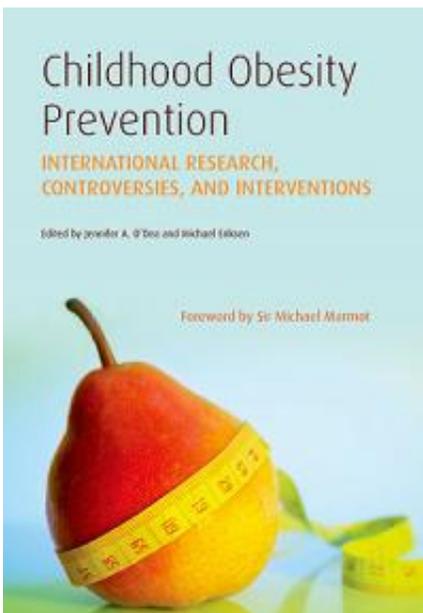


Childhood obesity best tackled via social strategies, claims new book

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Associate Professor Jennifer O'Dea: "The new book examines the controversy in childhood obesity."

(PhysOrg.com) -- A new book by the University of Sydney's Associate Professor Jennifer O'Dea puts forward the case to tackle and treat childhood obesity by targeting socially disadvantaged children, long before they become obese adults.

Childhood [obesity prevention](#): international research, controversies and interventions brings together the most up-to-date research and

experience of the world's most highly regarded [childhood obesity](#) researchers, practitioners and theorists.

The foreword is provided by Professor Sir Michael Marmot, a leading worldwide authority in the social determinants of health.

A new focus of the book is that both the prevalence and prevention of childhood obesity are covered, with international chapters examining the importance of factors such as social class and ethnic differences, and global and local trends.

Associate Professor O'Dea said it was important to think laterally on this issue: "The new book examines the controversy in childhood obesity, including the link with poverty and the difficulty of addressing obesity whilst also tackling the issue of eating disorders.

"In Australia, the USA and several other developed countries, obesity clusters in disadvantaged communities, but in developing countries such as China, Vietnam and South Africa, the opposite is occurring. These socio-economic trends obviously lend themselves to improving the social determinants of child health to reduce obesity," she said.

"The success or failure of obesity interventions will be determined by the speed at which governments can modify the social determinants of young people's health via education, income, employment, a sense of belonging, access to healthy foods and safe physical environments, rather than blaming the child and his or her parents," she said.

"Approaches to prevention are presented, and the book concludes with the successful outcome of various interventions, demonstrating how the whole school and community can collaborate to promote health among young people."

Provided by University of Sydney

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