

UK Health Forum Comment
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For immediate release

UK Health Forum welcomes chapter 2 of Childhood obesity: A plan for action

UKHF is pleased to welcome the bold and ambitious Chapter 2 of the Childhood Obesity Plan. In a signal that the government is serious about tackling the high levels of childhood obesity in England, the plan includes a number of significant commitments including:

- A 9pm watershed on TV advertising of unhealthy products high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) to limit children's exposure
- A ban on price promotions, such as buy one get one free and multi-buy offers on unhealthy foods and drinks in the retail sector through legislation
- A ban on the promotion of unhealthy food and drink by location (at checkouts, the end of aisles and store entrances) in the retail sector through legislation
- A commitment to consider further use of the tax system to promote healthy food if the voluntary sugar reduction programme does not deliver sufficient progress
- Legislation to mandate consistent calorie labelling for the out of home sector (e.g. restaurants, cafes and takeaways) in England.

The government has promised to consult on the new legislative proposals by the end of 2018. Commenting on the report, Dr Modi Mwatsama, Director of Policy and Registered Nutritionist at the UK Health Forum said:

"We are pleased to see the government commit to adopting many of the effective and evidence-based legislative and fiscal measures we have long been calling for.

It is clear that the voluntary efforts to reformulate and limit exposure to HFSS food marketing have not worked. In May, we saw how companies failed to meet the government's year one voluntary sugar reformulation targets, while exceeding expectations in products that were subject to regulation under the soft drinks industry levy.

The government now needs to follow-through with its commitment to consult and introduce the promised legislation as soon as possible.

Over one in three children are overweight or obese. This is significantly affecting their health and wellbeing and we owe it to our children to take it seriously.

Ends.

Notes to editors:

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1. Childhood obesity: A plan for action. Chapter 2 is available here:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718903/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action-chapter-2.pdf
2. The UK Health Forum (UKHF) is a charitable alliance of professional and public interest organisations working to reduce the risk of avoidable non-communicable diseases by developing evidence-based public health policy and supporting its implementation through advocacy and information provision. For more information visit: www.ukhealthforum.org.uk