More than 22 million children under five are now obese or overweight. Globally, an estimated 10% of school-aged children, between 5 and 17 years old, are overweight or obese, and in some countries this figure is as high as 35%.

Although recognised clinically for some time as an important condition that increases risk of ill-health in affected individuals, it is only recently that obesity has been recognised as a population-wide problem that requires preventive action. Disturbingly the epidemic is not confined to developed countries, with many developing countries and those in transition affected. This book draws together the existing literature and expertise with a view to helping set the agenda for public health action. The book is divided into three sections.