



**Craig Whittaker MP**

**CALDER VALLEY**

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## **Childhood Obesity Strategy**

Thank you for contacting me about the Government's plan to tackle childhood obesity.

With nearly a third of children aged two to fifteen overweight or obese, I agree that this is an important issue to tackle.

I am delighted that the Government has launched a far-reaching plan to curb childhood obesity, which urges industry to cut the amount of sugar in food and drinks while investing millions of pounds into school sport. The Government are confident that this strategy will reduce childhood obesity rates by around a fifth over the next ten years, and I hope you are encouraged by their efforts.

Sugary drinks are the single biggest source of sugar for children. To help combat this, the new plan will see the food and drinks industry working towards a 20 per cent reduction in the sugar used in products popular with children, including a five per cent reduction in year one. This can be done through cutting sugar levels, making portions smaller or encouraging the uptake of lower sugar alternatives.

This will sit alongside the new Soft Drinks Industry Levy, which is designed to encourage soft drink producers and importers to reduce the amount of sugar in their products and to move consumers towards healthier alternatives. The money raised from the forthcoming levy will be invested in programmes to reduce obesity and encourage physical activity and balanced diets for school children.

There is a total ban on the advertising of less healthy food during children's television programmes, on dedicated children's broadcast channels and in programmes deemed to be "of particular appeal" to children under the age of 16. The rules also contain restrictions on advertising content for both broadcast and non-broadcast media, for example promotional offers may not be used in less healthy food TV adverts targeted at pre-school or primary school aged children.

The Government is absolutely committed to reducing childhood obesity and one of the best ways to do this is to boost sports in schools. That is why the plan also asks primary schools to help every pupil get at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity a day.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP