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How do we engage overweight and obese children and young people in physical activity? By Kiara Lewis

Predisposing factors: ‘is it worth it’
- Emphasise; fun and enjoyable
- Not; health and weight loss
- Understand the influence of class and gender on the child’s identity

Participatory approach

Predisposing factors: ‘can I do it’
- Variety so can choose activities where competent
- Positive reinforcement
- Group according to skill level

Develop feelings of competency.

Reinforcing factors:
- Train teachers and pupils size acceptance
- Teach overweight children coping skills
- Understand parental attitudes

De-stigmatize obesity.

Enabling factors:
- Facilities and equipment that make incidental activity easier
- Uniforms and changing facilities that allow girls to maintain their identity

Providing opportunities and facilities.

Youth Physical Activity Promotion Model (Welk, 1999) is used as a framework for possible solutions based on reviewing the literature.

The child’s thoughts and perceptions regarding physical activity from reviewing the literature:
- ‘This is not fun’
- ‘I’m not good enough’
- ‘I will let the team down’
- ‘It will hurt’
- ‘It will make my asthma worse’

Considerations:

Low Quality of studies
- Poor reporting of PA levels
- Lack of control

Gender
- Boys and girls respond differently
- This is particularly the case as children get older

Parents
- Views do not always co-inside with health care professionals
- Perceived dangers prevent ‘free play’

CASE STUDY: Eat Smart, Be Smart is an obesity prevention program in a school in the US aimed at African-American students (50% overweight) (kindergarten to 8th grade) that utilized a participatory process including staff, parents and students (Baskin et al., 2009). Male students requested strength training activities and females fun and group work. A P.E. programme was devised to meet demands of all students; they were also given the opportunity to name the programme and set their learning objectives and gave constant feedback and suggestions for change. Parents were also given an input but they preferred indirect (talking about programme at home etc.) than direct involvement in the programme. Students responded positively to the programme with changes made to diet and physical activity.