**No Obesity and Family No Obesity**

*Two apps to support families to make healthier lifestyle choices*

Authors: Denyse King, Alison Potter, Em Rahman

---

**Aim**

To change service users’ attitudes in relation to the importance of a healthy weight and lifestyle, and change health workers’ attitude towards supporting clients with behavioural modification related to weight and lifestyle.

---

**Objective**

To enhance and support the knowledge and skills of health professionals and families in preventing obesity and overweight of children thus facilitating them with the optimisation of their own wellbeing.

---

**Research**

A series of online focus groups were undertaken with service users and professionals to understand the key challenges and issues respondents came across when trying to prevent/manage obesity. These findings were developed into personas which were used in the design day to develop the solution to the problem. Key themes from the focus groups were:

- **Empowering** – the solution needs to recognise the experiences people bring and therefore the tools need to be empowering in supporting families to address obesity.
- **Parenting Tips** – to address challenges with encouraging positive health behaviours with children.
- **Responding to Barriers** – from parent/carers who are being supported by health professionals.
- **Obesity isn’t a Quick Fix** – recognising that sustained behaviour change takes time and support to overcoming barriers is vital.
- **Healthy Snacks and Activities** – provide easy alternatives to unhealthy snacks.
- **Portion Size** – Understanding that portion size is important in addition to eating healthily.

---

**Lessons learned**

- Research findings showed that ‘one-size-fits-all’ health advice simply doesn’t work for most families.
- Families are keen to make changes to their health and lifestyle but simply don’t understand how to break the cycle they are in.
- Families want tailored advice that points them in the right direction to making their own behaviour change choices, and offers support on their journey.
- Health workers feel anxious about having conversations about overweight and obesity.
- Health workers want support to learn more about how to help families with making health and lifestyle changes.
- Health workers want tools to reduce their overweight/obesity workload.

---

**The solution**

After research into what families and health professionals wanted in relation to support around reducing obesity, the following tools have been developed:

**Family focused tool**

- Families are able to set health goals
- Identify potential barriers
- Develop strategies to overcome them
- Record progress towards goals
- Access parenting tips
- Play games
- Follow useful links
- Earn points and awards

Families are encouraged to link accounts to healthcare professional accounts (see below).

**Professional focused tool**

- Helps healthcare professionals provide tailored advice to families
- Healthcare workers can see goals, barriers, strategies, progress, points and awards of families they are linked with
- Includes the Wessex MECC-based guidance on how to best support families
- How to handle common objections
- Games
- And provides links to additional learning for each role.

---

**Project Design**

It was very important to us that patients and the public were engaged in the development of the apps.

- Insights from patients and the public about the challenges and issues surrounding reducing obesity were invited through focus groups.
- These insights were the foundation for a creative design day where behaviour specialists, educationalists, childhood obesity specialists and public health experts developed a robust, person-centred solution.
- Solutions were tested with service users and their feedback informed the final structure and functions of the apps.
- The content was then written by topic experts and reviewed by service users and professionals before moving to digital production.
- A Project Collaborative provided the governance, steer and topic expertise to the overall project.
- The model below demonstrates how the two apps were developed using a person-centred approach.

---

**Measuring Quality Improvement**

The Apps aim to address the following hypotheses:

1. Families with a connection to one or more professionals in the app make more progress towards goals than those who don’t.
2. Families with a connection to one or more professionals in the app are more able to overcome barriers to leading healthier lives.

---