

# Childhood Obesity

**Annual Report  
Director of Public Health  
March 2016**



# Why focus on childhood obesity?

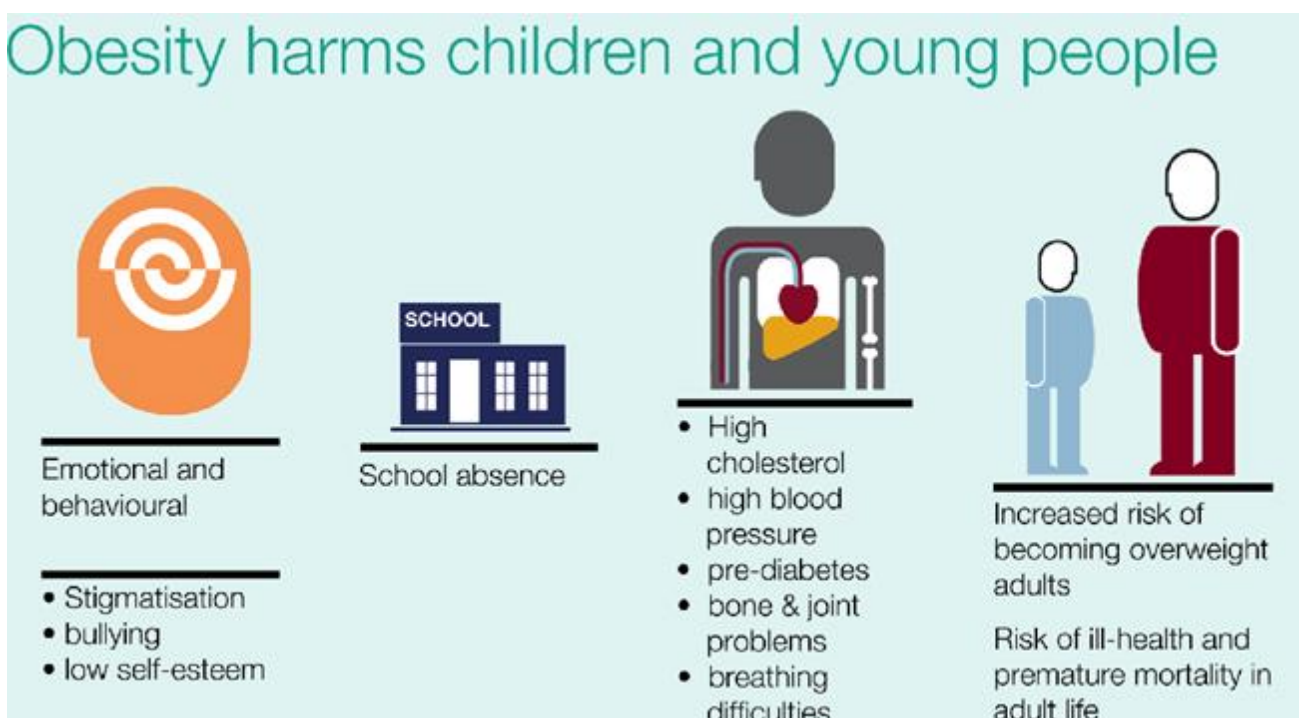
Obesity is one of the most complex and challenging public health issues we currently face. Childhood obesity is reaching alarming levels in many countries, including the UK. Today's children are growing up in an obesogenic environment where it's all too easy to make unhealthy choices. Unhealthy foods are often readily available, affordable, and marketed directly to children. Young people are also spending more time on screen-based and sedentary activities, and physical activity levels are declining.

Childhood obesity is also associated with health problems, including tooth decay, asthma, sleep apnoea, and psychological issues such as low self-esteem and depression. It may also impact on school attendance and educational attainment. Overweight and obese children are more likely to become obese adults, and as such, are at a greater risk of health complications, including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, cancer and premature mortality. The costs of managing obesity are staggering; the estimated annual cost is £27 billion, including £5 billion to the NHS.

There are significant and widening health inequalities. Children living in deprived areas and those from ethnic minority groups are more likely to be overweight or obese.

Childhood obesity is a 'ticking time bomb' for our nation's health. Urgent action must be taken at all levels in society. A national childhood obesity strategy is due to be published in summer 2016. In Ealing, reducing the prevalence of childhood obesity is a priority for the Health and Wellbeing Board as reflected in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-21.

*Dr Jackie Chin, Director of Public Health*



# What is the situation for Ealing's children?

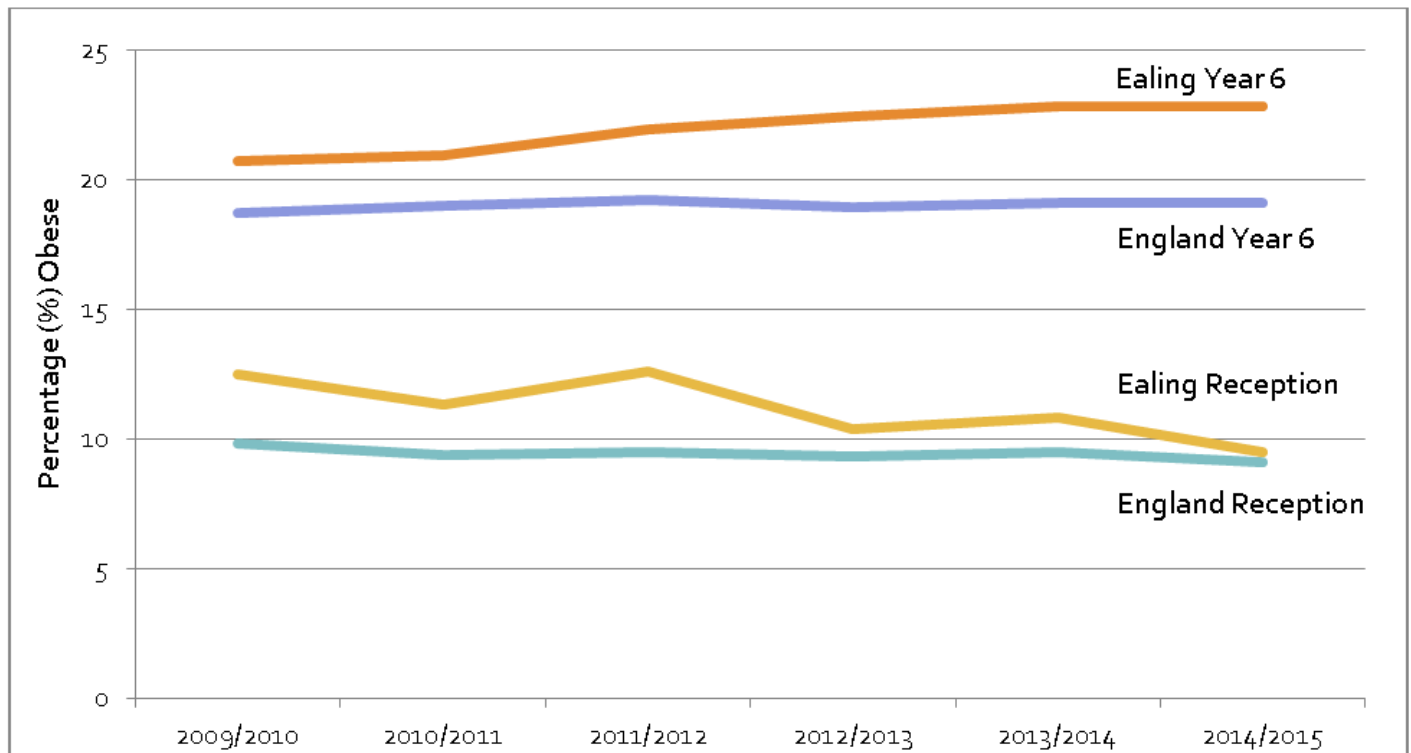
Every year, the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) measures all school children in state maintained schools at Reception class (aged 4-5 years) and Year 6 (10-11 years), and gives us a picture of the prevalence of child obesity.

## In 2014/15:

- **21% of Reception children were overweight, including 9.5% who were very overweight (obese)**
- **37.5% of Year 6 children were overweight, including 22.8% of year 6 children that were obese**

This situation in Ealing is worse than the England average, but similar to the London average. In recent years, the prevalence of obesity in Ealing for Reception age children has shown signs of improvement, although the prevalence in Year 6 is increasing (see figure below).

## Trends in Childhood Obesity in Ealing and England NCMP 2009/10 to 2014/15



Source: National Child Measurement Programme

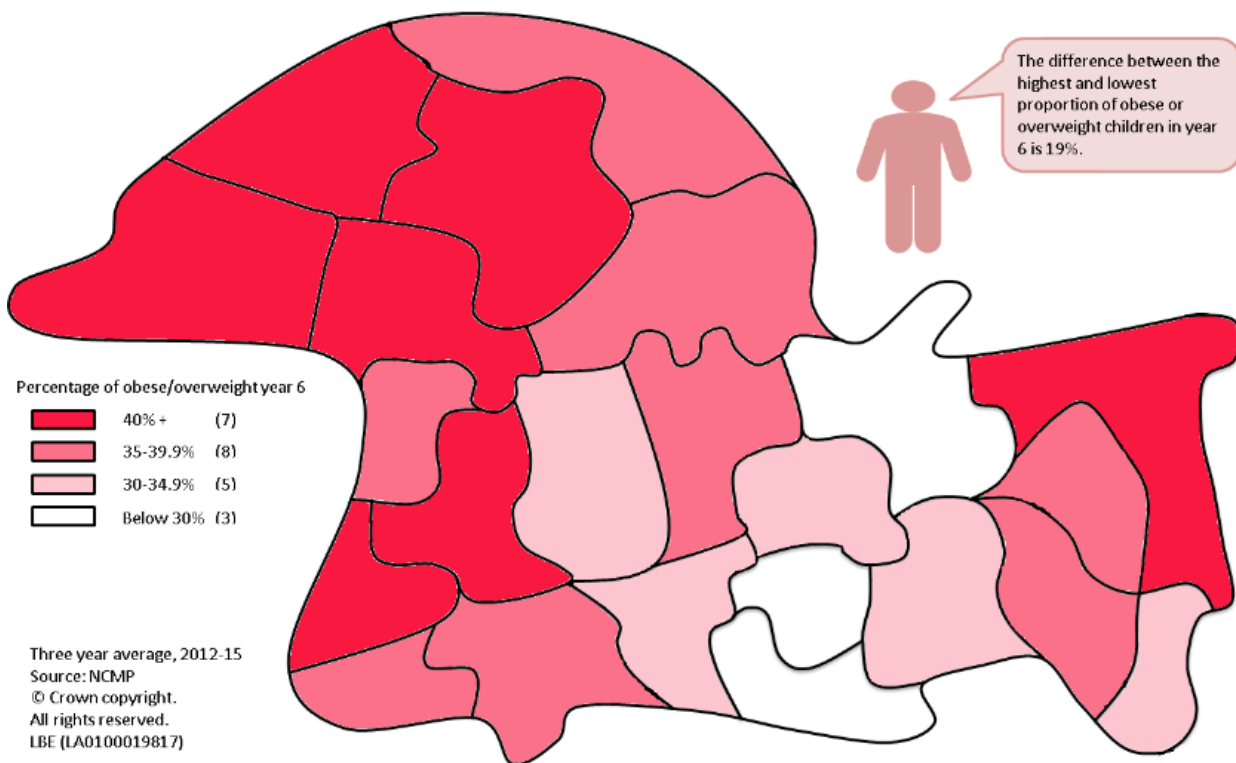


Source: Cartoon images, Change4Life, Public Health England  
Front page images, NHS Photo Library

# Where you live makes a difference

There is considerable variation in obesity prevalence, with those living in more deprived wards such as East Acton, Greenford Broadway, Greenford Green, Northolt Mandeville, Northolt West End, Dormer's Wells and Southall Broadway, almost double the prevalence of children living in the least deprived areas.

## Obese and Overweight pupils in Year 6 NCMP survey 3 year pooled data 2012/13 to 2014/15



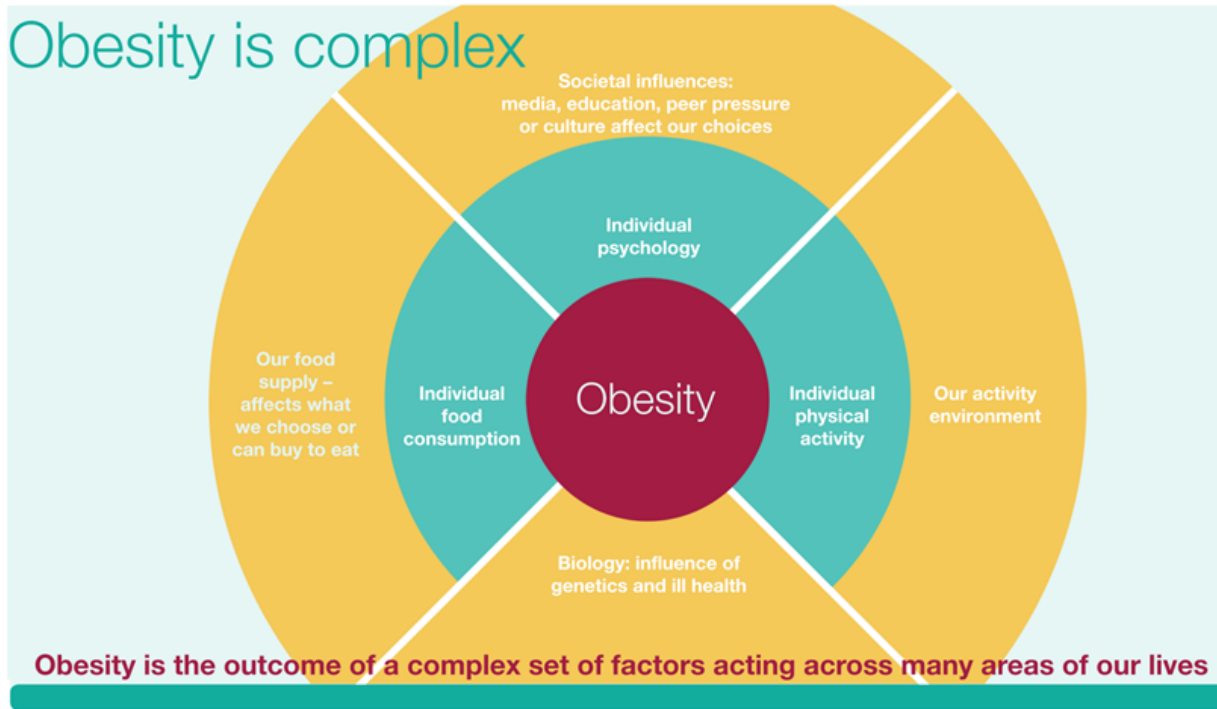
## Facts and Figures

- 29% of primary school pupils said they had **5** or more portions of fruit and vegetables the day before
- 26% of primary school pupils said that they did some physical activity on at least 5 days in the last 7 days.
- 54% of secondary school pupils walked to school on the day of the survey.
- 43% of secondary school pupils said they and their family never or hardly ever have a takeaway meal in the week.
- 23% of secondary school pupils said they had five or more portions of fruit and vegetables the day before.
- 26% of secondary school pupils reported they had exercised vigorously on at least three days in the last week.

# What can we do about childhood obesity?

Tackling childhood obesity involves taking steps to prevent children becoming overweight and obese in the first place, as well as providing support to those who are already overweight and obese to help them lose weight.

Action is required at national, local and family levels.



Source: Public Health England

## National

measures have seen central government working with the food industry to help families make healthy choices about the food they eat, including providing messages around nutrition, recommended portion sizes and sugar content, and efforts to limit the marketing and advertising of unhealthy food to children and young people. Measures include:

- providing appropriate nutritional information, guidelines, and labelling
- reducing exposure of children to advertising of unhealthy foods
- taxing sugar sweetened beverages
- Public Health campaigns such as Change4Life, Active Minutes and Sugar Swaps giving helpful tips to 'eat well, move more and live longer.'



# Local

action to tackle obesity for the whole family includes measures such as:

- providing 'Bikeability' standard training, improving cycle lanes, installing more cycle parking and establishing Cycle hubs at stations across Ealing.
- increasing walking in the borough by creating high quality streetscapes, 'Beat the Street' walking participation project in Southall and resident-led Playstreets.
- promoting active travel to school including providing road safety training and participation incentives for children.
- installing outdoor gyms and distance markers in Ealing's parks and green spaces.
- delivering a walks programme at different locations throughout the week.
- Improving outdoor sports facilities run by voluntary groups – including Spikes Bridge Sports Complex, Lord Halsbury Sports Ground and Pitshanger FC's new clubhouse.
- establishing running groups, and opportunities to be active, most recently the junior park run at Pitshanger Park.
- working with town planners to ensure planning applications support healthy lifestyles and impacts to the public's health.
- promoting the Change 4 Life programme and summer campaigns with local schools and other community groups.

In addition, we are training staff to 'make every contact count' to promote healthy lifestyles, and are making sure that local services take into account the critical life stages important to promote healthy weight in children:

- **Pregnancy:** local midwives and GPs offer guidance to ensure that weight gain in pregnancy is kept in check, and support breast-feeding.
- **Early years:** The 'Early Start' service includes health visitors and early years professionals providing support and guidance around breast feeding, healthy eating and active play. The national 'Healthy Start' voucher scheme is also promoted which provides vouchers to low income parents to spend on milk, fruit and vegetables.
- **School age:** Ealing's 'Healthy Schools Programme' supports local schools to provide a healthy environment for school children, including at meal times and through promotion of physical activity, as well as teaching about nutrition and cooking.

## Ealing One You Service

Ealing families with children aged 5-13 years above a healthy weight can access a family-based, multi-component weight management service, which includes: nutrition, physical activity and psychosocial support. Families can self-refer to the service, be referred by another professional, or may be contacted if their child has been identified as being above a healthy weight as part of the NCMP programme.

**One You** can also give you information and details for other healthy programmes in Ealing, such as the Walks Programme and signpost you to local children's centres and activities.

The programme can be accessed by contacting One You on 0300 4560556.

You can also find out about Ealing's greenspaces, play areas, family-focussed events, leisure and sports centres at: [www.ealing.gov.uk](http://www.ealing.gov.uk)



# The 8 key healthy behaviours for families

- 1. Swap the sugar.** Swap food and drink with added sugar for options that are lower in sugar or sugar-free. You can get the Change4Life Sugar Swap app on i-tunes.
- 2. Meal time.** Set regular times for meals to help avoid unhealthy eating habits.
- 3. “Me size” meals.** Give the kids eat the right sized portions for their age and size.
- 4. Snack check.** Set a limit on the number of snacks and treats kids have each day.
- 5. 5-a-day.** Make sure kids eat at least five portions of a variety of fruit and veg every day.
- 6. Cut back fat.** Take simple steps to eat less fat by comparing food labels, swapping certain foods for others and changing the way food is cooked and prepared.
- 7. 60 active minutes.** Make sure kids do at least 60 minutes of physical activity - like walking, cycling or swimming - every day.
- 8. Up and about.** Limit ‘sitting down’ activities, like watching TV or playing computer games, and encourage kids to do something more active, like playing outside.

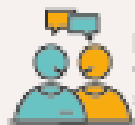
These are part of Change4Life has ‘Top Tips for Top Kids.’ Why not pop the poster on the next page on your fridge for a fun reminder to keep moving!

For more information about these tips, recipes and activities to try and even an app for your phone, go to: [www.nhs.uk/Change4Life](http://www.nhs.uk/Change4Life)

For the latest guidance on what should be on your plate, check out the Eatwell Guide at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide)

# Physical activity for children and young people

(5 – 18 Years)



BUILDS  
CONFIDENCE &  
SOCIAL SKILLS



MAINTAINS  
HEALTHY  
WEIGHT



DEVELOPS  
CO-ORDINATION



STRENGTHENS  
MUSCLES  
& BONES



IMPROVES  
SLEEP



IMPROVES  
CONCENTRATION  
& LEARNING



IMPROVES  
HEALTH  
& FITNESS

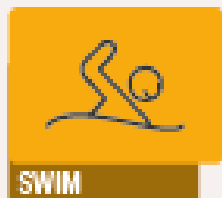
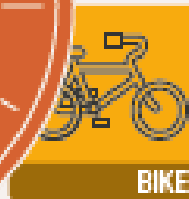
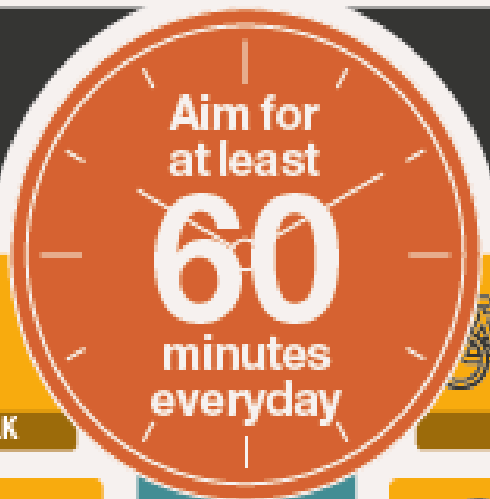


MAKES  
YOU FEEL  
GOOD

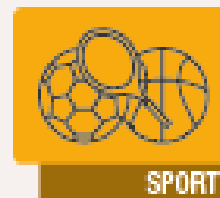
## Be physically active

Spread activity  
throughout  
the day

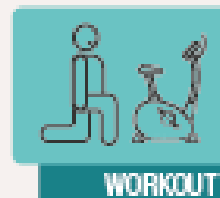
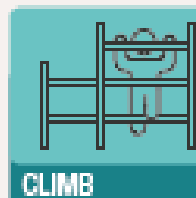
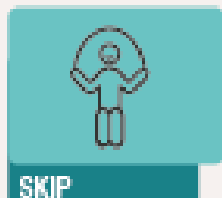
All activities  
should make you  
breathe faster  
& feel warmer



Include muscle  
and bone  
strengthening  
activities



3 TIMES  
PER  
WEEK



Sit less



Move more

Find ways to help all children and young people accumulate  
at least 60 minutes of physical activity everyday

UK Chief Medical Officers' Guidelines 2011 Start Active, Stay Active: [www.bit.ly/sartactive](http://www.bit.ly/sartactive)