



David Fairlamb

THE FIT FACTOR

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

In many households it is a challenge to motivate children to exercise rather than spend time on social media. Try a different approach and allow time on social media because they have exercised and make it the norm.

FITNESS TIP

Set your children exercise challenges in exchange for time on social media eg 20-30 min walk/cycle, squats or a plank challenge. Try exercising with them if possible therefore you all feel the benefit.

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

THE North East is one of the worst regions in the country for childhood obesity, new figures have shown, whilst national levels of severe obesity among Year Six children have hit a record high.

Data from the National Child Measurement Programme, overseen by Public Health England, shows 4.2% of 10 and 11-year-olds in England were defined as severely obese last year.

A new study out of the UK suggests that social media can influence children to eat unhealthy food, but not healthy food.

A total of 1,500 young people aged 11-25 were asked to track their moods while using the five most popular social media sites as part of a study by the Royal Society for Public Health.

It suggested that Snapchat and Instagram were the most likely to inspire feelings of inadequacy and anxiety whereas YouTube had the most positive influence.

Seven in 10 said Instagram made them feel worse about body image and half of 14-24 year olds reported Instagram and Facebook enhanced

feelings of anxiety. Two-thirds said Facebook made cyber-bullying worse.

Social media especially for children can trigger serious physical and emotional instability and complications, here are some examples that we all need to be aware of.

Social and emotional complications

■ Low self-esteem and being bullied - Children often tease or bully their overweight peers, who suffer a loss of self-esteem and an increased risk of depression as a result.

■ Behaviour and learning problems - Overweight children tend to have more anxiety and poorer social skills than normal-weight children do. These problems might lead children who are overweight either to act out and disrupt their classrooms or to withdraw socially.

If you become tired, learn to rest, not to quit

Motivational quote

■ Depression - Low self-esteem can create overwhelming feelings of hopelessness, which can lead to depression in some children who are overweight.

Physical complications

■ Type 2 diabetes - This chronic condition affects the way your child's body uses sugar (glucose). Obesity and a sedentary lifestyle increase the risk of type 2 diabetes.

■ Metabolic syndrome - This cluster of conditions can put your child at risk of heart disease, diabetes or other health problems. Conditions include high blood pressure, high blood sugar and excess abdominal fat.

■ High cholesterol and high blood pressure - A poor diet can cause your child to develop one or both of these conditions. These factors can contribute to the buildup of plaques in the arteries, which can cause arteries to narrow and harden, possibly leading to a heart attack or stroke later in life.

■ Asthma - Children who are overweight or obese might be more likely to have asthma.



■ Sleep disorders - Obstructive sleep apnea is a potentially serious disorder in which a child's breathing stops and starts during sleep.

■ Bone fractures. Obese children are more likely to break bones than are children of normal weight.

The link between social media, obesity and emotional instability is there to be seen and has been proven to cause unhappiness leading to

the development of mental health issues such as anxiety or depression.

It is hugely important that you take an interest and monitor where possible (there are plenty of apps available) your children's time and movements on social media. Even better, try to have conversations about social media and work together to improve the physical and mental impact social media can have.