

Tackling childhood obesity

The project

The research study is a trial to assess whether a programme of activities targeting diet and physical activity behaviours of children through the school environment can prevent the increasing trend in childhood obesity. The intervention package includes training primary school teachers to provide an extra 30 minutes of physical activity opportunities daily for pupils and a programme in collaboration with Aston Villa football club. There will also be healthy cooking workshops for children with their parents.

What did the research set out to achieve?

The WAVES study is a randomised controlled trial in the West Midlands, funded by the National Institute of Health Research Health Technology Assessment programme. It aims to assess the clinical and cost effectiveness of a programme of activities to encourage healthy lifestyle choices among children aged 6-7. The comprehensive programme targets both children and parents to encourage both healthy eating and physical activity with the aim of maintaining a healthy weight.

What impact will it have on the Olympics, sports industry or society?

The Olympics is impacting on the physical activity agenda in schools, and we will be able to assess whether it has influenced schools taking on this element of our intervention.

The research team

The research team are based at the University of Birmingham, including those with expertise in public health, child health, epidemiology, nutrition, sport and exercise sciences and psychology. The project involves training of primary school teachers to deliver some aspects of the programme.