



# Premier's Priority:

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Reduce Overweight and Obesity Rates of Children by 5% over 10 Years

OCTOBER 2016

**MAKE**  
**HEALTHY**   
**NORMAL**



## Children who are above a healthy weight are more likely to have poorer health and wellbeing, compared to children of a healthy weight. These children are also likely to carry excess weight into adulthood, placing them at increased risk of developing chronic disease in later life.

In 2015, more than one in five children in NSW was overweight or obese. Overweight and obesity has doubled in NSW children since 1985, but has been relatively stable since 2007.

Childhood overweight and obesity is a complex issue and the Premier's target is ambitious. Worldwide, child overweight and obesity has been increasing. Despite isolated successes in some settings and local regions, no country has successfully reversed the trend in childhood overweight and obesity.

Addressing childhood overweight and obesity requires a multifaceted, population-based approach, focusing on preventing unhealthy weight gain by supporting healthy eating and adequate physical activity in the long term. Vulnerable groups and those with complex needs will require more targeted interventions.

It is important that initiatives to tackle overweight and obesity do not contribute to stigmatisation of children who are overweight and obese. Our response will emphasise the positive benefits from healthy eating and active living for all children, families and communities in NSW.

No single intervention will have sufficient impact to reverse overweight and obesity trends. The *NSW Health Premier's Priority Childhood Overweight and Obesity Delivery Plan* outlines enhanced and new actions that build on the existing *NSW Healthy Eating Active Living Strategy 2013-2018*.

The Strategy is a comprehensive whole-of-government plan which includes a focus on:

- State-wide healthy eating and active living support programs;
- Healthy eating and active living advice and support as part of clinical service delivery;
- Education and information to enable informed, healthy choices; and
- Environments to support healthy eating and active living.

The *NSW Ministry of Health* is responsible for leading the implementation for this priority.



## Health Impacts

Overweight and obesity is a leading driver of chronic disease. It is the second highest contributor to the Australian burden of disease (AIHW 2011) and has an economic impact in NSW of \$19b per annum (Access Economics 2008).

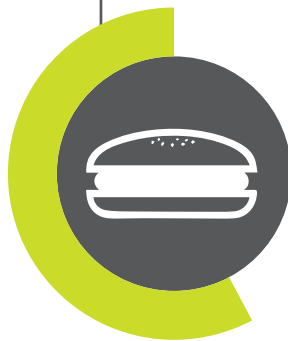
Childhood overweight and obesity is a strong predictor of adult overweight and obesity and has significant health impacts for children:

- Higher rates of asthma and obstructive sleep apnoea
- Lower self-esteem
- Bone and joint complications
- Accelerated onset of diabetes and heart disease.

## Children's current behaviours are not in line with healthy lifestyle guidelines:

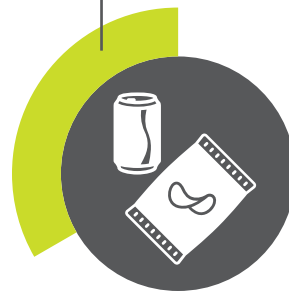
**58%**

Australian children obtain more than one third of their kilojoules from unhealthy food and drinks, and Australian households spend 58% of their food dollar on unhealthy food and drinks.



**1 in 3**

Around 1 in 3 NSW children are drinking a can of sugary drink and 1 in 3 are eating salty snack foods such as chips each day.



**<5%**  
**<10%**

Less than 5% of NSW children eat the recommended number of vegetable serves per day and less than 10% eat the recommended amount of healthy dairy foods such as milk, cheese and yoghurt.



**29%**  
**44%**

Most children are not active enough: only 29% meet physical activity guidelines and 44% spend more than 2 hours per day on sedentary leisure activities.



# Strategic Direction 1

## State-wide Support Programs



NSW has high quality evidence-based healthy eating and active living programs in place in primary schools and early childhood services. Across the state, 91% of centre-based early childhood services and 84% of all primary schools are participating. These programs will continue, with a goal of achieving higher levels of adoption of program practices in participating sites. For example, in early childhood services there will be an increased focus on water and age-appropriate milk drinks, menu quality and providing a supportive physical activity environment. In primary schools the program will focus on water availability, a healthy canteen and physical activity.

### Action Currently Underway:

- Refresh and strengthen physical activity and healthy eating programs in primary schools (*Live Life Well @ School*) and centre-based early childhood services (*Munch & Move*) (*NSW Health*).
- Encourage increased physical activity through the *Premier's Sporting Challenge* (*Department of Education*).
- Deliver nutrition and physical activity education through the PDHPE curriculum (*Department of Education*).
- Achieve compliance with policy of 150 mins of physical activity per week in school time (*Department of Education*).
- Increase participation in active recreation and sport (*Office of Sport*).
- Review and implement the *Fresh Tastes @ School Canteen Policy* (*Department of Education and NSW Health*).

- Trial chilled water provision in schools (*Department of Education, NSW Health*).
- Explore options to increase public access to school green spaces (*Department of Education*).

### New Actions:

- Develop and test new approaches to promote physical activity and healthy eating practices in high schools (*NSW Health, Department of Education*).
- Extend the reach of the *Finish with the Right Stuff* program, that promotes water and healthy food in junior community sports clubs (*NSW Health*).
- Develop and test new approaches to encourage active travel (*NSW Health, Transport for NSW*).
- Develop and test new approaches to encourage water consumption and discourage consumption of sugar sweetened beverages (*NSW Health*).

## Munch & Move

*Munch & Move* aims to promote and encourage positive lifestyle habits in young children aged birth to 5 years in NSW within the early childhood setting (including preschools, long day care and occasional care).

As of 30 June 2016, 3,231 (91%) of centre-based early childhood services across NSW are participating in the *Munch & Move* program.

For participating services, 2,965 (84%) have achieved 70% of the program practices.

Some practices that have high levels of achievement include:

- Written nutrition policy – 98%
- Menu includes fruit and vegetables at least once per day – 96%
- Active play for 1-5 year olds – 95%

Some practices that need a greater focus include:

- Fundamental movement skills – 71%
- Health information provided to families – 77%
- Written physical activity policy – 78%
- Water or age-appropriate milk – 80%

# Strategic Direction 2

## Routine Advice and Clinical Service Delivery



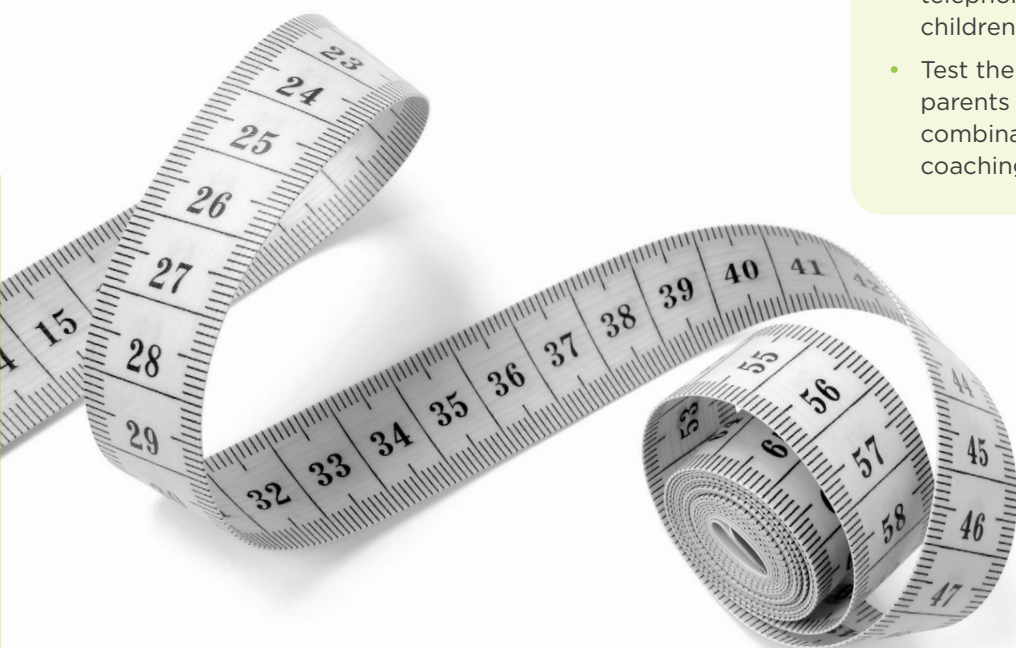
*NSW Health* will be increasing the identification and management of overweight and obesity in clinical services, including the provision of information, advice for parents and referral to an appropriate state-wide program where required. The successful **Go4Fun** community-based healthy lifestyle program has already assisted more than 7,800 NSW children and their families.

### Action Currently Underway:

- *Go4Fun* community-based program for children aged 7-13 years who are above a healthy weight, and their families. The program is being enhanced for Aboriginal families and a non-face-to-face, flexible delivery approach is being trialled to increase participation for all families, especially families from rural communities (*NSW Health*).
- The *Get Healthy in Pregnancy Service* is being rolled out, commencing with ten hospitals before becoming progressively available state-wide (*NSW Health*).

### New Actions:

- Implement the routine delivery of brief advice and referral for children who are above a healthy weight, along with their families, commencing with pilot testing in a limited number of inpatient and outpatient services (*NSW Health*).
- Develop and test a package of training and support tools for health professionals, to increase identification and management of children's weight status in health and other government services, and referral to state-wide programs such as *Go4Fun* (*NSW Health*).
- Further examine available models of care for local management of children who are above a healthy weight, and their families, and increase the local availability of appropriate care models, especially for 2-6 year old children (*NSW Health*).
- Test the feasibility of developing a state-wide telephone coaching module for parents of children 2-6 years (*NSW Health*).
- Test the feasibility of additional support for parents of children aged 0-2 years using a combination of text messaging and telephone coaching (*NSW Health*).



# Strategic Direction 3

## Education and Information Campaigns



Social marketing campaigns can raise awareness of the health risks associated with physical inactivity and unhealthy eating and encourage changes in health related behaviours and can influence social norms. The **Make Healthy Normal** campaign aims to support healthy eating and active living in NSW by increasing awareness of overweight and obesity as a public health issue, and motivating people to reassess their lifestyle choices. The campaign aims to create a new, healthy normal and drive people to existing effective support programs including the **Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service** and the **Go4Fun** treatment program for children and their families. The **Make Healthy Normal** campaign commenced in June 2015 with a focus on adults. The campaign uses television, print, out of home and digital channels and is supported by a website, mobile application, social media and community engagement activities.

### Action Currently Underway:

- The *Make Healthy Normal* campaign is being enhanced to have a stronger focus on children and families. Community ambassadors will also promote the campaign messages; including the overall message, 'Small steps can make a big difference' and the key messages, 'Eat healthier snacks', 'Switch off the screen and get active', and 'Make water your drink' (*NSW Health*).

### New Actions:

- Enhance the 8700 fast food kilojoule labelling tools with increased messaging for families and young people (*NSW Health*).
- Develop *Make Healthy Normal* resources and information for school communities (*NSW Health*).
- Undertake formative research for a new campaign focus on young people and development of adolescent engagement and communication approaches (*Advocate for Children & Young People, NSW Health*).



# Strategic Direction 4

## Environments to Support Healthy Eating and Active Living



Initiatives to create healthy food and healthy built environments are key components of a comprehensive approach to support healthy eating and active living. The food environment refers to what foods are available, how much they cost and how they are marketed. The built environment includes consideration of physical design, patterns of land use and the transport system, each influencing the opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating.

### Action Currently Underway:

- Revise and enhance NSW healthy food and drink policies to increase the availability of healthy choices in schools, and for staff and visitors in hospitals (*NSW Health, Department of Education*).
- Continue to support the NSW menu labelling initiative to help people make lower kilojoule choices when eating out (*NSW Food Authority*).
- Develop guidelines for the planning, design and development of healthy built environments (*NSW Health, Department of Planning and Environment*).
- Deliver the *Sydney Green Grid project* (*Greater Sydney Commission, Department of Planning and Environment, Office of the Government Architect*).
- Plan for and provide funding towards active recreation and sport infrastructure (*Office of Sport*).
- Inspire and support children and young adults to be active in National Parks (*Office of Environment and Heritage*).

### New Actions:

- Investigate opportunities to increase healthy food and drink provision in key government settings including sport and recreation centres (*Office of Sport*).
- Coordinate an enhanced regional intervention focus in *South Western Sydney Local Health District* (*Department of Premier and Cabinet, NSW Health*).
- Investigate the feasibility of a range of new food environment and physical activity policy options to support healthier choices (*Department of Premier and Cabinet, NSW Health*).
- Investigate the opportunities for partnerships that support the Premier's Priority.
- Develop and implement a *Healthy Parks, Healthy People* approach (*Office of Environment & Heritage*).

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**HEALTHY**  
**NORMAL**

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