

# **A preventative approach for the Management of Overweight and Obesity within the context of the Health Service Executive Model of Care – The Parents Plus Healthy Families Programme**

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# Obesity

Overweight and obesity are defined as “abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that presents a risk to health” (World Health Organisation, 2017).

It is a progressive, chronic and complex disease affecting all ages and genders

- Disproportionately greater in disadvantaged groups

# Prevalence (%) of Overweight and Obesity across the Lifespan in Ireland

# Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity

- Data suggests that overall prevalence in children is stabilising, but prevalence is relatively higher in older than younger children
- More prevalent in girls (particularly in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class) and in disadvantaged schools
- Double the rate of ow/ob in DEIS program schools and this gap is widening

(COSI, 2020)

# Impact of Overweight and Obesity

Asthma

Hypertension

Musculoskeletal disorders

*“It hurts when I walk”*

Sleep Apnoea

Pain

Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease

*“Nobody wants to see a fat kid ride a bike”*

Depression and Anxiety

Type 2 Diabetes

Eating Disorders

*“I feel like I’m going to explode” (PE)*

Dyslipidaemia

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome

Insulin Resistance

*“I can’t tie my shoe laces”*

# Model of Care for the Management of Overweight and Obesity

# The Model of Care

A comprehensive document taking a population health approach aiming to improve the health of the entire population and reduce health inequalities among population groups, recognising higher prevalence among socially disadvantaged groups

Two important highlights:

1. Comprehensive recognition of multifaceted nature of obesity
2. Shift away from “Eat less, Move more”

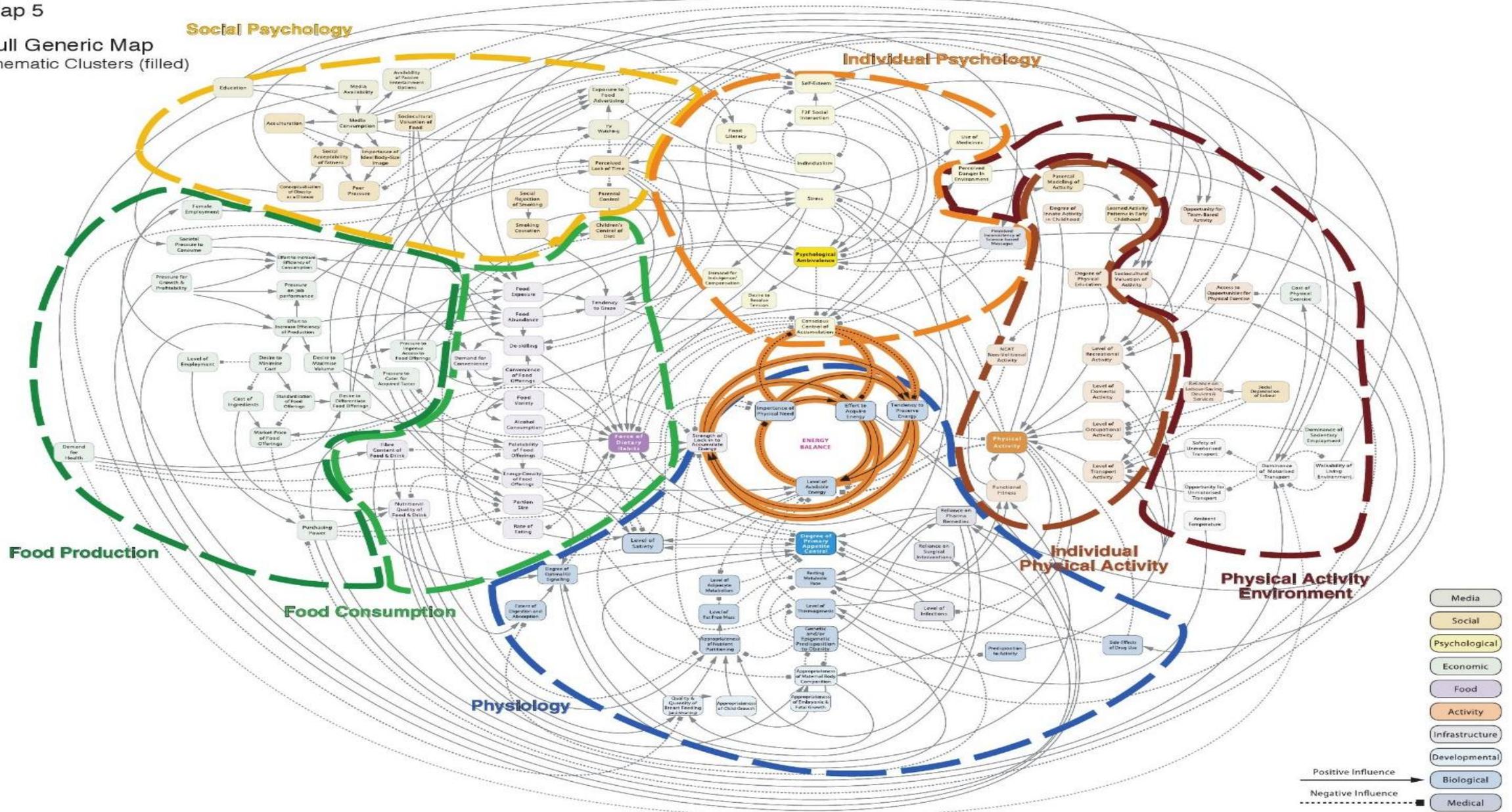


**EAT LESS**  
**MOVE MORE**

- “This approach ignores a wealth of scientific data confirming that energy balance is influenced by a complex and multifaceted system of determinants. At the heart of this system lies a homeostatic biological system, struggling to adapt to the rapid changes in our environment.”

Map 5

Full Generic Map  
Thematic Clusters (filled)



- Media
- Social
- Psychological
- Economic
- Food
- Activity
- Infrastructure
- Developmental
- Biological
- Medical

Positive Influence →  
Negative Influence - - -





# What should interventions focus on?

Model of Care highlights the need to improve **FUNCTION, HEALTH, WELLBEING AND QUALITY OF LIFE**

Evidence shows that multicomponent interventions are the most effective (Brown et al., 2019)

However, most interventions focus on only one or two component, usually diet or exercise (Ash et al., 2017)

There is also a need to reconsider outcomes beyond weight-based measures

FOOD

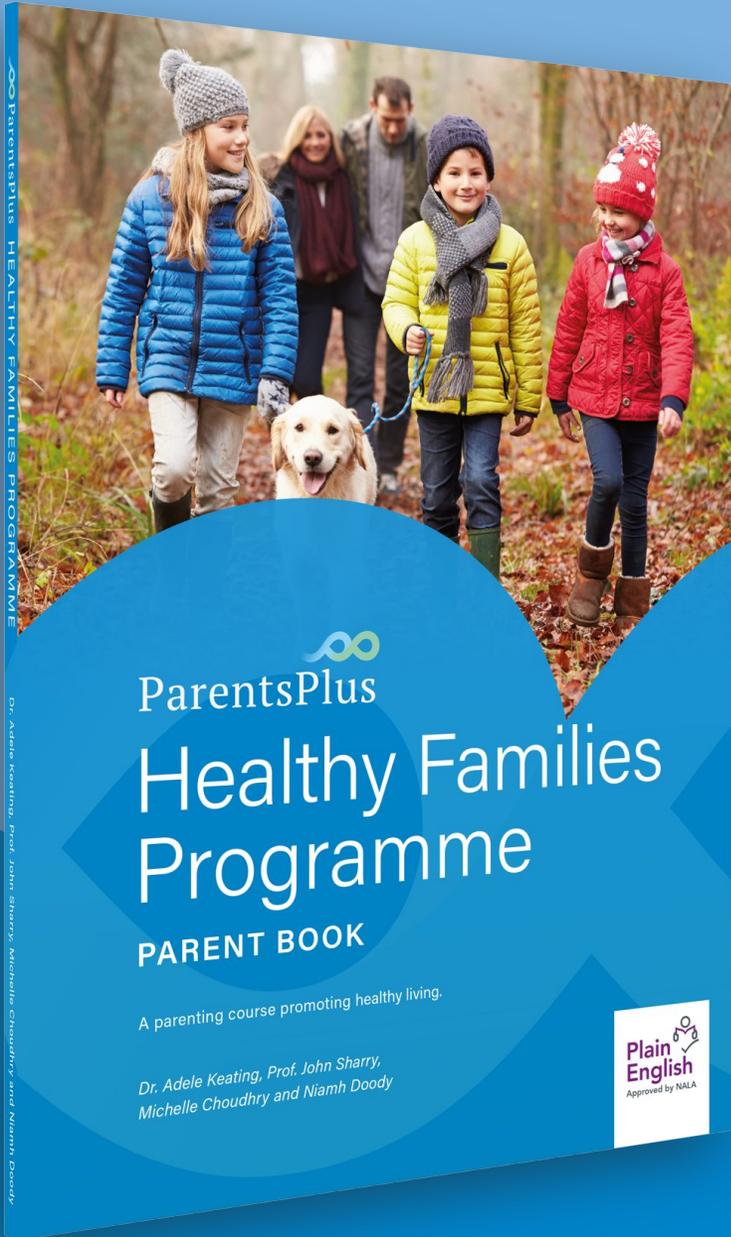
SLEEP

MEDIA USE

ACTIVITY

MENTAL  
HEALTH

FAMILY  
CONNECTION



# Parents Plus Healthy Families Programme

# Healthy families developed with support of ...

**TÚS LA**

An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency



An Roinn Leanaí  
agus Gnóthaí Óige  
Department of Children  
and Youth Affairs



Sláintecare.

**Healthy  
Communities**



**Irish Heart  
Foundation**



**SPECS**

Supporting Parents and  
Early Childhood Services

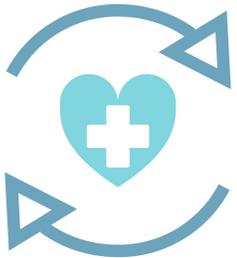


# Healthy Families Content

# Eight Modules

1. Empowering Parents
2. Family Connection
3. Healthy Food Routines
4. Healthy Mealtimes
5. Active Play
6. Managing Technology
7. Restful Sleep
8. Happy, Healthy Mind

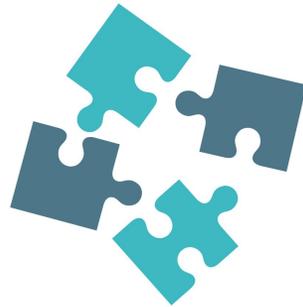
# Structure of the Sessions



Healthy Habits



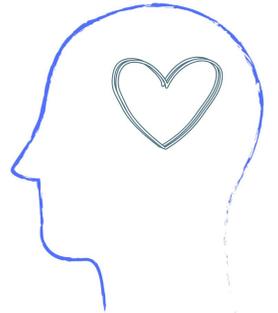
Checklist



Challenges



Establishing  
Routines



Take a Break

# Pilot Study – Qualitative Study

- Participants: 9 parents took part
- Themes:
  - Content of course – Parents liked the broad nature of the course and overall focus on family wellbeing. They felt the content was relevant and topical, especially screentime.
  - Feeling empowered – Parents reported feeling more confident and equipped to manage challenging behaviors when they arise.
  - More connected as family – Making time to eat meals as family and using it as opportunity to talk about their day was a big part of families feeling more connected and content.
  - Prioritising self-care – Taking time to engage in things parents enjoyed (e.g. yoga, walks with friends) meant they felt less short-tempered and communicated better with their children.

# Parent Feedback

## What changes did you make in your home?

- “Spending more 1:1 time with the kids, speaking with them at their level, being more active as a family and completing tasks together, Dinner at the table, less screen time.”
- “Meal Planner, Technology / device / media management plan, taking self care, encouraging children, 4 praises, remove my own devices to let them see that its a good thing. Encouraging them to plan meals.”
- “It helped me to be more patient and to let my daughter lead play and to understand her behaviours.”

Parents Plus Healthy Families Video - Parents Plus! %