EPODE

Ensemble Prévenons l’Obésité Des Enfants
‘Together let’s prevent childhood obesity’

Denis RICHARD, Director of Research
Quebec Heart & Lung Institute
To know more about EPODE

Case Report

EPODE approach for childhood obesity prevention: methods, progress and international development

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Obesity Prevention

Characterizing the EPODE logic model: unravelling the past and informing the future

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Obesity Reviews, 2011

Obesity Reviews, 2013
What is EPODE?

“a large-scale, coordinated, capacity-building approach for communities to implement effective and sustainable strategies to prevent childhood obesity.”
EPODE origin and evolution

- 2004: EPODE official debut in 10 French municipalities;
- 2008: creation of the European EPODE Network (EEN);
- 2011: launching of the EPODE international Network EIN.

![Graph showing the Fleurbaix Laventie Ville Santé (FLVS) pilot study](image)

EPODE is now implemented in more than 700 communities in 10 countries across the globe

- France (EPODE)
- Spain (THAO)
- Belgium (VIASANO)
- The Netherlands (JOGG)
- Greece (PAIDEIATROFI)
- Romania (SETS)
- Australia (OPAL)
- Mexico (5 PASOS)
- Inspiring many more programmes in countries including Scotland, Iceland and Portugal
EPODE Methodology

EPODE’s goal is to enable community stakeholders to implement effective and sustainable strategies to promote healthy life habits in order to combat childhood obesity.

EPODE is a coordinated, capacity-building approach for communities.

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van Koperen, TM et al, Obesity Reviews, 2013
EPODE organisation

- Mayor, Elected Representatives
- Local Steering Committee
- Schools
- Health Professionals
- Infancy Professionals
- Local Associations
- Local Project Manager
- Companies
- Media
- Social Marketing approach
- Independent Scientific Committee
- Institutional Support
- Private Partners (Sponsors, NGOs...)

Environment of families

Micro-changes

Local stakeholders
EPODE is a multistakeholder approach

The whole aim is to have childhood obesity reduced by local environments, childhood settings and family norms all being strongly supportive of children enjoying healthy eating, active play and recreation.
EPODE Methodology Four Pillars

- **Political commitment** at multiple levels;
- **Resources** to fund the central and local organizations;
- **Support services** for community practitioners and leaders;
- **Evidence** from a wide variety of sources to evaluate process, impact and outcomes of the EPODE approach.
1. Each country (or region) commits to a central coordination support/capacity;

2. Each local community has a formal political commitment for several years from the outset;

3. Each local community has a dedicated local project manager with sufficient capacity and cross-sectoral mandate for action;

4. A multistakeholder approach is integral to the central and local structures and processes;

5. An approach to action is planned and coordinated using social marketing. This is specifically to define a series of themed messages and actions, informed by evidence, from a wide variety of sources, and in line with official recommendations;
6. Local stakeholders are involved in the planning processes and are trusted with sufficient flexibility to adapt actions to local context;

7. The ‘right message’ is defined for the whole community. However, getting the message ‘right’ means tailoring for different stakeholders and audiences;

8. Messages and actions are solution oriented and designed to motivate positive changes and not to stigmatize any culture or behaviours;

9. Strategies and support services are designed to be sustainable and backed by policies and environmental changes;

10. Evaluation and monitoring are implemented at various levels. This is achieved through the collection of information on process, output and outcome indicators, and informs the future development of the programme.
EPODE works through **concreted actions** targeting local families and stakeholders and aimed at changing **behaviour** in order to promote a **healthier lifestyle** and to help reduce childhood overweight and obesity.

Example: ‘Let’s meet with the fruit campaign’ (France 2009-2010)
‘Let’s meet with the fruit’
(France 2009-2010)

“fruit tasting in market places, walking trails with fruit tasting stops with local producers, afternoon fruit snack distribution in schools, fruit taste education workshops in pre-schools, fruit consumption favoured during a town’s events (e.g. sports meetings and receptions) and distribution of materials to families (e.g. storybooks, recipes, magnets, etc.). Actions can similarly be built continuously or by recurring events that provide the opportunity to promote fruit consumption (e.g. tasting and cooking workshops with families in social centres, breakfast events in schools, open days of local producers and farms, annual EPODE week of local associations for nutrition and physical activity, etc.)”
In a campaign the "right message" is defined for the whole community but getting the "message right" means tailoring for different stakeholders.
# EPODE Tools (examples)

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EPODE Monitoring and Evaluation

- To find the optimal balance between scientific standards and feasibility on the field;

- To fit to the diversity of local settings and projects — various levels of achievement of monitoring activities at local level can be measured qualitatively (minimum, optimum, maximum);

- To harmonize the process of monitoring across EPODE towns and countries.
Important to monitor childhood overweight and obesity prevalence data in EPODE programmes

- Key driver for politicians
- Foster mobilization of stakeholders (national and local level)
- Ensure good media coverage of the programme highlighting the efforts and activities carried out
- Facilitate the tailoring process of the interventions towards targeted population

BMI index is preferred to other adiposity markers in children

- Well recognized and enable international comparisons
Evolution of the prevalence of children overweight in VIASANO towns /control towns

- Control Towns
- Marche + Mouscron

22 % decrease in VISIANO towns
EPODE International Network (EIN)
EPODE International Network is a Non-Governmental Organization

- **Members:** existing and new community based programmes for the prevention of childhood obesity
- **Mission:** to support community-based programmes (CBPs) aimed at reducing childhood obesity prevalence through sustainable strategies
- **Overall objective:** build international capacity and capability for CBPs
- **Capacities:** All tools for sharing experience and best practices
Organisation: Coordination & Supporting Platforms

The Programme members are gathered for sharing experience, best practices and tools for the continuous improvement through the support of the EPODE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK Board of Directors, Coordination Unit and the 3 Supporting platforms:

- A Scientific Platform, to provide scientific guidance for the implementation and evaluation processes;

- A Ministers’ Club, to raise awareness on the obesity issue and to advocate for a strong and sustainable political involvement in the development of CBPs around the world;

- A Public-Private Partnership Platform, to stimulate multistakeholder, concerted and coordinated partnerships supporting the implementation of CBPs around the world.
In 2012, 25 programmes in 17 countries.
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