full of the things that are bad for us – sugar, salt, fat and calories. So try and keep a careful eye on how many the kids are having.

4. Me Size Meals

Even though they're growing, it's important to make sure kids get just the right amount for their age – not too little and not too much.

5. 5 A Day

It's easier than you think to give your kids five portions of fruit and vegetables a day.

6. Cut Back Fat

We all know too much fat is bad for us. But it's not always easy to tell where it's lurking.

7. 60 Active Minutes

Kids need to do at least 60 minutes of activity a day to help them stay happy and healthy.

8. Up and About

The way life is today means that most of us spend too long sitting down.



Pointing people in the right direction

There is existing guidance and resource available for patients who present as obese. Care Pathways, NICE guidelines and some of the advice in the Health Weight, Healthy Lives toolkit are all set up to help care for obese patients (information available at www.dh.gov.uk/obesity).

What Change4Life can provide is preventative support and a pathway to empower healthy choices. Parents and children can be encouraged to make changes to their diet and activity levels, to join in with local events and maybe even become advocates for Change4Life themselves.

Champions of Change4Life

The importance of health care professionals to the success of Change4Life cannot be over-emphasised. As trusted advisers, you are influential and many in the Health Service will be the first point of contact for families with at risk children. We need you to get behind the campaign. You can do this by putting up Change4Life posters and stickers, giving out leaflets and sign-posting the public to further information.

All the information the public needs to get involved will be at www.nhs.uk/Change4Life or they can call the Change4Life helpline on 0300 123 4567.*

Co-branding

To create a unified message, there may also be the opportunity for you to use the Change4Life brand within your own communications. The Change4Life logo can be used on your materials (posters, leaflets or promotional items) as a co-brand or as the main brand on any healthy living initiatives around improving diet and increasing physical activity levels.

If you are involved with developing healthy living initiatives in your area, you might consider using the sub brands from Change4Life, such as Walk4Life, Cook4Life or Bike4Life. You can also get more information about linking up with other groups in your area at the Change4Life website (www.nhs.uk/Change4Life) or via your local PCT and Regional Obesity Lead.

All the available branding material, logos and characters from Change4Life, along with guidelines on how to use them can be downloaded at www.dh.gov.uk/Change4Life. If you need any help please call our helpline for health care practitioners: 0300 123 1004*.

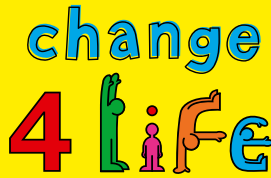
Further Information

As Change4Life has grown, a range of information has been published. This information can be accessed at www.dh.gov.uk/Change4Life and includes:

- The Government Office of Science's Foresight Report
- Consumer Insight Research Summary
- Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: A Cross-Government Strategy for England
- MRC's The 'Healthy Living' Social Marketing Initiative: A review of the evidence.
- Frequently Asked Questions about Change4Life
- Change4Life brand guidelines and brand assets
- 8 key behaviours
- Key statistics
- Links to other obesity resources

Remember that additional materials to support the launch of Change4Life are also now available. Please refer to the order form at the back of this leaflet.

Together we can help today's children and their parents regain the hope of a better and healthier future.



Obesity will soon
supercede tobacco as
**the greatest cause
of premature death
in this country.**
We need to take
action now.

Source: www.sirc.org

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