



Sleep

In the children studied in I.Family, only one-third of children and adolescents met the recommended sleep guidelines issued by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. There was no difference between boys and girls. The children who met the guidelines had healthier diets, eating for example more vegetables.



Environment

Well-designed public open spaces and safe and well-connected facilities for walking and cycling are key to increasing physical activity. Urban planning and public health need to collaborate to identify suitable interventions targeting vulnerable populations, as changing the built environment in deprived areas can play a role in reducing health inequalities.



Physical activity

I.Family Study provides the strongest evidence to date that large numbers of young people across Europe have less chance of achieving the known health benefits of physical activity because of their age, gender, where they live or the household in which they live. The older the children, the less active they are, with girls being less active than boys irrespective of age.



Family time

I.Family has shown that family members resemble one another in terms of diet and obesity-related traits. Interventions aimed at reducing obesity and improving diet quality may be more effective when targeting the entire family rather than individuals. Such family interventions are likely to be most successful when promoting healthier diets (rather than discouraging less healthy diets) and when they target families with younger children.



Brain

Children are more sensitive to visual cues of unhealthy food than adults. Overweight children are especially vulnerable, since they have less inhibitory activation in response to unhealthy foods. This has important implications for the regulation of marketing since children are actively targeted by unhealthy food marketing, with overweight children the most susceptible.



Screen time

The internet has become a way of life, impacting as is increasingly reported on both the mental and physical well-being of young people. In those studied in I.Family, adolescent males who use the internet for more than 3 hours a day have lower well-being scores including emotional well-being and family relationships as well as females who additionally have lower self-esteem scores. Physical indices are also affected; females who use the internet for more than 3 hours/day have higher waist circumference, BMI, body fat while males have higher triglyceride levels.

Visit *I.Family Study* for further information including the latest publications from the project.

I.Family Study – helping to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

Many factors are at play today that make it more difficult to choose the foods and lifestyles that will help maintain health and well-being for longer:

The built environment, social conditions, economic pressures and family lifestyles have changed enormously over recent decades. Often both parents are working and the time spent together with their children is limited. Home cooked meals from local ingredients made according to traditional recipes are replaced by fast, ready-made meals using potentially cheaper foods.

Action is clearly needed, but the truth is there is no simple solution to this problem. There are complex factors at play and the interplay between them is often tricky to unravel.

The inter-disciplinary research of the **I.Family Study** has helped to unravel these factors and therefore support policy development at European, national and local levels, enabling more families to make healthier choices.

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