

# Chapter 5: Being Healthy

Being healthy is an important factor in achieving our vision of 'fulfilment'.

We know that:

- Good physical health is fundamental to all other outcomes for children and young people
- Obesity levels in children are increasing
- Teenage pregnancy rates are high in the UK
- Good emotional health and well-being means children and young people are more likely to achieve their potential – this is a **KEY PRIORITY**.

## What is good about healthy foods and how do they taste?

- “If you eat healthy food you get loads of energy and they taste great!!!.”
- “Fruit is yummy and good.”
- “Healthy foods can keep you alive for longer. Most healthy food tastes very nice.”

Leicestershire children 2008

Working in partnership, lead by Leicestershire County and Rutland Primary Care Trust, we will **improve the physical health** of children and young people in Leicestershire through:

- **Health education and health promotion** – continuing to build on our successful Healthy Schools' programme, providing personal social health education (PSHE) (including Sex and Relationships Education) (SRE) and Drug Alcohol and Tobacco Education (DATE) and promoting healthy eating and physical activity in schools
- **Improving levels of breast feeding** – continuing to promote breast feeding through integration of midwifery, health visiting and our children's centre programme
- **Reducing young people's smoking** and creating smoke-free homes
- **Improving dental health** – working to reduce dental decay in our children and young people
- **Improving levels of immunisation and vaccination** – maintaining our high level of immunisation
- Commissioning **world class acute and community health services**.

## What's the best exercise to do?

- “All exercises are good there are no bad ones. Just exercise like you wish.”
- “To go down the gym and to run everywhere.”

Leicestershire children 2008

Leicestershire County and Rutland Primary Care Trust are leading our work to **reduce obesity** in Leicestershire's children and young people (a Leicestershire Local Area Agreement 2008-2011 priority). We already have a number of schemes in place but more work needs to be done through developing and implementing our Obesity Strategy.

We are determined to reduce levels of teenage pregnancy and improve young people's sexual health. Partners are working together in the **teenage pregnancy** strategy board to tackle the short and long-term consequences of early parenthood in terms of poorer health and education outcomes for teenage mothers and their children.



## How can I be a healthy grown-up?

- “Don’t smoke; don’t take drugs, just have a balanced diet. Don’t not eat chocolate etc...a little fat won’t hurt!”
- “Don’t eat too much sweets or chocolate, exercise 5 times a day, eat 5 vegetables or fruit, and don’t watch too much TV.”

Leicestershire children 2008

The needs analysis identified children and young people’s **emotional health and well-being** as an important issue. Children and young people have told us that they particularly need support in getting help with issues of emotional distress and we are keen to intervene as early as possible to prevent difficulties getting worse. Demand for mental health services is high. The Joint Area Review reported that **mental health services** were good but that access was inconsistent. We will, therefore:

- Develop an emotional health and well-being strategy to improve access to mental health services and the ability of universal services to respond to issues of emotional well-being and mental health
- Continue to get effective support to children in care as quickly and effectively as possible as we know that they are more likely than other children and young people to have problems relating to emotional well-being

- Provide good support for children and young people who are **bereaved** in childhood or families who experience the death of a child or young person.

Misuse of drugs and alcohol by young people, or by parents and carers, is likely to lead to poor outcomes for children and young people. We will work to **reduce the misuse of drugs and alcohol** (a Leicestershire Local Area Agreement 2008-2011 priority) by further improving our preventive services, increasing the numbers receiving structured treatment and meeting the estimated demand.

The **health of children in care** should be as good as that of the general population. We will ensure that children in care have health assessments properly completed at the correct time. We will also support the health care of children in care placed in Leicestershire by other local authorities.