5. Sports Anthropometry

103 | **THE EVOLUTION OF THE BODY SIZE AND SHAPE IN CHILDREN: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES**

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Childhood obesity is becoming a worldwide public health concern. Research studies from the International Obesity Task Force reveal that an estimated 155 million school-age children and adolescents worldwide show symptoms of obesity and being overweight. Among those, 30–45 million children and adolescents aged 5–17 are obese. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 18.8% of children aged 6–11 in the USA are obese. Recent studies have shown that the current generation of children in the USA and UK are projected to have shorter life spans than the previous generations – for the first time in history. According to recent studies, the costs of obesity to health systems and individuals are increasing by alarming rates. Since 2000, costs from childhood obesity-associated illnesses in the USA have risen from $35 to $127 million. The decrease in physical activity is found to be associated with the epidemic of obesity in children. There is therefore no better time for parents, educators, children and communities to promote healthy lifestyles and learning opportunities for students and to examine how we are preparing health and physical education (PE) teachers. It is important that all children have access to daily health and PE programmes. Physical educators at all school levels should remain abreast of current research, committed to further professional development, open-minded and committed to advancing the field. Life-long active living must be the primary goal of the health and PE curriculum. PE must be part of the school curriculum and not a subject that continues to be marginalised. Health must be a very important focus point in the PE curriculum with a strong emphasis on how to handle the worldwide obesity problem in children.