WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT CHILDHOOD OBESITY?
A HERTFORDSHIRE SYSTEMS APPROACH

Chair:
Professor Katherine Brown
Professor of Behaviour Change in Health,
University of Hertfordshire
Today’s speakers:

• Jen Beer – Health Improvement Lead, Children and Young People, HCC, Public Health Team
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• Faith Eddleston – Health Improvement Lead, Whole Systems Obesity, HCC, Public Health Team
  faith.eddleston@hertfordshire.gov.uk

• Professor Wendy Wills – Professor of Food and Public Health and Director of the Centre for Research in Public Health and Community Care, UH and NIHR ARC East of England theme lead ‘Prevention and Early Detection in Health and Social Care’
  w.j.wills@herts.ac.uk

• Stuart King – CEO & Head of Distraction, BeeZee Bodies
  stuartking@beezeebodies.co.uk
Obesity – a National and Hertfordshire priority

- NHS Long Term Plan
- Childhood Obesity: A plan for action – Chapter 1 and 2
- New 'Tackling Obesity: Government Strategy' - July 2020

- Hertfordshire Public Health Strategy (2017 – 2021)
Obesity harms children and young people

- Emotional and behavioural
  - Stigmatisation
  - Bullying
  - Low self-esteem

- School absence

- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Pre-diabetes
- Bone & joint problems
- Breathing difficulties

- Increased risk of becoming overweight adults
- Risk of ill-health and premature mortality in adult life
Obesity in children

Younger generations are becoming obese at **earlier ages** and staying obese into adulthood

30% of children aged 2 to 15 years old are **overweight or obese**

*Academic year 2017

Of every 100 4 and 5 years olds in England* there are:
- Underweight: 1
- Healthy weight: 77
- Overweight: 13
- Obese: 10

*Academic year 2017 - 2018

Of every 100 10 and 11 years olds in England* there are:
- Underweight: 1
- Healthy weight: 64
- Overweight: 14
- Obese: 20

*Academic year 2017 - 2018
Herts 2018/19 National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) data

- 98.7% (~13,500) of children in reception measured
- 91.7% (~12,500) of children in year 6 measured

What percentage of children in reception (age 4-5) and year 6 (ages 10-11) in Hertfordshire were:
- Underweight?
- Overweight?
- Very overweight?
Reception year (4-5) results

- Underweight: 1%
- Overweight: 12%
- Very overweight: 7%

Excess weight (overweight & very overweight) 19% (~2,600 children)
Year 6 (10-11) results

- Underweight: 1%
- Overweight: 13%
- Very overweight: 16%

Excess weight (overweight & very overweight): 29% (~3,700 children)
How are we doing? - Excess Weight

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reception</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compared to England</td>
<td>Hertfordshire: 19%</td>
<td>Hertfordshire: 29%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>England: 23%</td>
<td>England: 34%</td>
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<td>District variation</td>
<td>17% in North/East Hertfordshire</td>
<td>22% in St Albans</td>
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<td>22% in Broxbourne</td>
<td>36% in Broxbourne</td>
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<tr>
<td>By sex</td>
<td>7.3% Females</td>
<td>19.5% Females</td>
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<td>7.5% Males</td>
<td>19.3% Males</td>
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The burden of obesity is falling hardest on children from low-income areas.

Obesity rates are highest for children from the most deprived areas and this is getting worse.

Obesity prevalence of the most deprived 10% of children is approximately 2x that of the least deprived 10%.
How are we doing? –
Inequalities in Excess Weight

• The percentage of children who have excess weight is significantly higher in those living in areas of deprivation. This is true for both reception and year 6 children.

• Children with a Black ethnicity had significantly higher levels of excess weight than children with a White ethnicity.
The recent model – a traditional approach to child weight management

- Support from Public Health Nursing Service
- Campaigns e.g. Change4Life and Never too Late
- Daily Mile and other physical activity schemes
- Resources e.g. dining environment in schools

Evidence based 17 week programme (school age)

Healthy eating and physical activity information sharing across a range of stakeholders
Identifying the need for change

- Only a small number of families accessed services – met the current DEMAND but not the NEED
- There need to be more ‘next steps’ for families who have accessed support
- One size does not fit all
- Weight loss once overweight, and sustaining weight loss, is difficult, so investment in prevention is important
- Families may be unaware of relevant provision across Herts
- 76% of parents felt that more information and guidance on healthy weight would be useful
A new service for Hertfordshire

• Evidence based school aged programme remains in place, with additional capacity
• Stepped approach to support based on needs and preference of family
• Increased emphasis on Prevention including training for Professionals, masterclasses, and HENRY programme in Herts Valleys
• KPIs to ensure families at highest risk are able to access support
A new approach for Hertfordshire

- Whole systems approach
- Working together
- Insight led
- Removing the blame
- Challenging the stigma
Question 1

• What are the most important factors that influence obesity where you live or work?

Padlet link
https://universityof26.padlet.org/cripacc/jnpc4oc4tyqhsyhg
Hertfordshire’s Whole Systems Obesity Programme

Faith Eddleston, Health Improvement Lead, HCC
Faith.Eddleston@Hertfordshire.gov.uk
What are whole systems approaches?
• **Systems** are sets of interconnected elements organised in a way to achieve something. The relationships hold the elements together.

• A **complex system** is a system composed of many components which may interact with each other.
What is a whole systems approach?

• WSA involve:
  • identifying the various components of a system and understanding the nature of the links and relationships between each of them.
  • Working with communities and stakeholders to understand the problem, support identification and testing of solutions.
  • System change is a long-term endeavour, incremental steps and collaboration with many partners.
Whole systems approach

Traditional
- Silo working
- Generalising
- Individual, isolated activities
- Linear causes and effects
- Top down control

Systems
- Integrated/ the whole system
- Tailored to context: what matters here?
- Looking at how systems work as a whole
- Dynamic feedback loops
- LA holding the ring, stakeholders are partners

Systems ingredients
- Definition of a local whole systems approach
- Simple and complex systems
- Local context
- Shared vision and aligned actions
- Prioritisation of actions
- Dynamic approach
- Feedback loops
- Unintended consequences
- Leadership at all levels

Traditional versus whole systems approach

Childhood Obesity Master Class - 30th July 2020
Feedback loop example

- Supermarkets and takeaways supply convenience foods
- Purchase of convenience foods
- Demand for convenience foods
- Deskilling or honing of cooking skills
What have we done and plan to do in Hertfordshire
Local mapping of the system

• PH in partnership with 2 Herts Districts - East Herts and Hertsmere carried out facilitated workshops to understand and map the local obesity system.

• A range of professionals were involved including those from clinical, children services, leisure and community services.
Whole Systems Obesity Programme for Hertfordshire

Objectives in year 1 2019/20:

1. Establish a **WSO Programme** for Hertfordshire
2. Create a **partnership** with districts and a range of stakeholders
3. Obtain formal **commitment**/senior leader buy in to the obesity cause
4. Identified local partners and places for **system intervention at district level**
5. Take forward a minimum of **two place-based projects**, whilst also seeing some county wide change

#hertsphconnect

Childhood Obesity Master Class - 30th July 2020
Hertfordshire Obesity Partnership

Support delivery of the WSO Programme through:

• Supporting leadership at all levels
• Co-development of actions to prevent obesity
• Sharing best practice
• Coordinating obesity prevention initiatives
• Coordinating community engagement around health and weight
Creating a shared vision

Collectively build a healthy future for Hertfordshire, where local environments will make the healthy choice, the easy choice, and support everyone to be well, eat well, and be active.
10 Pillars – the route to success

1) A healthy environment
2) Engaging with neighbourhoods and communities
3) A ‘first 1000 days’ approach (from the start of pregnancy to age two)
4) Healthy workplaces
5) Schools and young people
6) Focusing on children and adults with special needs
7) Helping people to regain a healthier weight
8) Learning from research, evaluating what we do
9) Digital technology
10) Behavioural science
Principles of Childhood Obesity Master Class

Principle 1. Address inequalities associated with obesity

Principle 2. Focus on preventative approaches that consider the wider determinants

Principle 3. Implement sustainable changes

Principle 4. Actions or projects are underpinned by an evidence base
   *Where the base is weak, implement an evidence-based approach to monitor impact*

Principle 5. Actions or projects are produced in collaboration with stakeholders and partners

Principle 6. The action or project will acknowledge or aim to reduce weight-related stigma

Childhood Obesity Master Class - 30th July 2020
Phases of a whole systems approach
Next steps...

- We plan to develop a Hertfordshire Healthy Weight Charter
- We want to build and develop community engagement and involve people in local decision making that could improve health of their communities
- Engage, engage, engage ...... with professionals across the system and build understanding that everyone has a role to play in supporting the publics’ health.
- Work with our partners through the HOP and the CYP network
- Develop a place based project – single area effect
- Continue to reflect, develop and be flexible.
COVID-19 and obesity

- Media portrayal of the links of obesity and worsened outcomes of COVID - weight stigma
- Barriers? Increases in food insecurity
- Opportunities? New obesity strategy and national focus, active travel and home cooking
References

• Public Health England's Whole Systems Approach to Obesity Guidance -
  https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whole-systems-approach-to-obesity

• Amsterdam’s healthy weight programme –
  https://www.amsterdam.nl/sociaaldomein/blijven-wij-gezond/amsterdam-healthy/


• Obesity and COVID-19 : the role of the food industry
  https://www.bmj.com/content/369/bmj.m2237
Please use the 2-minute breaks between speakers to think about the question on the slide.

You are welcome to add your thoughts/responses or a question into the ‘chat’, or add a thought via the Padlet link in the ‘chat’

You can Tweet using #hertsphconnect

“Collectively build a healthy future for Hertfordshire, where local environments will make the healthy choice, the easy choice, and support everyone to be well, eat well, and be active”

Question 2

• What can you, or your organisation, do to help support the above vision, to address obesity in Hertfordshire?

Padlet link

https://universityof26.padlet.org/cripacc/jnpc4oc4tyqhsyhq
Social determinants and lived experiences relating to obesity

Professor Wendy Wills
Director, Centre for Research in Public Health and Community Care (CRIPACC), University of Hertfordshire

Social determinants and lived experiences relating to obesity

Underpinning principles

• #1 Involve people with *lived experience* of socio-economic deprivation, obesity [etc] in public health processes/practice, intervention or policy development

• #2 Consider *practices* rather than *behaviour* in relation to shifting rates of obesity downwards

• #3 *Social (and place-based) distinctions matter*: Cultural, social, economic capital inform obesity-related practices

• #4 *Use low- rather than high-agency approaches* (see Adams et al 2016)
Parent’s perceptions and experiences

• Parents well situated to monitor and help manage children’s weight
• Children with obese parents more likely to be obese themselves
• Adults from higher socio economic groups value and health and weight-related practices
• Individuals from lower socio economic groups value – but are challenged with prioritising – health and weight-related practices
  • Understanding this is essential
Parent’s perceptions and experiences

- Parent’s experiences of weight management / bodily control influence their view of their children’s bodies
- Puberty is a mystery in terms of weight gain
- Hereditary body shapes/size influences perceptions about children’s bodies

“I mean, I did it when I was 13, I just starved myself and I don't think it did me an awful lot of good whatsoever”

“We're short legged, stocky type, that is our breed”

“All of her dad's side is all big, eh… I says to her, if you were meant to be thin, you'd be thin”
Young people’s perceptions and experiences

• Rarely view puberty as an influencing factor on weight
• Like parents, view family similarity as important in terms of body shape/size [including the inevitability of future weight gain]
• Perception of losing weight was often negative, or fearful
• Like parents, experiences informed by socio economic status: ‘function’ over ‘form’ important
  • a functioning body has more value for lower SES groups; whereas for higher SES groups, adhering to ‘authentic’ health practices valued
People like me: The lived experience of ‘place’
Local, community engagement and the co-production of solutions – Obesity in Stevenage
Consultation methods and participants

• 56 young people (26 male, 30 female) participated in August 2019

• Recruited via the NCS / Stevenage Football Club

Visit 1
Mapping activity
Discussion
Suggestion box
Consultation methods and participants

- Visit 2 – small group discussion
  - (1) What does overweight mean to you?
  - (2) What words should we use when talking about overweight or obesity?
  - (3) Why are some people overweight and not others?
  - (4) What are the impacts of overweight/obesity?
Growing up in Stevenage

Four main themes identified as important:

• Affordability
• Crime and anti-social behaviour
• Transport
• Places to go and places to eat
Local Issues Related to Overweight /Obesity

- Affordability-
  - The cost of healthy vs less healthy food
  - The cost of gym membership and other physical activities
  - The cost of using public transport
- Crime and anti-social behaviour-
  - Bullying
  - Fear of gangs and knife crime
  - Both impact autonomy, freedom to be outside, lower levels of physical activity
Local Issues Related to Overweight / Obesity

• Transport
  • Cycle path network viewed positively
  • Public transport viewed as unreliable [encourage car use]

• Places to go and places to eat
  • Few places to go/socialise for older teenagers
  • This influences use of fast food restaurants
What solutions do young people suggest?

1. Healthy Environment Approach
   - More pathways and cycle lanes.
   - Ban cars in the town centre.
   - Remove advertisements for fast food restaurants on bus tickets and replace with adverts for healthy food, for example free fruit.
   - Increased and improved police patrols to prevent bikes from being stolen.
   - Increased street lighting, especially in the winter months.
   - Reduce the cost of healthy food such as fruit and vegetables/ Increase the cost of unhealthy food.
   - Decrease the number of fast food and takeaway outlets. Increase the number of healthy food outlets to give people viable alternatives, like fruit and vegetable markets.
   - Regulations so that shops have to relocate healthier foods to the front of shops or by the tills.
   - Regulations to change the way food is cooked in fast food restaurants; baked instead of fried.
   - Regulations to stop the advertisement of unhealthy and/or fast food.
   - Provide free fruit. Fast food outlets could offer free fruit bags.
   - Make public images about obesity more graphic, similar to cigarette packaging.
What solutions do young people suggest?

• 2. Neighbourhood and Community Approach
  • Areas for young people to socialise where gangs or knife crime will not be an issue.
  • Encourage people to walk or cycle, rather than driving, e.g. via a financial incentive.
  • Build an athletics track for young people to use that is free or cheap.
  • Provide affordable gym equipment people can use at home.
  • Increase the advertisement of local sports activities, clubs and events.
  • Make gyms more accessible by building them in residential areas.
  • Increase the number of local sports activities available for young people, for example a rock climbing club.
  • Build more skate parks for young people.
  • Organise fun runs for charity.
  • Make sports activities and clubs more affordable for young people and their families.
What solutions do young people suggest?

4. Schools and Workplace Approach
- Teach young people about respecting others, in particular those who are overweight or obese.
- Raise awareness about healthy foods and diets by educating people about food.
- Raise awareness about obesity in schools.
- Promote sports in schools. All schools should encourage students to participate in sports. Secondary schools could make PE compulsory for all students.

5. Focus on Young People
- Events about obesity that are specifically targeted at young people.
- Decrease the cost of public transport for young people to discourage the use of cars.
- Encourage young people to be physically active and engage in sports outside for school by reducing the cost of gym memberships and sports facilities or activities for young people.
- Introduce more programs like NCS for young people
- Increase the number of healthy food outlets that are affordable for young people
The impact of COVID-19 on food and eating in the East of England

- The economic shock resulting from the lockdown is exacerbating inequalities and plunging households into financial hardship and uncertainty.

- Measures to control the spread of Covid-19 are impacting upon food systems, household food practices, and organisations supporting vulnerable people.

- The current crisis has highlighted gaps in provision and co-ordination, and the extent to which the third sector is being relied upon to feed people.

- It is crucial that the lived experiences of and local responses to Covid-19 are documented in order to: inform targeted interventions throughout the crisis period and beyond and contribute to the evidence base on dietary health inequalities.

Thanks to Claire Thompson
c.thompson25@herts.ac.uk
Emerging findings:

1) How are Covid and the lockdown impacting upon household food practices?

Those who have not been impacted financially by the lockdown have been able to spend more time and attention on their cooking and eating practices, taking the opportunity to try and improve their household diet.

Those heavily effected by the lockdown may well have had to compromise the quality of their diet, rely on donated food and skipping meals.

The potential of the pandemic to amplify existing dietary health inequalities – improving the diets of some households while worsening others.
Using practice theory within a systems approach to address obesity?

➢ To better understand which element of a practice might be harder/easier to shift, consider for example:

➢ Meanings
➢ Competencies / capacity
➢ Resources [materialities]
Attitudes to weight and weight management in the early teenage years: A qualitative study of parental perceptions and views. / Wills, Wendy; Lawton, Julia.


GET IN TOUCH!

w.j.wills@herts.ac.uk / Wendy_J_Wills on Twitter

Childhood Obesity Master Class – 30th July 2020
Question 3

- What could you do differently with families and young people, to take account of the social factors that influence their weight?

Padlet link

https://universityof26.padlet.org/cripacc/jnpc4oc4tyqhsyhx
Stuart King
CEO & Head of Distraction
The next 15 Mins

1. Who are we?
2. What do we do?
3. What is coming up in Hertfordshire?
4. Being part of a movement
About BeeZee Bodies

2007 → 2013 → 2020

Childhood Obesity Master Class – 30th July 2020
Innovation and Co-production
Free Support for Everyone

Our blog, social media & newsletter are jam packed with resources to support a healthy lifestyle:

- Articles, guides & tips
- Healthy recipes & activity videos
- Local activities and events
- National information and events

What's next? Improve website by providing tailored content– “if you liked that, you'll love this...”
SUPPORT FOR PROFESSIONALS & FAMILIES

BeeZee Masterclasses delivering pragmatic information to support professionals and families in their everyday lives. Run in partnership with local experts and organisations across Hertfordshire, masterclasses will cover key topics such as:

- Fussy eating
- Physical activity
- Meal planning
- Mental health & body image
BEEZEE LITE – SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

A consultation with our team, to create a personalised behaviour change plan.

- One-off, 1:1 support
- In person or over video chat
- Pilot programme based on local families responses in a County Council survey.
- Families who need more support can be forwarded onto other BeeZee Bodies services.

What next? Evaluation report determining the effectiveness of BeeZee Lite.
HENRY - FOR UNDER 5’S

HENRY is a fun 8 week programme that provides healthy starts for families with children under 5. It is the most effective parenting programme in the country and its totally free for families living in East Hertfordshire (funded by the local CCG)*.
BEEZEE FAMILIES - FOR 5 - 15 YEAR OLDS

AWARD WINNING HEALTHY LIFESTYLES PROGRAMME TO SUPPORT FAMILIES LIVE HEALTHIER LIFESTYLES

- Fun and family focussed
- Practical healthy eating advice
- Exciting physical activity sessions
- Parenting support and behaviour change advice that makes sense in real life!
Dr. Joan Crawley Award for Excellence in Public Health
Healthy Habits LIVE to your living room

Due to the Coronavirus restrictions, the way we help adults, children and their families make healthy habits is going to look a little bit different for a while. But COVID-19 won't stand in our way of supporting you to live a healthier lifestyle! Sign up for BeeZee Live - our brand new online learning service where we stream our Nutrition and Behaviour Change Specialists straight to your home.

Click here to learn more!
We are hiring two apprentices to lead a project that speaks to young people about health & wellbeing.

The project will work with a large and diverse group of local young people to produce campaigns and services - supported by The Power Of Youth challenge.
Be part of a MOVEMENT
Q. What can you do?

A. Become part of the Hertfordshire movement

😢 It can be tricky recommending or referring people to weight related services like BeeZee Families

👉 HCC whole systems includes you!

🙏 We want to work with you to provide resources and support you actually value – we can only do that with your help
BECOME PART OF THE MOVEMENT
We Want You!

Is it clear that we want you to see genuine value in the services and resources we offer you as professionals?

Do one thing now to kick off your involvement if you are even a little curious...

Go to www.beezeebodies.com/jointhemovement
Support to navigate big events with children

3 simple steps to share evidence-based information from "Something Bad Happened" by Dawn Huebner PhD

1. Share to Professionals
   Share this blog with key insights from the book to professionals.

2. Send to Parents
   Share this link to our Parents Guide via email or social media.

3. Post on Social Media
   Share the graphic on your social media channels with the following text:

Is this helpful to you?
Let us know if we can serve you better. If you want more or different content, check out our full Asset Bank to access many more resources.

Visit Asset Bank

To share with Professionals...

A timely book review
Key insights into how to help kids cope with tough situations, from "Something Bad Happened" by Dawn Huebner PhD.

Check it out

Podcast of the week
Stu King and Aline Holzwarth discuss the complexity of decision making the real world, & the impact of COVID-19 on our habits.

Check it out

Nudgestock open to all
Fantastic development opportunity for all health professionals. The global festival of behavioural science is now open to all, with no cost.

Check it out

Childhood Obesity Master Class – 30th July 2020

#hertsphtconnect
Help kids navigate tough times
Share a link to a parent guide or download this simple infographic.

Jamie’s Top 6 kids recipes
Neat ideas to get the kids excited in the kitchen!

Indoor & Outdoor Obstacle Courses
Fun videos to inspire families to get active inside and outside the home.

Disney Dance-Alongs
Guaranteed to get the whole family singing and dancing together.

Resources for Families

- Free Digital Care Packs
- CBeebies Mindful Garden
- Talking about big events
- RECIPE: Souvlaki Chicken Skewers

Video Resources

BeeZee TV
We’ve been busy producing videos to inspire healthy habits. Simple, healthy cooking videos developed by our nutritionist. Short, fun and accessible workouts from our exercise coaches. Family-friendly activity ideas such as cooking, games and challenges.
Oh, and one last thing!...

become part of the movement 😊

www.beezeebodies.com
Please use the 2-minute breaks between speakers to think about the question on the slide.

You are welcome to add your thoughts/responses or a question into the ‘chat’, or add a thought via the Padlet link in the ‘chat’

You can Tweet using #hertsphconnect

Question 4

• What action can you take today that supports our local approach?

* For example tweeting [use #hertsphconnect] about changes you can make to address obesity taking account of a systems approach;
* Making contact with a stakeholder attending today’s master class;
* Getting in touch with one of us about the role of your service/organisation in the Hertfordshire system.

Padlet link

https://universityof26.padlet.org/cripacc/jnpc4oc4tyqhsyhq