In this video, I have chosen to talk about Obesity as an aspect of children's health and wellbeing. This video will analyze -

- What is Obesity?
- Importance of staying healthy in children and young people
- Evidence from policies and research
- What can we do about it?

The United Nations convention on the rights of the child (2023) state on Article 24 that every child has the right to health, this entails good health care, clean water, nutritious and healthy food and a clean environment and education on wellbeing and health to ensure that children are educated on how to stay healthy.

What is Obesity?

The World Health Organization (WHO) (2025) defines Obesity as excessive and abnormal fat accumulation that is a risk to health with children and young people. They state that the body mass index (BMI) over 25 is considered overweight, and the BMI of 30 is considered obese.

However, Lifshitz (2008) describes obesity as a medical condition where it puts a child and young person at a higher risk of health problems, where they could develop a range of physical and psychological health conditions. They believe that obesity should not only be seen as body weight but as a factor that can affect a child's wellbeing and lifestyle.

What can happen if a child is obese?

Adeniyi (2022) believes that being overweight can cause health and psychological problems for children and young people, now and into adulthood. They explain that there are several health conditions that could possibly happen to a child being overweight such as asthma, high blood pressure, and diabetes. This could further lead to the child feeling unhappy which can affect their self-esteem and how they see themselves. Research into Obesity has a long history, to build on this the Government UK (2022) state that the impact of obesity on children and young people have several

interconnected areas such as, physical health, mental and emotional wellbeing for example bullying and poor body image, long term health risks, development and learning issues where there could be a lack of sleep and poorer academic performances due to elevated body mass index.

Policies and Research

One significant stat reported by The World Health Organization (2025) highlights the concern for obesity. From 1990 to 2022, the percentage of children and young people aged between 5-19 years old increased from 2% to 8% globally.

Research by Wildham (2020) sees that many parents and carers underestimate the severity of obesity and do not understand the consequences. Similarly, EIT Food (2026) argues that childhood obesity can deeply damage the physical and mental health of the child/young person, affecting their future wellbeing and quality of life.

The Royal College of Pediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH, 2020) shows that currently there is an ongoing strategy in Wales which is called ‘Healthy Weight’. The strategy is in place to reduce obesity, which is part of the Welsh government's obligation to The Public Health Wales Act 2017. This strategy is to support the requirements of public health Wales 2017 and promote healthier lifestyles.

The Welsh Government (2025) is currently providing free school means in all primary schools to children. This is to ensure that every child can access healthier food during school hours and develop healthy eating habits. They believe that this is working toward tackling hunger and child poverty, supporting children to learn and achieve, and contributes towards the child’s health and wellbeing.

Prior to the work of the Welsh government (2025) The minister for health and social services (2020) put £5.5 million to help prevent and reduce obesity in Wales. This was too -

- Invest in cycling and walking routes
- Develop healthy programmes in schools
- Promote healthy and nutritious eating through the new curriculum

- Improve the access to healthy food
- More physical activities in schools

The Welsh Government (2025) emphasizes that regular physical activities are vital – they recommend that children should be encouraged to at least 60 minutes of exercise or active play. To support this, they promote ‘Active travel’, encouraging children to walk or cycle to school where possible. This is to increase physical activity levels and help children develop lifelong healthy habits.

Application to practice

In practice, a range of initiatives are used to promote children and young people's health and wellbeing and reduce the risk of obesity. One example is the ‘Designed to smile’ scheme. According to the Welsh government (2017) designed to smile encourages good oral hygiene and is highly effective in stopping snacking on sugary foods.

Physical Education lessons are done once a week where all children are encouraged and motivated to take part; this is an integral part of the school's values. The Welsh Government (2025) have a healthy eating scheme in all schools to ensure that the children are eating healthy and nutritious foods this is in place in schools to ensure that the children can learn better, grow stronger and feel better in themselves. They believe that children that eat nutritiously from a young age will shape better health habits and reduce health risks such as obesity.

The Welsh Government (2022) has introduced the Healthy weight management pathway which focuses on weight management (2021), from early interventions to specialist support. We also use an app called ‘Travel Tracker’ in school. This is to track how the children are arriving at school, are they cycling, walking, coming in the car etc. If a child walks to school regularly at the end of every month, they have a badge. This encourages the children to walk or cycle to school when they can and promotes physical activity and to keep healthy (Walk to school Wales, 2025).

These examples demonstrate how schools play a significant role in promoting healthy lifestyles by supporting and encouraging balanced nutrition, physical activities, and positive health behaviors. With these initiatives, schools can support children and young

people in developing lifelong habits that help contribute to health and wellbeing and help reduce the risk of obesity.

What can we do about it?

Public Health Wales (2025) emphasizes that workplaces, schools, families, and school staff have key roles in reducing obesity. This is done by offering a variety of healthier food and drink options and creating and encouraging physical activities whenever possible. This will help the child maintain healthy weight and improve their overall health and wellbeing.

They believe that it is vital to encourage physical activities and serve balanced meals. Dewis Wales (2026) offers programme called ‘Change4Life’ which has various healthy recipes for children and offers nutritional advice. They encourage more time outside, outdoor activities, ensure that children are getting enough sleep for their age, and discourage excessive hours infront of a screen.

Overrall, tackling obestity requires a collaborative approach involving families, teachers and multi-agency organizations.

Conclusion

To conclude, childhood obesity remains a public health concern in Wales and affects children’s physical health, emotional wellbeing and could affect their life chances into adulthood. The research found has demonstrated that obesity increases the risk of diabetes, asthma, and cardiovascular disease, where it can also impact the child’s mental health and self-esteem. Although policies and procedures in Wales such as free school meals, Design to smile and increased opportunities for physical activities have made a positive impact on settings, obesity rates seem to be a barrier. This suggests that tackling obesity needs a collaborative approach where families, schools, and multi-agency professionals need to come together to support, encourage, and promote healthy wellbeing lifestyles. By promoting and encouraging healthy eating habits, regular physical activity and sleep, children and young people can be supported to achieve better health and wellbeing outcomes and to develop to the best of their ability throughout their lives.