



The IDEFICS Community Intervention to Tackle Childhood Obesity

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- on behalf of the I.Family consortium -



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Two main research topics in IDEFICS

- To study the **aetiology (causes)** of overweight and obesity in children
- To develop, implement and evaluate a community-based **intervention program** for the prevention of overweight in children



Timeline of IDEFICS and I.Family



Survey 1
+16,000 children

Survey 2
~13,500 children



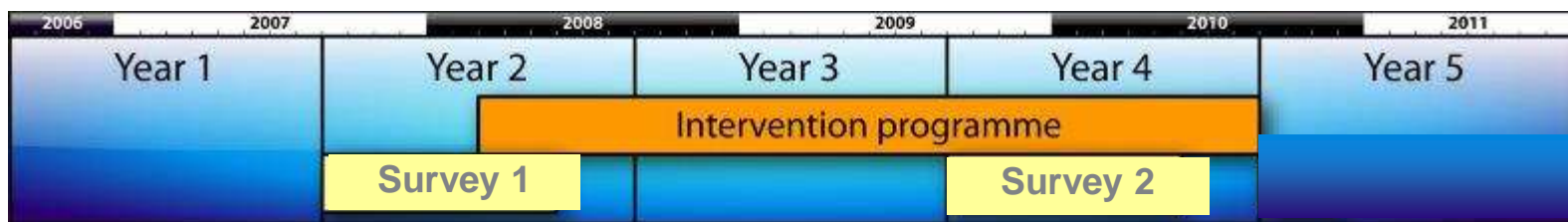
Study population

- In eight **countries**
 - one control area
 - one intervention area

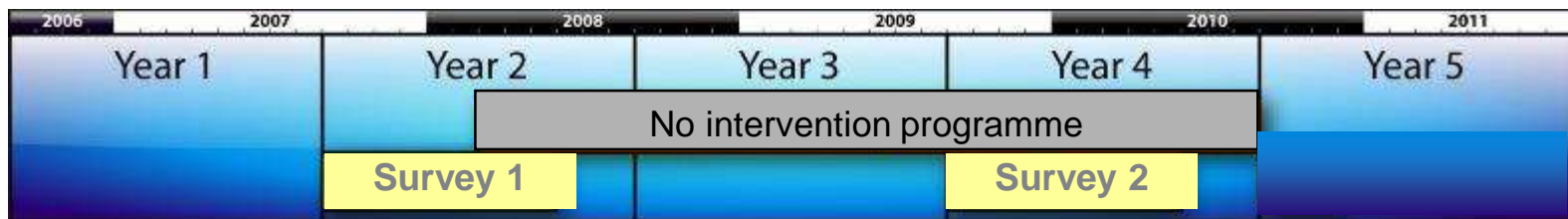
- In each **area**
 - 1,000 children
 - Aged 2-9 years

Timeline of surveys and intervention

Intervention areas



Control areas



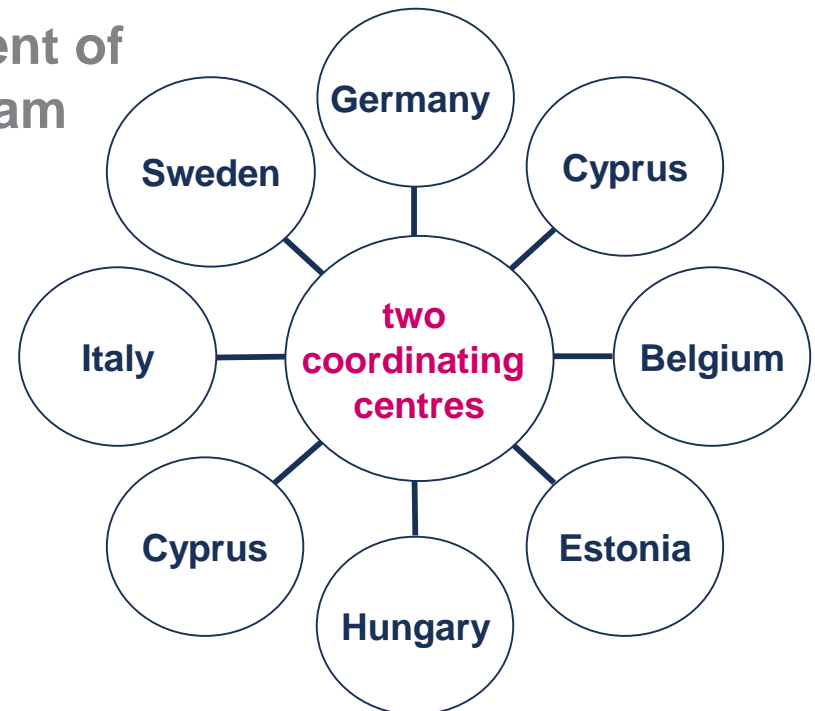
+16,000 children

~13,500 children

IDEFICS – common research protocol

Important features

- Theory- and evidence-based
- Intervention mapping framework
- Informed by focus group research
- Central development of intervention program



Intervention design – key messages

Diet

Stimulating the daily consumption of water



Stimulating daily consumption of fruit and vegetables



Physical activity

Reduce TV viewing



Stimulating daily physical activity



Stress and relaxation

Spend more time together



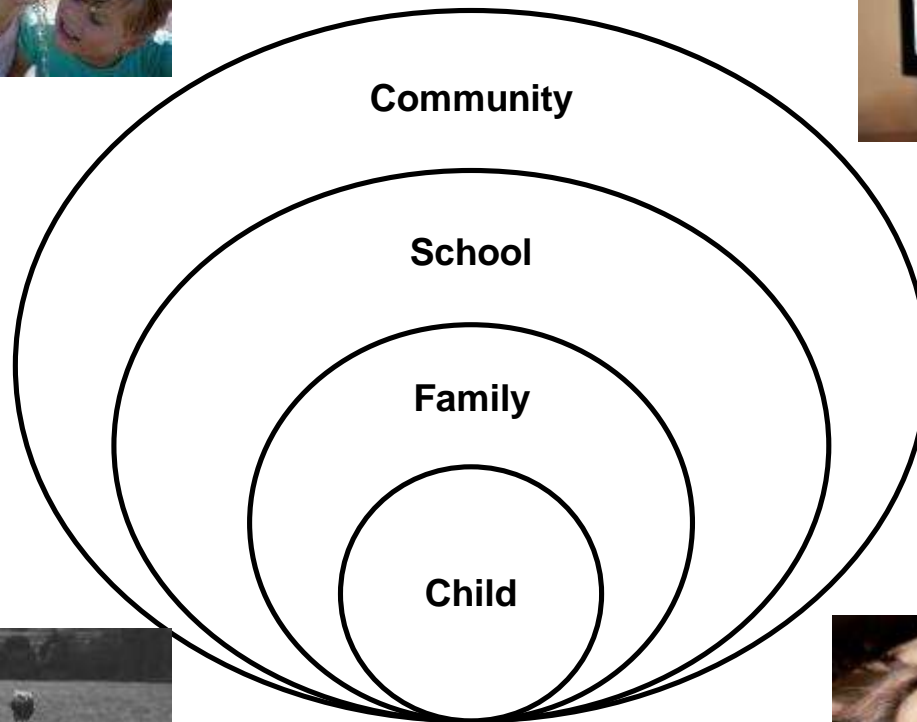
Stimulating adequate sleep duration



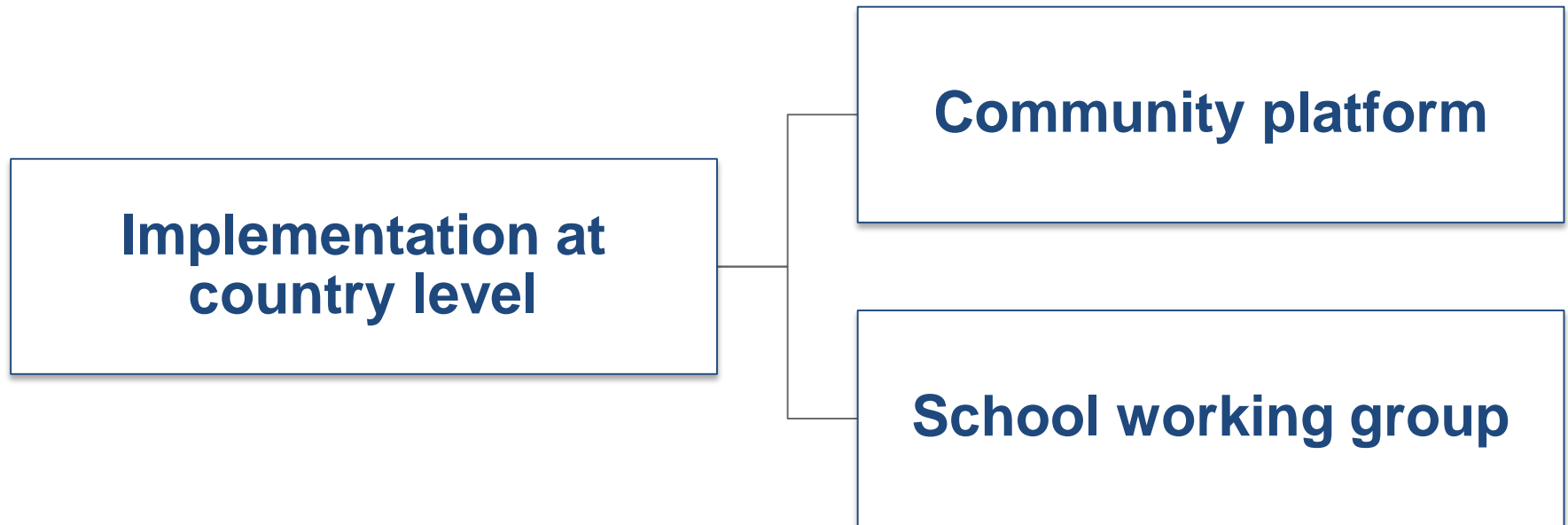


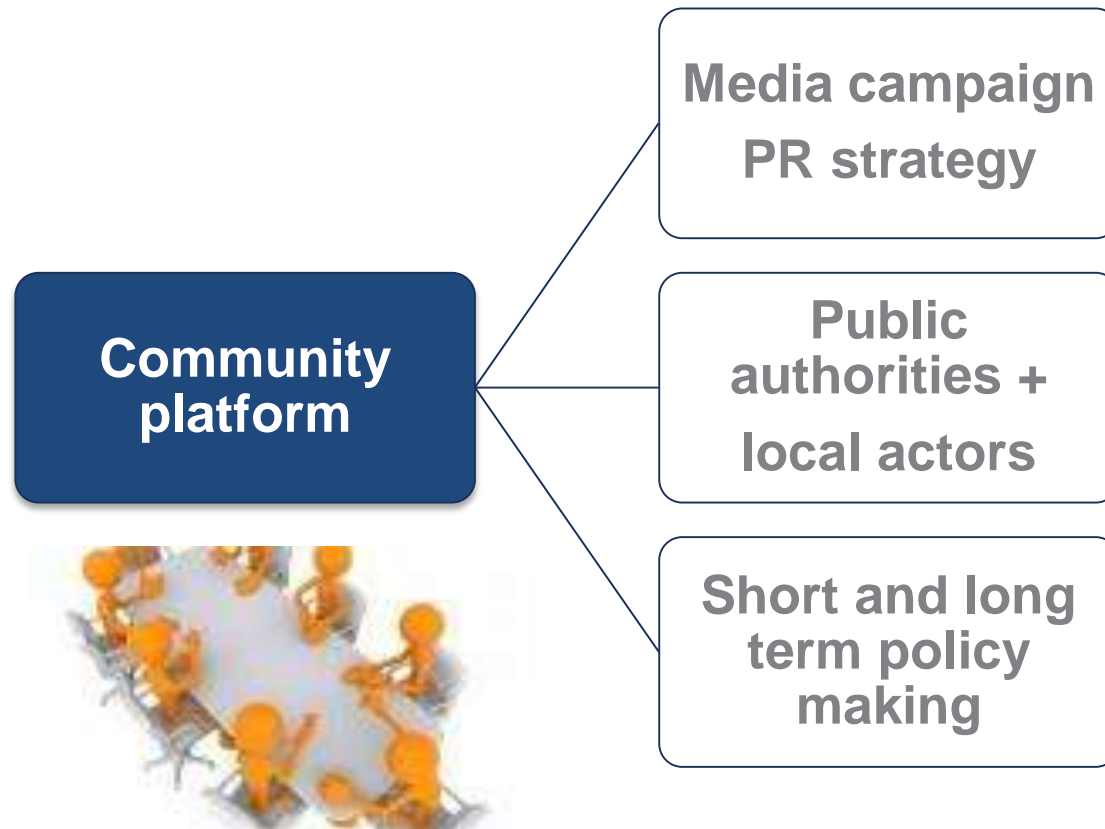
Theoretical framework

Socio-ecological approach



Overall implementation





Fruit



and vegetable

colour your life,

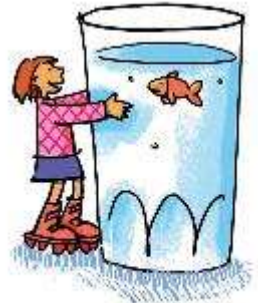


enjoy them together!

Increase
the consumption of
fruit and vegetable
and spend more time
together.



Water and physical

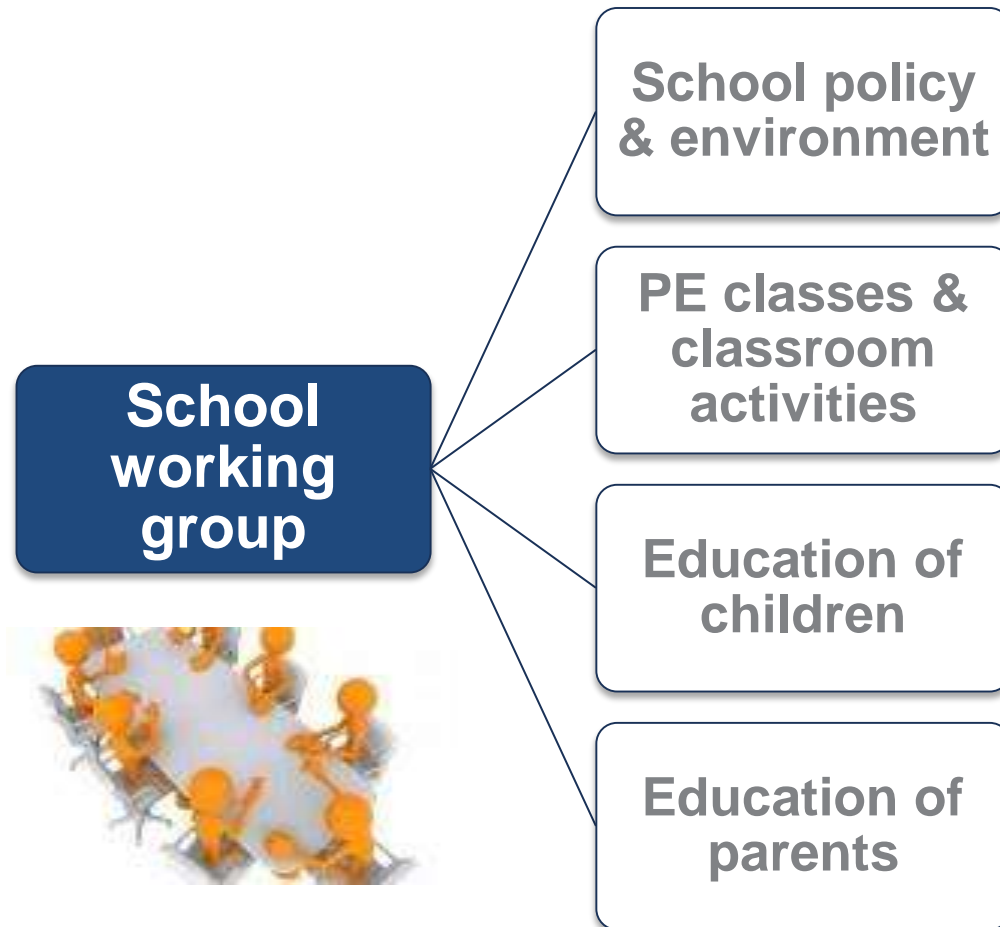


activity is cool!



Increase
the consumption
of water
and daily physical
activity.





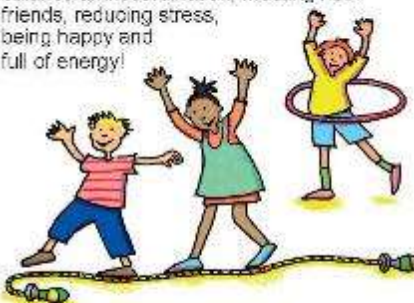
Did you know that

Preschool children need at least 2 hours of physical activity during the day?
Primary school children should be at least 1 hour physically active during the day?
This means activities which cause an increase in heart rate and breathing and includes a leisurely bike ride, active play in the backyard, swimming or playing football.



Why is being active so important?

Being active, in combination with healthy eating is a great way for kids to become and stay healthy. Just some of many other benefits are: developing strong bones, muscles and lungs, developing flexibility, balance and coordination, meeting new friends, reducing stress, being happy and full of energy!



The IDEFICS project provides 6 folders promoting a healthy environment for childhood and adolescent development:
Refresh your child with water!
Enjoy family time instead of media time!
Help your child to get enough sleep!
Fruits vegetables taste delicious!
Encourage your child to be more active!
These folders and other materials can also be downloaded from the website www.ideficstudy.eu
2008 © Published by Prof. Wolfgang Ahrens, BIPS.

Encourage your child to be more active!



www.ideficstudy.eu
learning healthy living
Bremer Institut für Präventionsforschung und Sozialmedizin BIPS Linzer Str.10, D 28359 Bremen

5 tips to have your kids to be more active and to live a more healthy lifestyle



1. You can spend time together with your child and be an active parent

If your kids see you enjoying physical activity and having fun, it will motivate them to be more active: you can play outdoor, go to the swimming pool, bike ride together, ...



2. You and your child can try to be active any way you can

Kids love it when mum and dad join in their games but you can also try to fit some physical activities into daily life: you can walk or bicycle with your kids to and from school or the local shop and you can encourage your kids to help you with household chores such as walking the dog or washing the car.



3. You can stimulate and support your child to be active

You can stimulate your kids to be active through encouraging and supporting them to take part in organized sport(s), after school clubs, youth movement or just by playing outdoor games with friends or family members.



4. You can reduce inactive leisure time and replace it by active alternatives

Instead of watching television, playing video games or surfing the net, you can provide your kids attractive opportunities to be active: playing together, a "backyard kit" containing activity related equipment such as a ball, frisbee, skipping rope, ...



5. You can support and encourage your child's active choices

Some kids like team sports but other kids prefer less structured activities like bike riding. Whatever their choice, you can praise them for their efforts. If your kids have done a good job, such as cleaning up their toys, you can reward them with amusing activities, e.g. going for a swim.



Results

- Children adhering to more **key messages** at the start of the project were less likely to develop overweight
- Effects of the intervention on behaviour (physical activity, diet and sleep), body composition and markers of healthy aging were **overall very weak**
- Parents and families **often did not notice or remember** the messages from the intervention

Results: also some positive findings

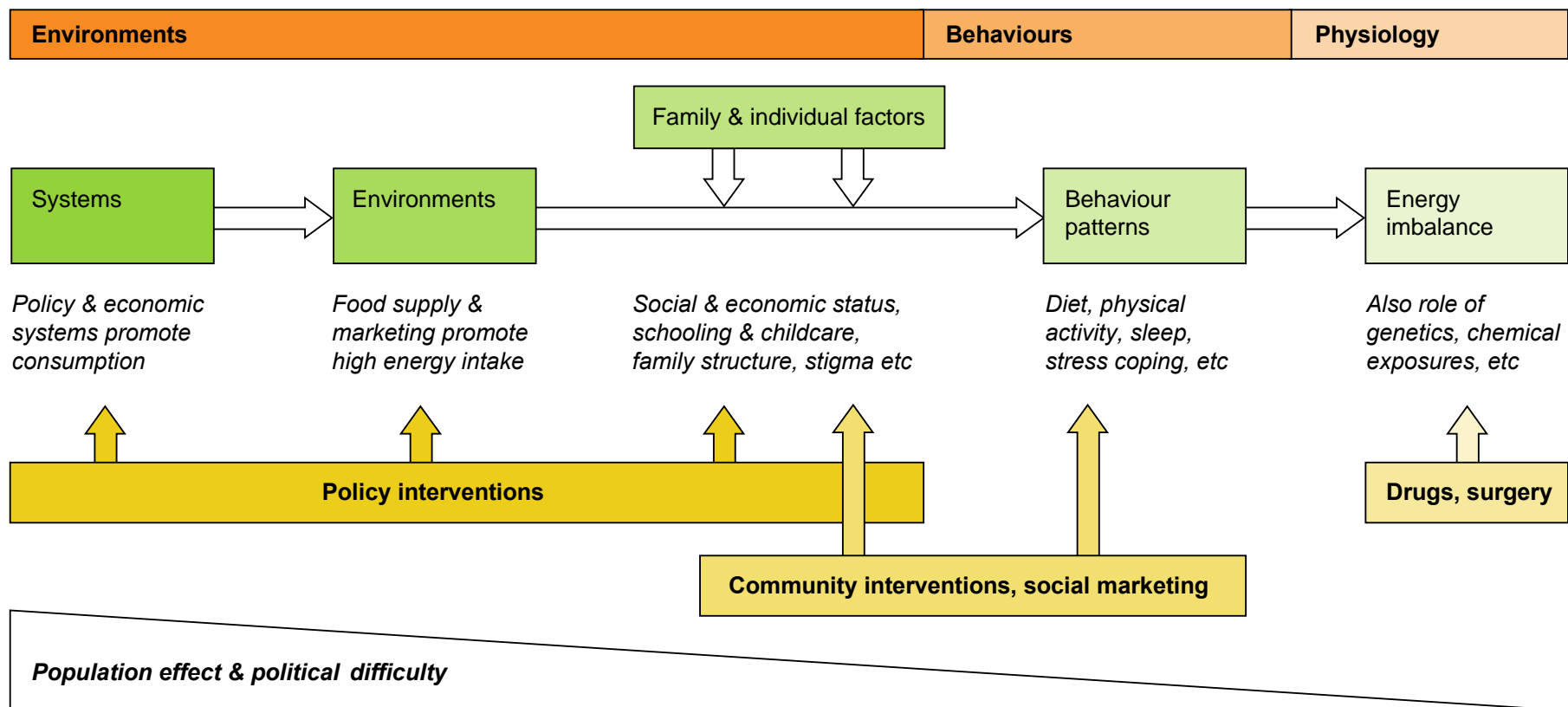
- Parents and children in the intervention areas were less likely to consume **sugared foods and drinks**
- Children who were **already obese** on the first survey were more likely to lose weight if living in the intervention areas (as compared to the control areas)
- **Schools with higher implementation score** were more successful in supporting positive lifestyle change
- Some **community achievements** with highly positive perceptions can serve as “good practice” examples



How to explain the outcomes?

- Need for exploratory steps in the target community *prior* to the intervention?
- Need longer intervention period?
- Need to start earlier in life?
- Causal models to explain body fat changes too simple?
- Current leading thinking calls for efforts to understand the broader complexity and interactions of factors operating at the community level and at the “systems” level

Interventions and the causes of obesity



Adapted from: Swinburn et al. The global obesity pandemic: shaped by global drivers and local environments. Lancet. 2011; 378: 804-14



Thank you!

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