



## David Fairlamb

# THE FIT FACTOR

### LIFESTYLE CHANGE

Look to help your own children live a healthier lifestyle, many follow their parents' habits, therefore if you make better choices, surely they will to.

Don't miss David's tips every Saturday in your Journal

**I**MUCH prefer to write articles which are positive and motivational - but sometimes it's important to state pure facts. Unfortunately these numbers are yet again damning, but I feel we all need to know and where possible, do something to help.

New figures show more than 20,000 children are classed as severely obese when they leave primary school. That's nearly twice as many children in year 6, than those those in reception.

The Local Government Association, which represents 370 councils in England and Wales obtained the figures from the national child measurement programme, said it showed children are gaining weight at a drastic rate as they go through school.

Public Health England's own figures from 2017 show that in Newcastle's Blakelaw, Elswick and Westgate's wards show more than 30% of Year 6 pupils are obese.

The NHS-led National Child Measurement Programme found at least 31 children in the North East are potentially 'morbidly obese,' equating to 6% of all the cases

found in England.

To put that in perspective morbidly obese means:

The most extreme forms of obesity, having a body weight high enough to pose a severe risk to health, including chronic diseases such as Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, mental illness and some cancers. This is measured as having a body weight more than twice the optimum. It is indicated more precisely by a 'body mass index' of 40 or over (BMI = the weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in metres).

In years gone by morbid obesity was usually only associated with adults, but to think children as young as 11 lives are at risk due to

their weight, is inconceivable.

The UK's severe child obesity rates are also contributing to a multi-billion pound ill-health time bomb.

The UK is already the most obese nation in Western Europe and councils are calling for reductions in public health grants to be reversed and for further reforms to tackle childhood obesity.

There has to be more action from Jeremy Hunt. I believe he has to introduce health/lifestyle studies into the national curriculum and make it compulsory throughout school. He needs to stand up and openly admit there is a severe obesity problem in the UK rather than running scared, as he seems to be doing.

He is the man that can pull so many people, organisations, food manufacturers, advertising campaigns, public figures, schools, councils etc alongside all the other people who are trying to make a difference, together and tackle this full on. I'm not sure when or what it will take to really get the ball rolling, but let's hope it is sooner rather than later.

*Your child will follow your example, not necessarily your advice*

**Motivational quote**



**> More exercise on schools' curriculums will help fight childhood obesity**

### FITNESS TIP

Make that extra push towards your summer holiday, try to intensify your training. That doesn't mean train for longer or add more sessions, just aim to work harder and gain more from your usual session. It's always easier when you have an incentive.