



# CHILDHOOD OBESITY: A PRESSING HEALTH CONCERN

## THE SITUATION



Obesity affects **1 in 3 European children**, making it the most common chronic disease in this demographic

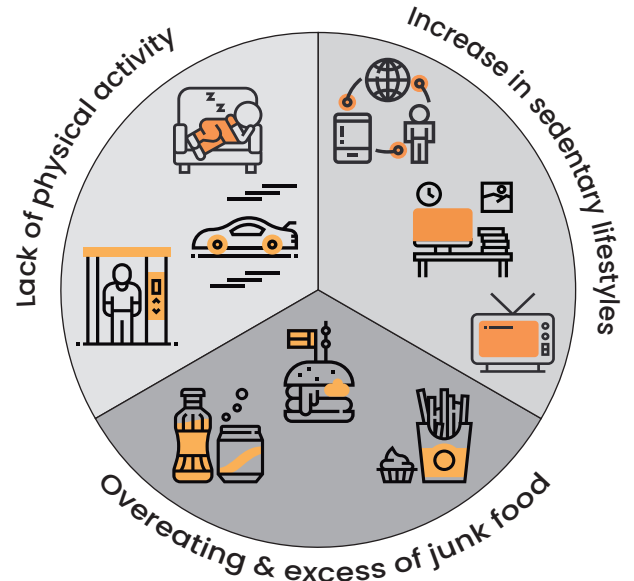
Between 2015-2017, obesity trends were higher among Southern European countries, especially among boys



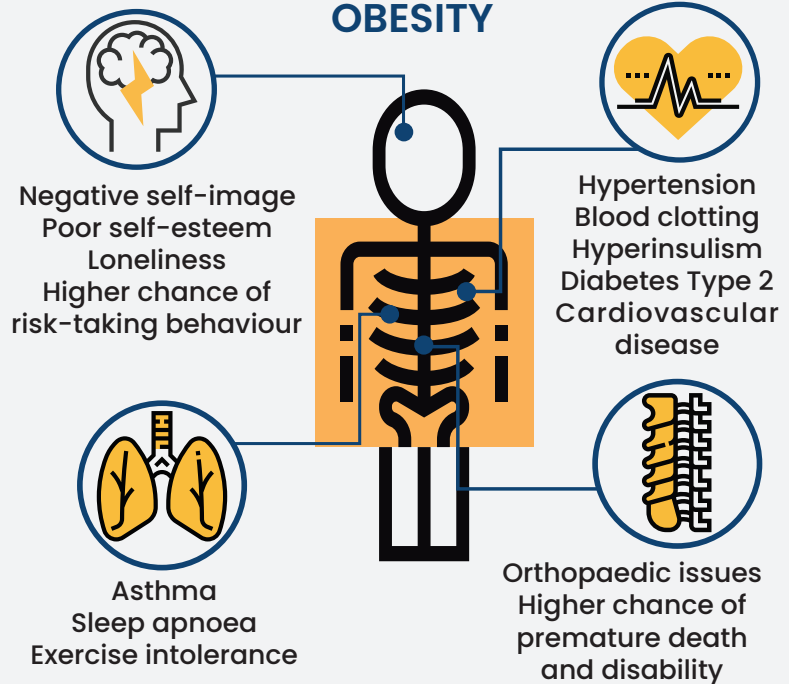
However, a decrease in the prevalence of obesity was recorded over the last 10 years in some European countries



## CAUSES OF CHILDHOOD OBESITY



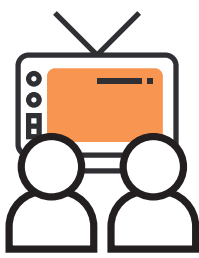
## CONSEQUENCES OF CHILDHOOD OBESITY



## CHILDHOOD OBESITY & MASS MEDIA

Children with limited screen time, regular sleep schedules and traditional family dinners have a **40%** lower prevalence of obesity

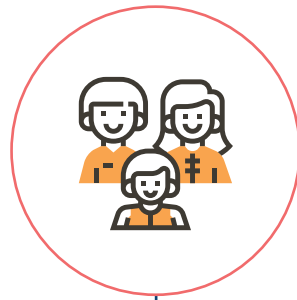
Children eat more fruit and vegetables when the TV is turned off during mealtime



Each extra hour of TV watched by 5-year olds corresponds to an **8%** risk increase of adult obesity

Up to **1/4** of a child's daily food intake often comes from snacking in front of the TV

# TACKLING CHILDHOOD OBESITY IMPLIES FUNDAMENTAL SOCIETAL CHANGES



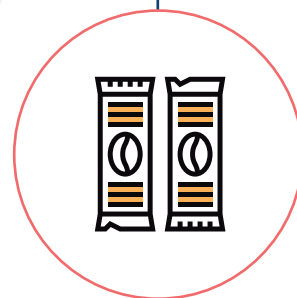
Set **positive examples** for children by reducing your own media use.  
Help children identify the **real aims of food advertisers**.  
**Reduce children's screen time** in favour of human contact.

Standards for **healthy food options** at school.  
**Education** about eating.  
**Increase physical activity** at home and in school.



**Preventive counselling** on healthy eating, activity and family lifestyle behaviours.  
**Inform parents of social/mass media effects** on cognitive and physical development, and the need to limit exposure.  
**Advise on appropriate nutrition** during pregnancy and lactation.

Investing in **safe outdoor spaces for physical activity**.  
Invest in **pro-health initiatives**.  
Integrate media and Internet regulation into **health protection recommendations**.  
**Restrict food ads** targeting children.



Produce and make available **affordable, healthy food**.  
**Move nutritional labels** to the front of food packaging.

## Facts and data retrieved from:

I. Nicholson, S. Del Torso, A. Hadjipanayis, D. Van Esso (2008) "Childhood Obesity - a public health crisis across the European Union", in Paediatriki

Mazur, A., Caroli, M., Radziejewicz-Winnicki, I., Nowicka, P., Weghuber, D., Neubauer, D., Dembiński, Ł., Crawley, F. P., White, M. and Hadjipanayis, A. (2017) "Reviewing and addressing the link between mass media and the increase in obesity among European children: The European Academy of Paediatrics (EAP) and The European Childhood Obesity Group (ECOG) consensus statement." in Acta Paediatrica

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