

## **NELFT guidance for multi-Agency partners regarding severe obesity in children**

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### **1. Purpose**

This summary guidance is intended to help professionals identify, support, and refer to other services children and young people who are identified as being overweight or obese.

### **2. National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP)**

The NCMP measures the height and weight of children in Reception class and year 6 to assess overweight and obesity these ages

Parents/carers receive letters from their local authority to inform them of the programme

Parents/carers can choose to withdraw their child from the process. The data is collected and used to produce National Statistics Reports showing trends at national level, differences between groups of pupils and the latest local authority data

<https://www.gov.uk/.../collections/national-child-measurement-programme>

### **3. What is a healthy weight?**

As children and young people (C&YP) grow their weight, shape and height will change. Ideally keeping a healthy weight and eating healthy diet will better physical

health. C&YP that grow up eating healthy and active are more likely to stay healthy into adulthood.

The use of Body mass index (BMI) is the most practical measure to identify C&YP and Adults as healthy weight

### 3.1 BMI

BMI is calculated by using an individual's weight in kilograms by their height in metres squared. In C&YP 2 to 18 years, BMI is also adjusted for age and gender as well as height and weight and plotted on a BMI centile chart. (<https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/body-mass-index-bmi-chart>)

BMI can easily be calculated by using the online nhs.uk tool inputting <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator/> OR using the RCPCH/WHO mobile app.

### 3.2 BMI Classifications

<2 <sup>nd</sup> centile	2 <sup>nd</sup> -91 <sup>st</sup> centile	>91 <sup>st</sup> – 98 <sup>th</sup> centile	98 <sup>th</sup> - 99.6 <sup>th</sup> centile	>99.6 <sup>th</sup> centile
Underweight	Healthy Weight	Overweight	Very Overweight (Obesity)	Severe Obesity

#### A mention on accuracy of BMI

BMI takes into account natural variations in an individual's body shape, giving a healthy weight range for a particular height.

It should be noted that BMI is an estimate of adiposity (excess body fat) and there are some limitations and can overestimate for example in tall lean or athletic C&YP. But is still the most reliable metric in routine monitoring and identification.

#### BMI reduction not weight loss

In growing children where decrease in BMI is indicated. Majority of the time weight maintenance and healthy diet is advised and not weight loss, this is because the C&YP are still growing. There are exceptions and recommendations are support are given by specialist paediatric dietitians and paediatricians.

## 4. What to do if a child falls outside a healthy weight / BMI.

All professionals are recommended to be opportunistic in opportunities to measure C&YP are a healthy weight, signpost and promote healthy eating and exercise and referral onto specialist services.

Initiating conversation about weight can be difficult and professional judgement is needed. Often professionals already supporting C&YP and their families are positioned to be opportunistic with measuring, signposting to healthy eating resources and making referrals to other services.

#### **4.1 The below links provide resource support and e-Learning to professionals**

Lets talk about weight;

Recommended for professionals, raising weight, terminology.)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-weight-management-short-conversations-with-patients>

#### **Childhood obesity e-learning**

This is a bite-sized session to give health and care professionals an overview of childhood obesity - including key evidence, data and signposting to trusted resources to help prevent illness, protect health and promote wellbeing.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childhood-obesity-applying-all-our-health/childhood-obesity-applying-all-our-health> (click on the interactive e-learning link)

#### **NHS (Professionals and Families)**

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/childrens-weight/>

### **5. Safeguarding**

Every child who is subject to a Child in need or child protection plan will have an allocated health visitor or school nurse so all that is required is the professional concerned is to discuss the child/young person's weight with the health professional involved.

Children where an assessment is being completed by children's social care should include contact with universal 0-19 childrens services

Even if a child/young person does not attend a school they are still able to access a school nurse who will be able to weight and measure a child/young person if there are weight concerns

Children with no GP should be advised to register GP as soon as possible and again contact the health visitor or school nurse if there are weight concerns, the generic email is [havering0-19spa@nelft.nhs.uk](mailto:havering0-19spa@nelft.nhs.uk) and they will identify the allocated health professional

Obesity can be a sign of neglect and professionals working with obese children should be mindful of the possible role of abuse or neglect in contributing to obesity either as an indicator or as a response to abuse and neglect.

Consistent failure to change lifestyle and engage with outside support can indicate neglect, particularly in younger children. Childhood obesity can become a safeguarding concern if the parents/carers behave in a way that actively promotes treatment failure in a child who is at serious risk from obesity, this may include consistently failing to attend appointments,

refusing to engage with various professionals or with weight management initiatives or actively subverting weight management initiatives.

These behaviours are of particular concern where there is evidence of obstructive sleep apnoea, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, or mobility restrictions.

Completion of the safeguarding analysis tool in the context of obesity will help clarify the impact the obesity on the child and supports practitioners to develop a holistic assessment of a child where obesity has been identified as a significant concern .

## 6. BMI classifications, actions and referring

BMI Category	BMI Centile	Communication	Action/Recommendation
Underweight	<2 <sup>nd</sup> centile	Communicate BMI centile.	Refer to N&D Service
Healthy Weight	2 <sup>nd</sup> -91 <sup>st</sup> centile	Communicate BMI centile.	
Overweight	98 <sup>th</sup> - 99.6 <sup>th</sup> centile	Communicate BMI centile.	Provide / Signpost to healthy eating resources/websites. (Appendix. 1) <i>(Referrals to dietetics are not excepted unless BMI is rapidly increasing)</i>
Very Overweight (Obesity)	98 <sup>th</sup> - 99.6 <sup>th</sup> centile	Communicate BMI centile.	Refer to N&D Service 0- 5 Years Henry programme referral
Severe Obesity	>99.6 <sup>th</sup> centile	Communicate BMI centile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to N&amp;D Service</li> <li>Referral to GP&gt;Paediatrician</li> </ul>

### Where, how, and which services to refer too

- Making a referral to the Nutrition and Dietetic Service (Havering) : <https://www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-havering-nutrition-dietetics-clinicians>
- Children with no GP should be advised to register asap and again contact the health visitor or school nurse if weight concerns , the generic email is [havering0-19spa@nelft.nhs.uk](mailto:havering0-19spa@nelft.nhs.uk) and they will identify the allocated health professional

## 7. First line information and sign posting

Healthy eating information can be found through the NHS website and change4life (links below in section.8)

Six ways below that can promote and help C&YP and families with healthy nutrition and weight.

Its usually better to make one change at a time.

1.	<b>Healthy Portion Sizes</b> -Start with small portions -Give children child portions.
2.	<b>Healthy Eating</b> Prepare Healthy Meals and Snacks - Eat 5 Fruit and Vegetables per day - Reduce sugary foods and drinks - Increase fibre/wholemeal foods
3.	<b>Encourage Physical Activity</b> - At least 60minutes per day (could be broken down into shorts burst during the day)
4.	<b>Reduce screen time</b> - Limit to 2 Hours television per day and no screen time before bed
5.	<b>Be a good role Model</b> Follow a family approach to health eating
6.	Good sleep

## 8. Resources C&YP and Families

- ✓ Change4Life is an England and Wales campaign offering advice on making healthy choices and reducing sugar. <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life>
- ✓ NHS.UK website offers tips for healthy eating: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/eight-tips-for-healthy-eating>
- ✓ The Eatwell Guide shows the proportions in which different types of foods are needed to have a well-balanced and healthy diet. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide>

- ✓ 5-a-day gives advice and recommendations about the benefits of eating 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day. <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/5-a-day-what-counts>
- ✓ Infographics explain the physical activity needed for general health benefits for all age groups, disabled adults, pregnant women and women after childbirth. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-guidelines-infographics>
- ✓ Use the Healthy weight calculator to check your body mass index (BMI) and find out if you are a healthy weight. <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator/>
- ✓ <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/very-overweight-children-advice-for-parents>
- ✓ <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/physical-activity-guidelines-children-and-young-people/>
- ✓ <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/activities>