



The Impact of New Health Imperatives on Educational Policy and Schooling (Woodhead Fibre Series)

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Currently a great deal of public discourse around health is on the assumed relationship between childhood inactivity, young people's diets, and a putative steep rise in obesity. Children and young people are increasingly being identified as a population at 'risk' in relation to these health concerns. Such concerns are driving what might be described as new 'health imperatives' which prescribe the choices young people should make around lifestyle: physical activity, body regulation, dietary habits, and sedentary behaviour. These health imperatives are a powerful force driving major policy initiatives on health and education in a number of countries in the Western world. Schools in particular have been targeted for the implementation of a plethora of initiatives designed to help children and young people lose weight, become more active and change their eating patterns inside and outside school.

Addressing these issues requires an innovative theoretical approach. Neither the fields of 'eating disorders' nor 'obesity research' has addressed these issues from a sociological and pedagogical perspective. The contributors to this edited collection draw on a range of social theories, including Michel Foucault and Basil Bernstein to interpret the data collected across three countries (Australia and New Zealand, United Kingdom) and from a range of primary and secondary schools. Each chapter addresses various aspects of the relationship between health imperatives as constituted in government policies, school programs and practices, their recontextualised in school practices and the impact of this on the subjectivities of children and teachers.

This book was originally published as a special issue of *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*.

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