

### **Did You Know?**

Four out of 10 Irish adults die from heart disease...and this disease begins in childhood.

Good lifestyle will lift mood and improve energy levels...good lifestyle improves performance.

Good lifestyle reduces your risk of many illnesses, including several cancers, type II diabetes and stroke.

The World Health Organisation recommends eating more fruits and vegetables to help prevent diseases like cancer, heart disease, and diabetes:  
[http://www.who.int/chp/chronic\\_disease\\_report/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/chp/chronic_disease_report/en/index.html)

Irish children are eating less fruits and vegetables. Roughly two thirds of Irish children eat less than one piece of fruit per day.

Regular physical activity helps to prevent a huge range of lifestyle-related illnesses.

Watch this space for further lifestyle tips...

RedBranch is a not-for-profit organisation that promotes healthy lifestyle choices in Irish children. We work with schools and parents, and act as advocates for healthy food and physical activity choices.

We aim to empower people of all ages so that they can make informed choices about their lives. We provide a series of health-related parent factsheets to school



## Why Lifestyle?

Lifestyle has a massive effect on health and quality of life. What you eat, how active you are, how much sleep you get...all these things affect health.

Did you know that many cancers are strongly influenced by lifestyle?

Heart disease is a massive killer in Ireland...and the disease has silent beginnings in childhood. Poor diet and being a couch potato are terrible for your heart.

Type II Diabetes is becoming much more common in children, primarily due to our lifestyle habits.

administrations. We also run a free schools consultancy service that offers advice on policy and the integration of health issues into the curriculum. We can also help schools to improve access to healthy food choices.



Regular physical activity reduces the risk of certain cancers, heart disease and other chronic illnesses...Yet physical activity levels in Irish children are worryingly low

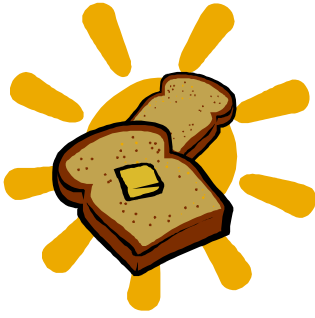
**40%**

...of all deaths in Ireland are because of heart disease/stroke

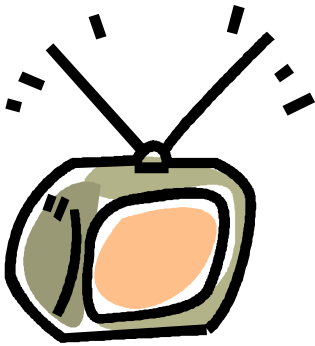
**25%**

...of all deaths in Ireland are caused by cancer

## School Lifestyle



In some schools, 20% of students skip breakfast completely and 40% skip breakfast at least once per week.



The average child in Ireland watches TV for almost 3 hours per day. This is equal to 46 full days per year lounging comatose in front of the box. Do we have “a life” anymore, or do we just watch “reality TV”? A passive lifestyle is killing us.

### Lifestyle Issues

The food we eat and the amount of physical activity we get are crucial for health and wellbeing.

Did you know that eating plenty of fruit and vegetables reduces your chances of getting certain cancers?

Did you know that more and more young people are getting type II diabetes, and that diet and inactivity plays a role?

Did you know that regular physical activity will reduce your chance of getting heart disease, stroke, and certain cancers?

Lifestyle also affects mental and physical performance. For example, the type of breakfast you have will influence your mood, mental abilities, energy levels and hunger cravings throughout the day. You might even be surprised to learn that many so-called “healthy” breakfast cereals aren’t really that healthy at all.



Irish children consume large amounts of junk food, which seriously affects long term health. Junk food companies actively target children. Our work exposes the marketing tricks that are used, and enables you to make up your own mind. See our website for more information on how advertisers target children.

### Lifestyle and Young People

Simple changes to lifestyle can make a huge difference to health and to everyday performance. It’s our mission to make people more aware of lifestyle issues, and to make good lifestyle choices easier to make.

Young people are under sustained commercial pressure to consume in a certain way. Poor lifestyle comes about almost by accident as children passively drift through life.

Ireland has some of the worst rates of chronic disease in the Western world. These illnesses have their roots in childhood, and are heavily influenced by lifestyle.

In general, Irish children consume large amounts of junk food, do not consume enough fruit and vegetables, tend to be physically inactive and watch large amounts of TV.

These lifestyle habits are a health timebomb, and are linked to an increased risk for:

- Childhood Obesity
- Type II Diabetes
- Cancer
- Heart Disease
- Stroke

Prevention is better than treatment. Given that lifestyle habits are learned in childhood, this issue has huge relevance for parents and schools.

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