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# Childhood Obesity And Its Affect On Society

## Effects on the wider society

Early Childhood services are affected by this nutritional issue as they are responsible for the care of the obese child. Because the child has limited mobility (unlike the other pupils who will exercise and play outside), it is the responsibility of the ECE service provider to adapt a curriculum that still educates and stimulates developmental growth within the child. This adapted programme takes time to create and requires special care. This could impact the amount of attention the other students will be given or the perhaps the extent to which they are allowed to play outside. Early Childhood services that provide nutritional lunches throughout the day will be expected to alter their menu in a more healthy manner in order to decrease the childhood obesity rate, based on "The Childhood Obesity Plan." This could also lead to the promotion of physical activity but also extensive first aid courses to prepare teachers for potential health complications.

Often the severity of this health issue affects whether or not the child has the ability to attend school. Leaving gaps in their learning, education and development. The potential disadvantage of their schooling career could limit their future employment which in turn affects the economy and the unemployment rate, continuing a cycle of impoverished areas based on ethnicity (Maori and Pacific) of which the 'epidemic' is of more severity. Unemployed individuals in New Zealand earn the 'dole' (government subsidy) which is a small monetary benefit allowance paid by the government, and the citizens who pay taxes, to support them financially. The amount however, is not enough to live off of due to high New Zealand housing expenses nor is it enough to contribute to a healthy diet that will decrease the obesity rate. This unemployment can extend to families due to their responsibility of caregiving of their young obese children and their limited productivity (that could potentially result in further unemployment) and in turn affects the income of a business, a business that pays revenue tax to the government of which is a main source of income. Directly affecting the economy. If the income of the state is reduced, this could affect the quality of other governmental based organisations and facilities such as health care.

The economy will continuously be impacted due to the often free distribution of health services for the New Zealand public (especially children with "Well Child/ Tamariki Ora") and the increased amount this service is used based on the ever increasing obesity rate and the often life threatening health complications that come with it. "Healthcare costs of overweight and obesity-related conditions was estimated at \$624 million in 2006, or 4.4 percent of all health spending." This, however, is inclusive of adult obesity.

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Another surprising factor of society that will be impacted is the use of “public transport” due seat sizes of “Bay Buses” in New Zealand being fitted according to individuals who have a body mass index below 25/30, those who do not fit this category will need specially manufactured seating to ensure they have opportunity to use the governmental facilities and become mobil(a need). However, this causes a large mass within the vehicle, affecting “payload” based on the “fuel” consumption and use because of added weight of morbidly obese children. This affects the natural environment based on the use of fuel emissions that create local air pollution and “global greenhouse gases.”

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