



**Jillian Skinner**  
Minister for Health

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **IT'S TIME TO *MAKE HEALTHY NORMAL***

Health Minister Jillian Skinner was joined by leading health agencies in the heart of Sydney's shopping district today to spread the NSW's Government *Make Healthy Normal* message.

The \$4.5 million *Make Healthy Normal* campaign aims to help people make simple food and activity changes to tackle the state's overweight and obesity problem.

The campaign commenced last month with television advertisements on all major networks. Now a *Make Healthy Normal* roadshow is travelling the state, visiting major shopping centres in Parramatta, Sydney CBD, Central Coast, Bathurst, Wagga Wagga and Wollongong.

"With more than half of NSW adults and a quarter of children overweight or obese, it's time to act," Mrs Skinner said.

"We want to help people find the new 'normal' - small changes to lifestyle habits can make an enormous difference to overall health.

"My hope is that *Make Healthy Normal* will become as memorable a rallying cry as *Life. Be In It* was when it hit our screens and airwaves in the 1970s."

Combined high body mass index, physical inactivity and low fruit and vegetable consumption are the largest contributors to the burden of disease on society.

Overweight and obesity costs the NSW economy around \$19 billion annually, while chronic disease is estimated to be responsible for 80 per cent of the total burden of disease in Australia.

In contrast, healthy eating and physical activity are key factors in maintaining quality of life and preventing diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, stroke and some cancers across all life stages.

"Evidence shows that, for overweight people, every kilogram of excess weight lost brings long-term benefits. Take diabetes - a five per cent weight loss leads to 40-60 per cent less chance of developing diabetes over three years," Mrs Skinner said.

The *Make Healthy Normal* roadshow stopped in Pitt Street Mall today, where shoppers and workers were able to take a healthy choices challenge while riding exercise bikes.

Lending support to the campaign in the Mall were Australian Medical Association (NSW) president Dr Saxon Smith, Pharmacy Guild of Australia (NSW) president Paul Sinclair, National Heart Foundation (NSW) chief executive Kerry Doyle, Diabetes NSW chief executive Sturt Eastwood and NSW Chief Health Officer Dr Kerry Chant.

To learn more about *Make Healthy Normal*, visit [www.makehealthynormal.nsw.gov.au](http://www.makehealthynormal.nsw.gov.au)