Physical activity promotion in a community based program to reduce overweight prevalence in Belgian children

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With more and more overweight children
Prevention & modification of lifestyle are the only way to efficiently combat obesity

VIASANO

= An intervention at the scale of the community that helps adjust lifestyle habits by the long-term involvement of different local actors

19 Viasano towns in Belgium

760,000 inhabitants!
A strong organization

Concrete actions

Sharing best practices...

- Playground activities
- Fruit tasting sessions in schools
- Animations during courses
- An organized hike with the whole family and a Viasano fruit tasting stand
- An information session on physical activity for the municipal staff
- New snack policy at schools
Example communication tools: « Playing is moving »

- Leaflet & poster
- Newsletter for local health care professionals
- Action sheets
- Press communication
- Mobilisation sheets
- Concrete tool: game

Study material

- 2 towns: Mouscron and Marche-en-famenne: participating in Viasano program for more than 3 years

- All school-going children age 3-4 and 5-6 in study towns compared to all school-going children of same age in French Community

- BMI available of all school-going children in 2007 and 2010
Number and type of actions (2007-2010)

Method

- BMI: height and weight measured by trained nurses from official medical school surveillance system

- Cross sectional design:
  - All children age 3-4 and 5-6
  - In study towns and in French Community
  - In 2007 and 2010

- Overweight 85th and obesity 97th percentile of growth curves

- Compare trends (Chi square) correcting for lack of homogeneity
### Changes % 2007 - 2010

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<th>2007</th>
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<td>OVERWEIGHT</td>
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<td>FRENCH COM OBESITY</td>
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<td>15.8</td>
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### Evolution 2007 – 2010 in study towns (M & M) and French Community (adjusted for lack of homogeneity)

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<tr>
<td>O + O</td>
<td>- 2.2</td>
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Conclusion

• Specific actions to promote physical activity are a key component of the community based program VIASANO.

• Such CBP combining actions on food & physical activity may contribute to containing the prevalence of childhood overweight.