



Great Weight Debate: Is London making our children obese

18 October 2016

London boroughs have started holding conversations with their communities about childhood obesity as the Great Weight Debate launched this week. The London Borough of Waltham Forest held an event for parents at a children's centre and an assembly for pupils at a primary school. The London Borough of Southwark and London Borough of Ealing will both hold Great Weight Debate events in November. Other boroughs taking part include Barking and Dagenham, Bexley, Brent, Bromley, Camden, Croydon, Fulham, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith, Haringey, Harrow, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets and Westminster.

Summary

The Great Weight Debate aims to raise awareness of London's childhood obesity epidemic and gather ideas from Londoners about how children can be helped to lead healthier lives. Co-ordinated by Healthy London Partnership and led by boroughs locally, the conversations will highlight the global evidence that shows obesity is caused by our abnormal environment. This abnormal environment includes:

- the widespread availability of cheap, high calorie food, such as fast food outlets and fizzy drinks
- larger portion sizes than in the past
- marketing of unhealthy foods to children
- confusion about what the healthiest food options are for their children amongst parents
- lack of understanding of what a 'normal' weight is for a child
- a city environment that discourages walking and cycling.

The Great Weight Debate website includes blogs and videos from a range of professionals about childhood obesity

- [Watch Dr Danny Ruta, Chair of the London Obesity Leadership Group and Director of Public Health in Lewisham, explain how we're living in an environment where it's easier to put on weight than stay a healthy size.](#)
- [Read Sarah Price, Chief Officer at Haringey Clinical Commissioning Group and senior responsible officer at Healthy London Partnership for The Great Weight Debate, blog about how they are tackling obesity in Haringey.](#)

- [Read Dr Yvonne Doyle CB, Regional director for Public Health England, London, blog on the possibilities for London's fight against child obesity.](#)
- [Watch Rosie Boycott, Chair of the London Food Board from the Mayor of London's office, talk about the need for the food industry to be involved in the Great Weight Debate.](#)
- [Watch Jo Murfitt, Director of Public Health for NHS England \(London Region\), talk about what she would like to see discussed in the great weight debate – access to healthy food for people on low incomes.](#)

[We are interested in gathering people's views and are asking Londoners to fill in the Great Weight Debate survey](#)

A marketing campaign by Healthy London Partnership will promote the survey. All the views and ideas gathered during the Great Weight Debate will be used to inform the next stage of the debate which will work towards making tangible changes at a community and London-wide level.

The Great Weight Debate website include engagement and communications resources for boroughs, engagement resources for schools and youth teams, and communications resources for CCGs to promote the debate.

[Great Weight Debate resource materials](#)

[To find out more, please email Healthy London Partnership](#)