

# **Are Public Health Policies to tackle childhood obesity fair, safe and sensible?**

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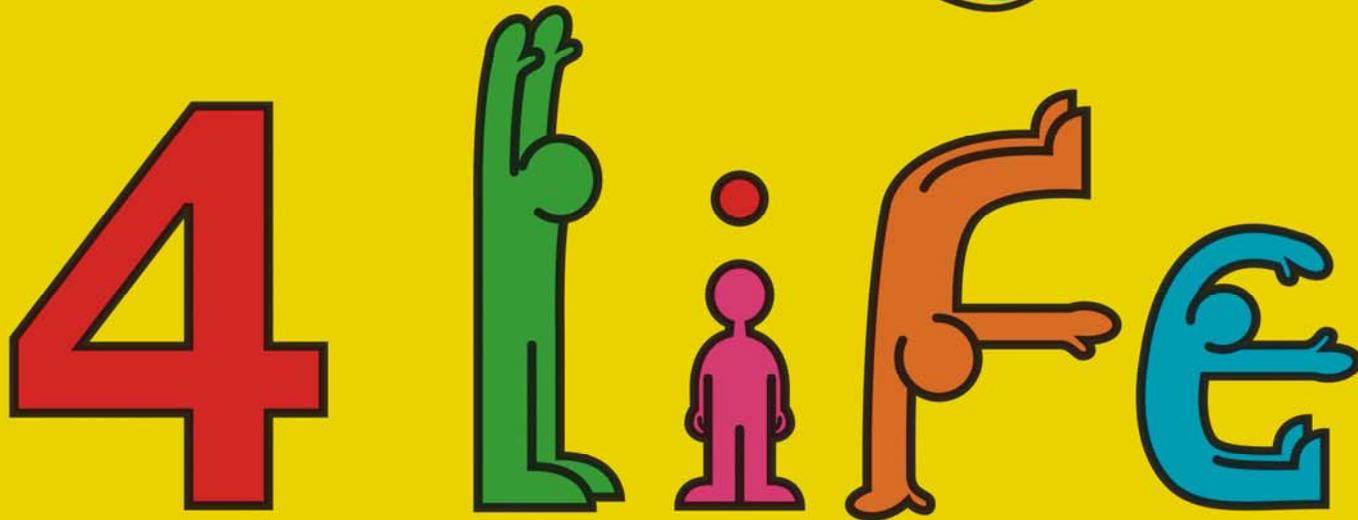
**HEALTHY WEIGHT, HEALTHY LIVES:  
A CROSS-GOVERNMENT STRATEGY  
FOR ENGLAND**





# **The 'Healthy Living' Social Marketing Initiative: A review of the evidence**

change



Eat well

Move more

Live longer



**EPODE**

*Ensemble, prevenons l'obesite des enfants...*

**Together, lets prevent obesity in children**

**is a community intervention that aims to prevent  
childhood obesity, involving local stakeholders in a  
sustainable way**

# France's obesity epidemic

- Like America and UK, France has its own childhood obesity epidemic
- EPODE has been piloted in 10 French towns and is now being extended...
- 127 cities in France
- 5 pilot cities in Spain
- 2 pilot sites in Belgium



# EPODE:

Ensemble prevenons l'obesite des enfants or  
**Together, let's prevent obesity in children**

- A community-based intervention approach prompting a lifestyle change at the local level
- Inspired from experience of successful community-based interventions from across the world
- A methodology dedicated to the development of a local strategy for a sustainable involvement of local stakeholders

# Principal of the EPODE programme

- To promote a balanced, affordable and pleasant diet



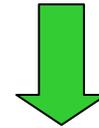
- Encourage children and families to be more active and exercise on a regular basis



# The EPODE approach



The city/town is at the heart of the initiative

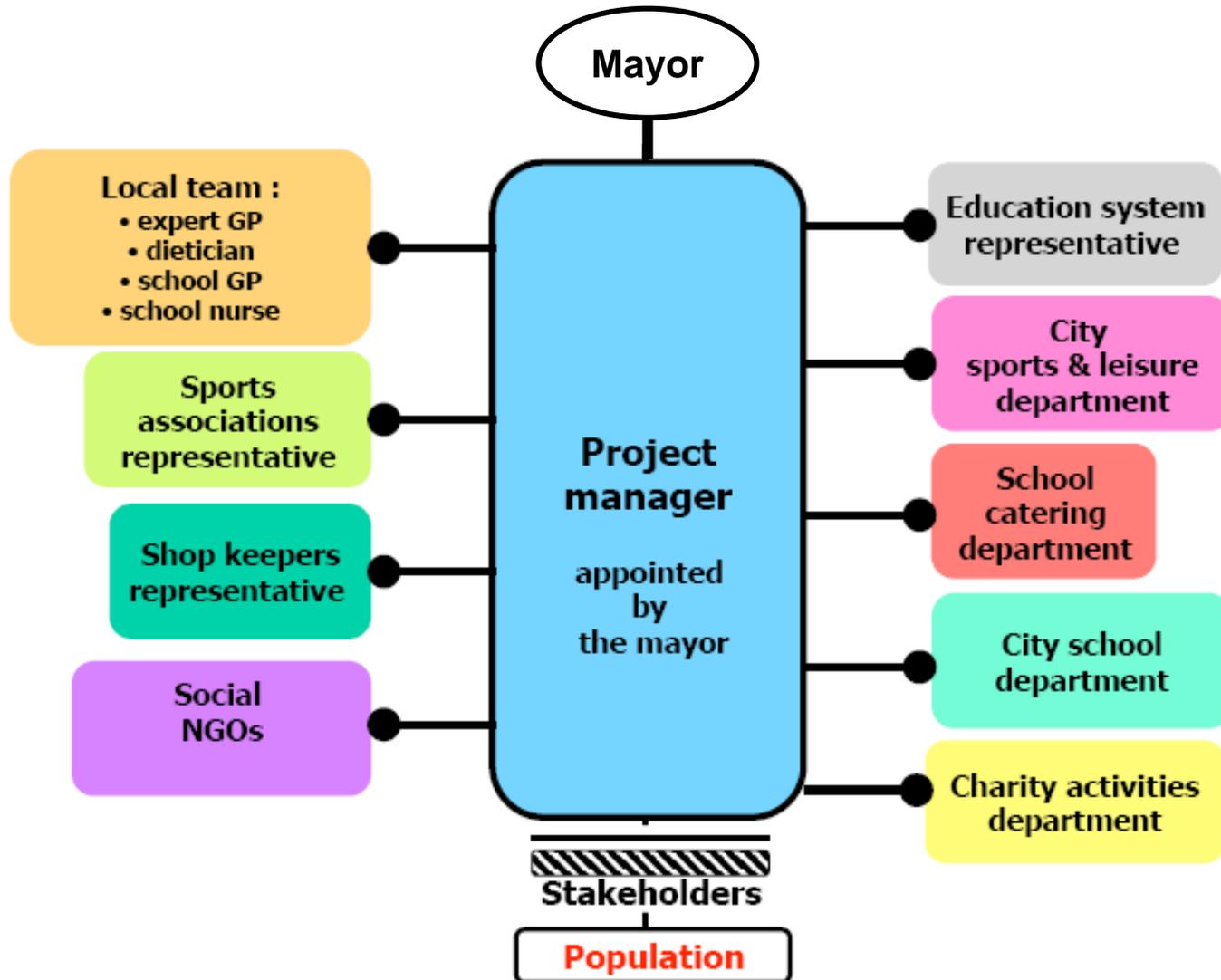


Foster a group dynamic and change professional practices to change the environment

# Philosophy of the EPODE programme

- An awareness of the obesity issue, both collectively and individually, with no stigmatisation of overweight and obesity.
- Create a long-term programme that works in daily life taking the environment and constraints into account (time, budget, products on the market)
- A positive, step-by-step apprenticeship of nutritional balance and physical activity
- A continuous action targeting families from an early age
- A behaviour centred approach, with an educational philosophy, prompting fun and non-stigmatisation of any food
- Messages based on scientific recommendations

# Organisation at the city/town level



# EPODE programme engineering

- A national coordination team using social marketing and social techniques to serve to coach and accompany the local project manager and the local project team

## ***The secret to success...***

- Not that difficult to follow
  - Presented as a game, Delivered at the local level
- Appeals to patriotic parents, as EPODE demands a return to traditional French values
- Not an expensive project
  - €2 a day per child
  - Cost is borne equally between local government and industries

# Method:

mobilise local stakeholders to relay healthier lifestyle habits

**Each quarter, a set of aliments is highlighted**

Eg: April 2006 - July 2006 : vegetables

## Stakeholders

**Doctors**  
Health/  
nutritional news



**Parents**  
« The taste of the  
season » brochure



**Teachers**  
Pedagogical  
animations



**City**  
Local  
newspaper,  
billboards



**Associations**  
Animations,  
information  
material  
dissemination

**Restaurants  
& schools  
catering**  
Adapted menus,  
pedagogical and  
fun animations

**Local  
producers &  
distributors**  
Animations,  
information  
material  
dissemination

**Dedicated tools and roadmaps for each profession**

# Preliminary assessment of childhood obesity prevalence in EPODE pilot cities

Example: 19.15 % of the children in Saint-Jean were overweight. A year later this figure was down to 13.39 %

	Normes IOTF										
	Nombre d'enfants pesés			Obésité				Surpoids (obésité incluse)			
	2005	2006	2007	2005	2006	N(2007)	2007	2005	2006	N(2007)	2007
Vitré	1332	1377	1380	2,03%	1,53%	12	0,87%	10,44%	11,47%	139	10,07%
Saint-Jean	611	635	619	3,60%	1,57%	6	0,97%	19,15%	13,39%	86	13,89%
Evreux	4176	4231	4162	4,79%	4,02%	170	4,08%	19,61%	16,40%	703	16,89%
Royan	1051	1003	1041	2,57%	2,59%	23	2,21%	17,32%	17,35%	160	15,37%
Beauvais	4784	4692	4891	5,12%	4,41%	250	5,11%	22,11%	18,86%	1000	20,45%
Béziers	4983	5110	4235	4,59%	4,64%	198	4,68%	19,26%	18,98%	784	18,51%
Meyzieu	2202	2169	2255	5,45%	4,66%	101	4,48%	25,07%	19,96%	492	21,82%
Asnières	5184	5278	5283	5,09%	4,51%	209	3,96%	21,49%	20,41%	1031	19,52%
Thiers	857	840	833	5,95%	5,12%	48	5,76%	24,74%	23,21%	190	22,81%
Roubaix	1298	3284	4774	6,70%	9,29%	401	8,40%	23,27%	25,03%	1172	24,55%
<b>Total villes EPODE</b>	<b>26478</b>	<b>28619</b>	<b>29473</b>	<b>4,80%</b>	<b>4,75%</b>	<b>1418</b>	<b>4,81%</b>	<b>20,60%</b>	<b>19,19%</b>	<b>5757</b>	<b>19,53%</b>

# Evaluation of the EPODE programme

- Interest of EPODE has spread to Britain
- EPODE is a case study in 'Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: A cross government strategy'.
- Fits in with the government's plans for 'healthy towns'.

## Work at Durham University

- Anonymised data, collected in France between 2005 and 2007 from children aged 5 to 10 years (height, weight, date of birth, gender, date of data collected, school/town) for 8 of the 10 EPODE pilot towns in France.
- Change over time (% overweight and obese, and BMI) after controlling for age, gender, and socio economic status (SES)

# Evaluation of the EPODE programme

- There was an overall decrease in the prevalence of overweight including obesity of 1.88% (from 18.88% in 2004-2005; 90% CI, 1.05 to 2.71%,  $p=0.0002$ )
- For the obese, prevalence decreased by 0.68% (from 4.14% in 2004-2005; 90% CI, 0.30 to 1.06%,  $p=0.003$ )
- From the start of the EPODE campaign to 2007, the prevalence of overweight and obesity declined substantially across the involved towns. While cause-and-effect may not be demonstrated conclusively with such a design, the results are encouraging and support the sustainability and roll-out of the initiative on a wider scale

# DH funded 'Healthy Towns' projects

- £30m healthy towns kick start Change4life
- 9 Towns selected, one is Middlesbrough



Evening Gazette

Middlesbrough   
Primary Care Trust