

Compassionate approach to Weight

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Our Vision

Everybody in Doncaster is fully able to pursue their own health goals and are fully supported to do so by society, without judgement or assumptions. They feel valued as an individual just the way they are. Compassion is at the heart of how we move together towards a healthier society for future generations.

Overview

The world is filled with mixed messages regarding, food, weight, body image and health. Our view of what is 'healthy' and what a 'healthy body' looks like is very rigid. People, in general, can identify what 'healthy' or 'unhealthy' choices are, but struggle to put this into practice. For the vast majority of people, dieting or restricting food for weight loss only works in the short term, potentially leading to harmful weight cycling and disordered eating patterns.

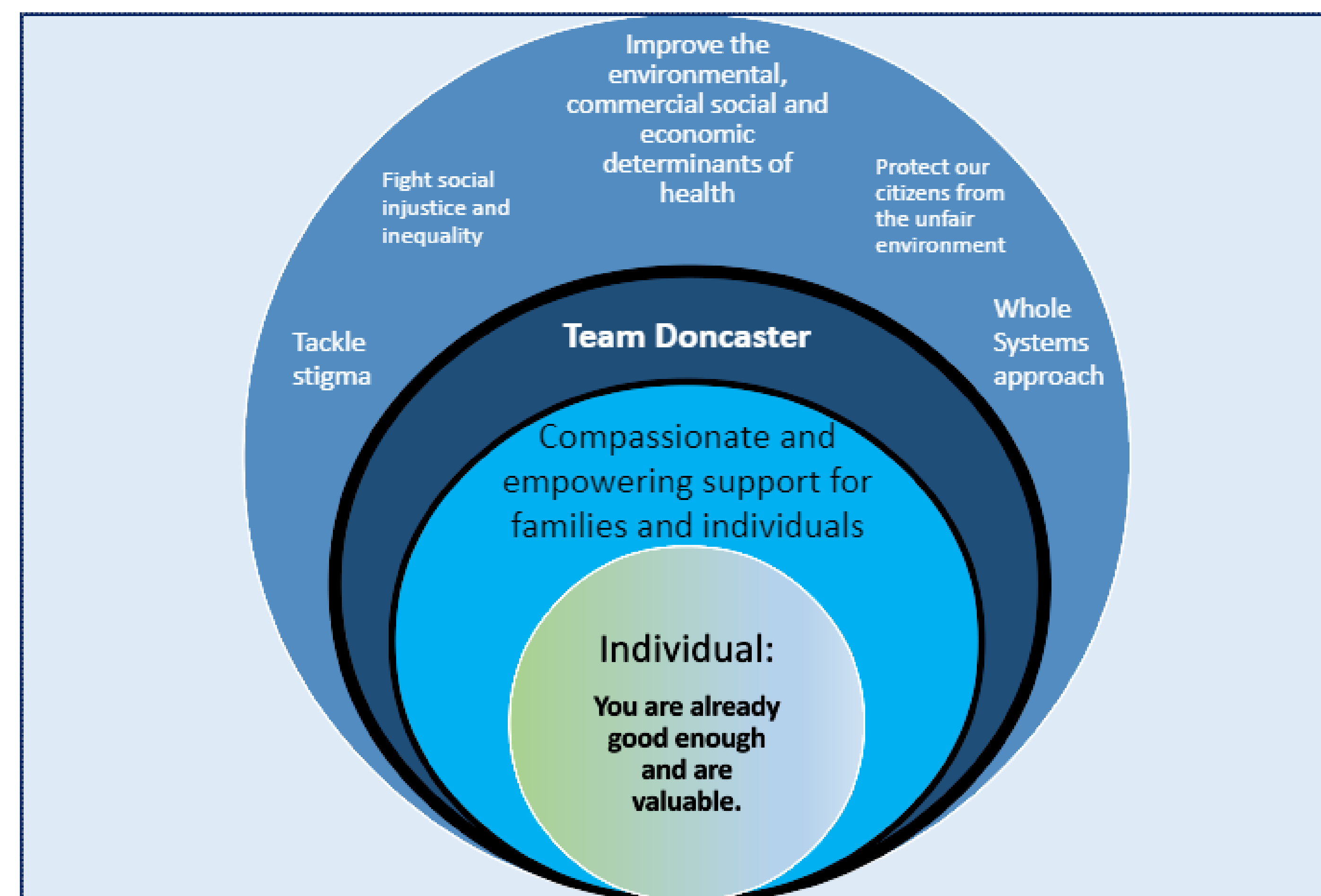


Images Sourced: The Power of the Poster - Graphic Design Ravensbourne, 2020. Available at: Ravensbournegraphicdesign.com.

Inequalities

- Obesity disproportionately affects disadvantaged communities and is strongly associated with inequality
- Most interventions focus on individual responsibility to change behaviour, without addressing the underlying determinants that impact on health, wellbeing and people's ability to take care of themselves.
- Feelings of shame around weight are not motivators for change and does not elicit long term behaviour change and can make things worse for individuals, when many socioeconomic factors influence the quality of diet and physical activity.

Mapping the approach locally



Our Principles

- Rooted in principles of social justice, aiming to lift up the systematically disadvantaged and challenge the environmental and social structures that create inequalities
- A compassionate approach that is sympathetic and realistic regarding circumstances and human behaviour.
- Capitalise on opportunities and build on existing levers for change whilst acknowledging this is a long-term approach.
- Take away individual blame and challenge assumptions.
- An approach that builds up individuals strengthens confidence and self-worth and provides a clear message that everyone is valued and are already "good enough".
- Intervene upstream at a population/community level wherever possible. Unsustainable individual interventions are least preferable

What we want to reject:

- Anything that creates or increases inequality.
- Anything that places the responsibility on individuals or shames them, rather than supporting them.
- Messages that a certain weight always means you are healthy and that losing weight is the only way to improve your health.
- Use of government guidelines as a way to measure and judge families and communities e.g. 5aday and 10,000 steps a day

What we want to adopt:

- Working towards social justice and fairness.
- Protecting everyone from the unfair environment and the conditions that prevent them begin as healthy as they can be.
- Accept and respect different body shapes and sizes, promoting health and wellbeing without fixating on body size and weight.
- A 'gentler' approach food and nutrition that supports a positive relationship with food and eating; does not place moral value on one food over another; does not shame or police.
- Support people of all sizes, abilities, and interests to engage in enjoyable movement, to the degree that they choose.
- Allow people to feel valued and happy right now, rather than waiting until they reach a certain weight.



Images sourced from 'The Weight of Expectation' by Dr Oli Williams and Jade Sarson