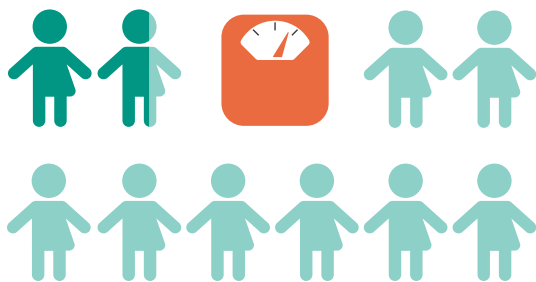




# The prevalence of overweight and obesity among children is high and increases with age

The prevalence of overweight and obesity among children 6–9 years old is high (particularly among girls) and increases with age. These results were obtained from a survey of a representative sample in Sweden.

The results from the survey indicate that 18.4 percent of all the children in the sample are overweight or obese. There are, however, gender differences, and 20.1 percent of girls compared to 16.9 percent of boys aged 6–9 years old are overweight or obese.



**18%** of children aged 6–9 are overweight or obese.

Data on length and weight from eight municipalities for the school year 2015/2016 (WHO COSI). IsoBMI IOTF (International Obesity Task Force).

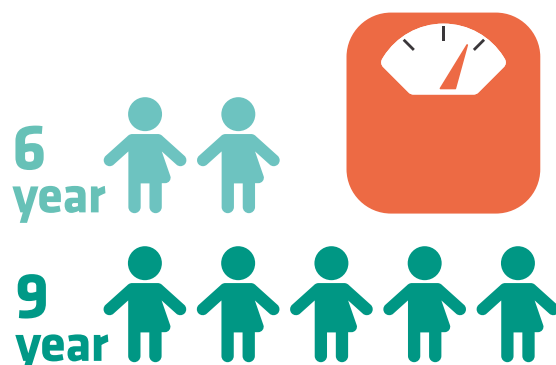
## Increasing overweight and obesity with age

The prevalence of overweight and obesity increases significantly with age. The results indicate that the prevalence for 9 year olds is more than double that of 6 year olds. The results further indicate both age and gender differences. For example, the proportion of 9-year-old boys who are over-

**The WHO Child Obesity Surveillance Initiative (COSI)** is a survey of overweight, obesity, and underweight among children 6–9 years old (i.e. preschool class and grades 1–3) in Europe. The data collection has taken place every two years since 2007/2008. The purpose of COSI is to:

- contribute information on current weight and height
- gain an understanding of the development of overweight and obesity
- enable comparisons across countries
- monitor and follow-up interventions to counteract increasing overweight and obesity.

weight or obese is more than double (31.1 percent) that of 6-year-old boys (14.5 percent). The difference for girls in various age groups is less than that of boys, and 30.5% of 9-year-old girls are overweight compared with 16.8% of 6-year-old girls.



The prevalence of overweight and obesity in 9 year olds **is more than twice** that of 6 year olds.

Data on length and weight from eight municipalities for the school year 2015/2016 (WHO COSI) IsoBMI IOTF (International Obesity Task Force).

## Method

Across Sweden's 290 municipalities, there was a total 474,003 students in preschool and grades 1–3 for the school year 2015/2016. The Public Health Agency retrieved (in consultation with SKL and with the help of Statistics Sweden) a national representative sample of data based on the number of students in each municipality. Of the 28 selected municipalities, 8 participated in the survey. Data on age, gender, height, and weight were collected for a total of 7,869 children, of which 3,798 (48.3 percent) were girls and 4,071 were boys (51.7 percent).

### Long-term consequences of being overweight and obese

Overweight and obesity increases the risk for injuries and diseases of the organs, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, mental illness, and premature death.

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**TARGET GROUP AND AIM** Here you will find out what the latest data collection shows about overweight and obesity among children 6–9 years old in Sweden. This information is important for preventing overweight and obesity through efforts that increase physical activity and healthy eating habits among children. It is aimed at policy makers who develop or work with preventative measures, for example, in schools, municipalities, or county administrative boards.

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Folkhälsomyndigheten  
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