

# Model United Nations – Penicuik High School

Welcome to our first MUN Conference 30.09.11

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## ■ Obesity – a global time bomb

### Briefing Paper

Background:

We are living in a society which is getting fatter. For the first time ever, in the developed world, a generation of children has been born which is expected not to live as long as their parents or grand-parents. Because of sedentary lifestyles and growing levels of obesity, life expectancy is falling. Moderate obesity (BMI 30-35 kg/m<sup>2</sup>) was found to reduce life expectancy by an average of three years, while morbid obesity (BMI 40-50 kg/ kg/m<sup>2</sup>) reduces life expectancy by eight to ten years.

The top three 'most obese major nations' in the world are the United States, Mexico and the United Kingdom and many will argue that due to the economic strength of the USA and the globalisation of the world economy, obesity has been one of the USA's main exports to the world. Young people in many countries would rather have a Happy Meal or Whopper than traditional local food.

Some argue that fast-food companies deliberately target their advertising at children, and that young people are in fact exploited by these fast-food companies for profit. And it's not just fast-food companies, supermarkets, snack-food producers almost all target children in some form or another.

Many illnesses and diseases can be directly attributed to obesity so it is important for all affected countries to act and put measures in place to tackle obesity, otherwise society will be paying for this epidemic through increased health care costs and people being unable to work.

Obesity is stigmatised in most countries, but there are some countries where the 'fuller figure' is encouraged such as Mauritania with its **fat farms** which force-feed girls and young women until they reach a 'desirable' size.

Questions to consider:

1. Where does my country rank in terms of obesity as a percentage of population?
2. Is reduced life expectancy a major factor caused by obesity?
3. Does my country have laws to protect children from advertising?
4. Are unhealthy foods discouraged/taxed?
5. What does my country do to promote sport and health lifestyle choices?



PENICUIK HIGH SCHOOL

- [Penicuik HS – new website](#)
- [Penicuik HS – old website](#)

### RESEARCH LINKS

- [BBC Country Profiles](#)
- [BBC News](#)
- [CIA Country Profiles](#)
- [French Foreign Ministry](#)
- [International Debate Education](#)
- [Nations Online](#)
- [New Internationalist](#)
- [The Economist](#)
- [UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office](#)
- [UN Millennium Development Goals](#)
- [United Nations Official Website](#)
- [US State Department](#)

### SELECTED MUN CONFERENCES

- [Delegates Guide from THIMUN](#)
- [Earlston High School MUN](#)
- [Methodist College Belfast MUN](#)
- [MUNCH \(Cheadle Hulme\)](#)

### HOW TO FIND US

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-515316/Obesity-time-bomb-big-threat-planet-climate-change.html>

[http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/hea\\_obe-health-obesity](http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/hea_obe-health-obesity)

<http://www.who.int/topics/obesity/en/>



<https://apps.who.int/infobase/?id=1>

<http://obesity.procon.org/>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1578329/Spam-at-heart-of-South-Pacific-obesity-crisis.html>

<http://www.takepart.com/news/2010/06/10/fantasizing-fat-how-africas-status-symbol-threatens-africans-health>



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