



LET'S TALK ABOUT WEIGHT

A step-by-step guide to conversations about weight management with children and families for health and care professionals

ASK



"Would it be okay to check [insert name of child]'s height and weight today?"

If received NCMP feedback:

"Would you like to talk about the feedback in the letter?"

Weigh and measure the child

Plot the child's height and weight on a RCPCH UK Growth Chart and determine BMI centile

ADVISE



"The chart shows that [insert name of child] is above the healthy weight range for a boy/girl of their height and age."

"We know from working with other families, one thing they have found useful to help them to make lifestyle changes is support from others, and there are fun, free/low-cost, healthy lifestyle programmes available. I can refer you now if you are willing to give it a go?"

Consider referral options:

See supporting guidance for referral criteria

Considerations:

Use a growth chart to visually demonstrate that the child's weight is outside the healthy weight range

Focus on terms such as 'healthier weight status' and 'healthier lifestyle'

Use terms such as 'very overweight' to describe children \geq 98th centile rather than 'obese'

Inform the family about what the service offers and be clear about the service aim

ASSIST

Parent/carer receives advice and offer of referral **positively**

- let the family know what the next steps are
- reassure the family that you are there to help them. Suggest a follow up appointment to monitor the family and provide help and encouragement

Parent/carer does **not perceive** that their child has excess weight

- acknowledge the difficulties in recognising excess weight
- reassure the family that support is available; acknowledge that this is a difficult decision. Explain what the family could expect from the service and re-offer referral

Parent/carer is visibly upset or angry and **does not want to engage** in conversation about their child's weight

- show acceptance of the parent or carer's wishes, reassure them that you are there to help and re-offer your support should they change their mind
- don't force the issue but leave the door open

ACTIONS

1

Make the referral if the family accepts the offer

2

Note in the child's records any conversations about weight and outcomes

3

Remember to follow up with the family