

# press release

## **Novo Nordisk launches new initiative to prevent childhood obesity in disadvantaged urban communities**

- The initiative will launch in six cities across five continents
- Interventions aim to increase physical activity and healthy eating among children
- The three-year initiative comes with an investment of more than 250 million Danish kroner

**Bagsværd, Denmark, 8 October 2024** – Novo Nordisk today announced a new global initiative to prevent obesity in children. The Childhood Obesity Prevention Initiative aims to accelerate the prevention of childhood obesity in disadvantaged urban communities globally. Together with a coalition of partners such as city governments, academic institutions and non-profit organisations, the initiative will support six cities in designing, implementing and evaluating tailored solutions focused on physical activity and healthy eating.

The initiative is founded on a robust evidence-based framework to measure and evaluate the impact of the interventions. In the project, changes in health behaviour and well-being, including health-related quality of life and body mass index (BMI) will be measured in children aged 6-13 at baseline and with follow-ups one and two years after the intervention, respectively. It has a controlled study design and will include a target population receiving the intervention compared to a control group in each city. The aim is to collect data from approximately 1,000 children in each group.

“Childhood obesity is rising at alarming rates all over the world, putting the health and well-being of this and future generations at risk. With a focus on disadvantaged urban communities, the Childhood Obesity Prevention Initiative will provide important evidence and a unique data-led framework to support city leaders in preventing childhood obesity”, says Katrine DiBona, Global Head of Sustainability & Public Affairs at Novo Nordisk.

The initiative builds on over a decade of experience in city-based prevention programmes through Cities for Better Health and will be rolled out in an initial set of six cities across Brazil, Canada, France, Japan, South Africa and Spain.

### **About childhood obesity**

In 2022 more than 390 million children aged 5–19 years were affected by overweight worldwide, including 160 million who were living with obesity. This puts them at risk of developing early onset of type 2 diabetes and is a strong predictor of adult obesity<sup>1</sup>. Children from lower socioeconomic communities tend to have an increased risk of obesity<sup>2</sup>.

### **About Childhood Obesity Prevention Initiative (COPI)**

In the project, global partners, [Delivery Associates](#) and [Behavioural Insights Team](#) (BIT) will support the design and delivery of the interventions and evaluation in collaboration with a coalition of cross-sector local partners such as city governments, academic institutions and non-profit organisations. After 24 months, the impact is measured through a robust monitoring and evaluation framework. The learning generated will be used as guidance to city and community leaders worldwide on how to design, implement, measure and sustain effective interventions. The initiative is part of Novo Nordisk's social responsibility efforts to address obesity holistically as a serious chronic disease.

### **About Cities for Better Health**

The initiative is part of Cities for Better Health, a global public-private partnership committed to accelerating change in urban health across generations by building impactful local partnerships to drive health promotion and prevention. The partnership, formerly called Cities Changing Diabetes, takes a holistic approach to drive impactful community-based action to promote healthy food consumption and physical activity among children and vulnerable communities. Today, more than 50 cities and 300 partners are collaborating through the programme. Read more [here](#).

*Novo Nordisk is a leading global healthcare company, founded in 1923 and headquartered in Denmark. Our purpose is to drive change to defeat serious chronic diseases, built upon our heritage in diabetes. We do so by pioneering scientific breakthroughs, expanding access to our medicines, and working to prevent and ultimately cure disease. Novo Nordisk employs about 69,000 people in 80 countries and markets its products in around 170 countries. For more information, visit [novonordisk.com](https://www.novonordisk.com), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).*

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