Childhood obesity in Scotland

The [UK is the most overweight country in all of Europe](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-41953530) with 63% of adults being overweight or worse. With recent research showing that once you gain weight it is hard to lose it as your body resets its natural target weight (<http://time.com/4793832/the-weight-loss-trap/>). So it is important for long term health that we address childhood obesity to catch this problem early. In the UK 1 in 10 children (aged 5 to 19 years old) is obese. This is three time the level found in other European country’s such as Norway (<https://www.fhi.no/en/studies/child-growth-study/funn/proportion-overweight/>).

So How dose Scotland compare? Let’s look at the data gathered over the last decade for Scottish Primary 1 children (typically 5 years old) at the start of there first school year.(<http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Child-Health/Child-Weight-and-Growth/>).

The good news is that in contrast to the 63% of adults that are overweight in 2015 this is only 15% for Primary 1 children. This is split into 9% overweight and 6% obese or worse.

The level of Primary 1 children being obese or severally has remained relatively stable over the last 10 years ranging between 5% and 6% even though the number of Primary 1 children has doubled over that time.

No reduction in the last 10 years

Concerns over obesity since early 1970

Over the last decades Obsity has spread from the urban central belt of Scotland to the wider rural regions

The rate is of obesity in children is most strongly correlated with economic background. Since the economic crash of 2008 the gap between rich and poor has gotten even wider, with the most deprive seeing a 12% increase in obesity while the most well off have seen a 19% reduction.

In 2015 children from the most deprived children are 3 times more likely to be obese than the most well off.