

1. Actions within the Classroom

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FACT SHEET 1.1

Introduce vegetable, fruit and water consumption during school hours

What is the research showing?

- It is recommended that children;
 - Consume two serves of fruit and five serves of vegetables each day.^{1;2}
 - Choose water as a drink and consume approximately; 1 litre (5 glasses) for 5-8 year olds, 1.5 litres (7 glasses) for 9-12 year olds and 2 litres (8-10 glasses) for children aged 13+.^{2;3}
- The 2004 NSW *School Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey* (SPANS) found that;
 - Only 15-25% of children eat four serves of vegetables each day, with most only eating two serves.¹
 - Only 65-70% of children eat at least two serves of fruit per day.¹
 - Many children only drink water when reminded to, with approximately 60% of children drinking four or less cups of water each day.^{2;4}

Benefits of a vegetable, fruit and water program

- Educational
 - Academic and physical performance may improve as refuelling and rehydrating during class time maintains blood sugar levels and therefore increases students' energy levels, mental alertness and ability to concentrate.^{2;5}
 - Provides an opportunity to link nutrition education into other Key Learning Areas of the curriculum.²
 - Offers teachers an opportunity to positively influence eating behaviours by acting as role models.²
- Health
 - Can help students meet their required vegetable, fruit and water intake.²
 - A diet high in vegetables and fruit can protect students from developing a number of chronic conditions including diabetes, some cancers and heart disease.⁶
 - Childhood is a time when eating habits are formed, therefore such a program may encourage children to taste new foods and foster lifelong healthy eating behaviours.^{5;7;8}
 - Water has zero sugar and energy content meaning it will not negatively impact on children's weight or oral health.³

FACT SHEET 1.2

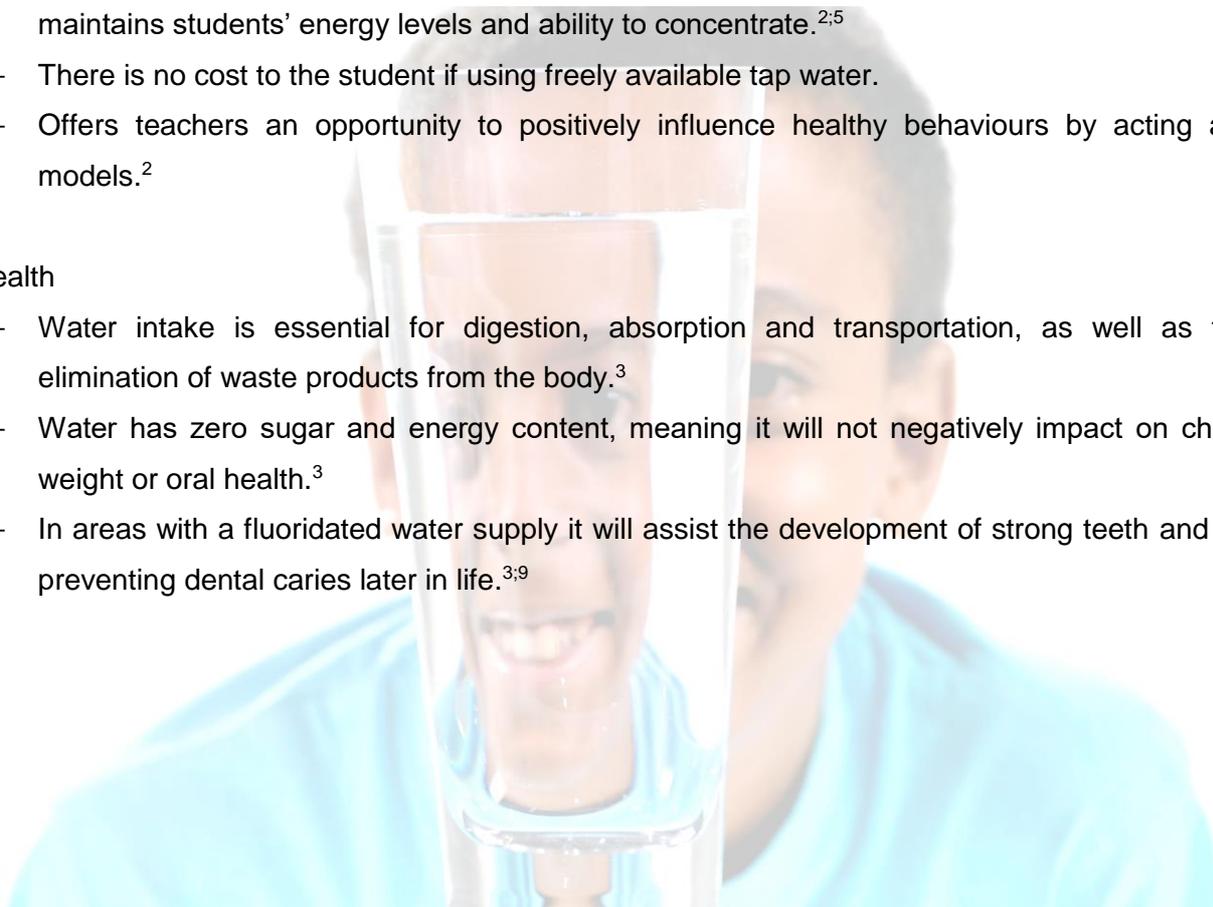
Encourage water consumption during class time

What is the research showing?

- Children are recommended to choose water as a drink and consume approximately; 1 litre (5 glasses) for 5-8 year olds, 1.5 litres (7 glasses) for 9-12 year olds and 2 litres (8-10 glasses) for children aged 13+.²
- Many children are not meeting this recommendation, with approximately 60% of children drinking four or less cups of water each day.⁴
- Many children will only drink water when reminded to.²

Benefits of encouraging water consumption during class time:

- Educational
 - Academic and physical performance can improve, as the chance to hydrate during class time maintains students' energy levels and ability to concentrate.^{2;5}
 - There is no cost to the student if using freely available tap water.
 - Offers teachers an opportunity to positively influence healthy behaviours by acting as role models.²
- Health
 - Water intake is essential for digestion, absorption and transportation, as well as for the elimination of waste products from the body.³
 - Water has zero sugar and energy content, meaning it will not negatively impact on children's weight or oral health.³
 - In areas with a fluoridated water supply it will assist the development of strong teeth and bones, preventing dental caries later in life.^{3;9}



FACT SHEET 1.3

Integrate messages of healthy eating and physical activity across the curriculum

What is the research showing?

- The NSW Quality Teaching Framework suggests students need to see the significance of what they are learning in order to achieve higher educational outcomes.¹⁰
- The demonstration of links between and within subjects and Key Learning Areas (KLAs) is imperative if students are to see the "significance" of that which they learn.¹¹
- Subject matter relating to healthy eating and physical education has traditionally been located within the KLA of Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE). By integrating such messages across other subjects students' knowledge and skills in adopting healthy behaviours can be enhanced.¹²

Benefits of integrating healthy eating and physical activity messages across the curriculum

- Educational
 - As learning becomes more meaningful to students their academic and physical performance may improve.¹³
 - It allows for flexibility in the planning and delivery of units of work, in particular for primary schools, which is consistent with Connected Outcome Groups (COGS).¹⁴
 - Integrated healthy eating and physical activity messages will support other activities occurring outside the classroom eg Fresh Tastes @ School and school sport.¹⁵
 - It provides an opportunity to reach and educate parents/carers on these health matters as they regularly see these messages throughout their child's lessons and homework.
- Health
 - Schools that run coordinated nutrition and physical activity programs have a lower prevalence of overweight and obesity amongst students. Students at these schools also self report healthier diets and lower risk factors for future adverse health.^{16;17}
 - Integrated healthy eating and physical activity can help children develop the competence and confidence to have a healthy diet and to remain physically active throughout their lives.¹⁸

Important issues to consider:

- When implementing any .

FACT SHEET 1.4
Involve students in at least two hours of mandatory physical activity per week
(including sport and PE)

What is the research showing?

- The Australian Government's 'Active School Curriculum' requires schools to include at least two hours of weekly physical activity in the curriculum for primary and junior secondary school children.¹⁹
- It is recommended that children and young people aged 5-18 years participate in at least one hour of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.²⁰
- Children do not appear to be meeting this recommendation, with research indicating up to 87% of school aged children undertake less than one hour of physical activity a day.^{1;4}

Benefits of involving students in at least two hours of physical activity per week

- Educational
 - Physical activity can improve student self-esteem, confidence and well-being, as well as decreasing stress, anxiety and depression.²¹
 - It provides an opportunity for positive social interactions amongst peers which can improve a student's sense of school connectedness and social cohesion.^{19;21-23}
 - Short-term academic performance may increase due to increased blood flow to the brain, increasing children's concentration, mental alertness and energy levels for learning.^{19;21;23}
- Health
 - Can help students meet their recommended physical activity levels.¹⁹
 - Physical activity can promote healthy growth and development, assist in the maintenance of a healthy weight, reduce the risk of heart disease and diabetes, increase energy and improve bone health.²⁴⁻²⁶
 - Offering physical activity everyday promotes its value in daily life, which may help produce lifelong physical activity behaviours in children.²⁷

Important issues to consider:

- Some school policies may need to be reviewed so that they do not disadvantage children from lower SES families participating in physical activity, eg lack of PE uniforms as a reason for exclusion from activities, utilising external physical activity providers at a cost to students.
- Schools may also need to review disciplinary strategies to ensure that denial of physical activity/physical education is not used as a punishment.
- Including traditional Indigenous games in existing physical activity programs can help to further engage Aboriginal children in physical activity classes.

FACT SHEET 1.5

Provide opportunities for the development of Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) through active PE lessons

What is the research showing?

- FMS are basic actions, which are considered the foundation of human movement.²² They include locomotor skills (eg running, jumping etc) and object-control skills (eg catching, throwing).¹
- FMS do not automatically develop with age but are influenced through the quality of physical education provided.¹ Therefore children must be given opportunities to practise these skills.²²
- Failure to master these skills can be a significant barrier to students participating in daily physical activity and achieving the recommended levels of physical activity.²⁸

Benefits of providing opportunities for FMS

- Educational
 - The development of FMS is an identified outcome in the K-6 and 7-10 PDHPE syllabi.^{22;27}
 - It may provide an opportunity for positive social interactions amongst peers, which can improve a student's sense of school connectedness and social cohesion.^{19;21-23}
 - This principle supports a key strategy identified in the 2003 Government Response to the NSW Childhood Obesity Summit which was *"to develop student proficiency in fundamental movement skills by the end of Year 6"*.²⁹
- Health
 - Engaging in FMS can assist students to meet the recommended physical activity levels, which will provide them with health benefits including maintenance of healthy weight, reduced risks of heart disease and diabetes, increased energy and improved bone health.²⁴⁻²⁶
 - The development of FMS and physical competencies are positively associated with participation in organised sports, which facilitates children being more physically active now and in later life.^{22;28;30}

2. Actions within the school environment

FACT SHEET 2.1

Fully implement the Fresh Tastes @ School (NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy) throughout canteens and vending machines

What is the research showing?

- Fresh Tastes @ School is a NSW Government policy that requires all Department of Education and Training schools to sell only healthy and nutritious foods in canteens and vending machines.³¹ This policy is strongly supported by Catholic and Independent schools advisory bodies.
- Whilst not all students access the canteen everyday, for those that do, a large proportion of their dietary intake may be provided by this source.³² Therefore it is important that this food is of high nutritional value.

Benefits of implementing Fresh Tastes

- Educational
 - If students refuel on a nutritious meal/snack while at school, academic and physical performance may improve as blood sugar levels are maintained. This increases students' energy levels, mental alertness and ability to concentrate.^{2;5}
 - Fresh Taste Canteens can serve as an educational tool, by modelling healthy food choices and introducing students to new foods which may then influence their food choices at home and in the wider community.^{32;33}
 - Fresh Tastes reinforces the positive nutrition education messages that are being taught within the classroom.^{32;33}
- Health
 - Fresh Tastes ensures that healthy foods are available which may help students to increase their consumption of nutritious foods.^{32;33}
 - Childhood is a time when eating habits are formed, therefore the provision of healthy foods at the canteen may encourage children to taste new foods and foster lifelong healthy eating behaviours.^{5;7;8}
 - Fresh Tastes allows students to put into practice the positive nutrition education messages they have learnt within the classroom.^{32;33}

FACT SHEET 2.2

Ensure that school fund-raising activities, classroom rewards and school events are consistent with the Fresh Tastes @ School principles

What is the research showing?

- Fresh Tastes @ School is a NSW Government policy that requires all Department of Education and Training schools to sell only healthy and nutritious foods in canteens and vending machines.³¹ This policy is strongly supported by Catholic and Independent schools advisory bodies.
- Fresh Tastes extends to all food provided through the school canteen. 'RED' food items i.e. those that contribute excess kilojoules, saturated fat, sodium and/or sugar to the diet, are not to be sold on more than two occasions per term.³³
- It is recommended that 'RED' food items provided to students as part of school fund-raising activities, classroom rewards and school events form part of the allocated two 'RED' food days per term.³³

Benefits of ensuring fundraising, classroom rewards and school events are consistent with Fresh Tastes

- Educational
 - Food and drinks provided at these times can reinforce the positive nutrition education messages that are being taught within the curriculum and through the healthy school canteen.³³⁻³⁵
 - Healthy fundraising can involve the whole school community in a health promoting activity.
 - Healthy fundraising can add to school profit (for healthy fundraising ideas please refer to the *Good for Kids* website www.goodforkids.nsw.gov.au).
- Health
 - Childhood is a time when eating habits are formed, therefore the provision of healthy foods during school events may encourage children to taste new foods and foster lifelong healthy eating behaviours.^{5,7;8}
 - It allows students to put into practice the positive nutrition education messages they have learnt within the classroom.^{32;33}

FACT SHEET 2.3

Ensure that water is freely available during all breaks

What is the research showing?

- Students are recommended to choose water as a drink and consume approximately; 1 litre (5 glasses) for 5-8 year olds, 1.5 litres (7 glasses) for 9-12 year olds and 2 litres (8-10 glasses) for students aged 13+.²
- Many children are not meeting this recommendation, with approximately 60% of children drinking four or less cups of water each day.^{2;4}
- Many children will only drink water when reminded to and many consume fruit juice and soft drinks in place of water.^{1;2}

Benefits of water being freely available during breaks

- Education
 - Academic and physical performance may improve as the chance to hydrate maintains students' energy levels, mental alertness and ability to concentrate.^{2;5}
 - There is no cost to the student.
 - This principle supports a key strategy identified in the 2003 Government Response to the NSW Childhood Obesity Summit: *"That guidelines and/or policies be developed and implemented to ensure all students have easy access to drinking water in schools"*.²⁹
- Health
 - Water intake is essential for digestion, absorption and transportation, as well as for the elimination of waste products from the body.³
 - Water has zero sugar and energy content, meaning it will not negatively impact on children's weight or oral health.³
 - In parts of Australia with a fluoridated water supply it will assist the development of strong teeth and bones, preventing dental caries later in life.^{3;9}

FACT SHEET 2.4

Where appropriate, restrict access to stores and food outlets during school hours

What is the research showing?

- Unlike the school canteen, external food outlets do not have the duty of care to students in providing a menu of nutritious foods.³²
- Evidence has shown that children who are high consumers of foods from outside the home (especially from takeaway stores) have lower nutritional intakes and a higher proportion of food energy derived from fat.³⁶

Benefits of restricting access to stores and food outlets during school hours

- Educational
 - Prohibiting access to external outlets during school hours may increase student consumption from the canteen, which will add to school profits.³²
 - If students refuel on a nutritious meal/snack while at school, academic and physical performance may improve as blood sugar levels are maintained. This increases students' energy levels, mental alertness and ability to concentrate.^{2;5}
 - The duty of care to students is maintained as students are not leaving the school grounds.
- Health
 - If eating from a Fresh Tastes school canteen, students may increase their consumption of healthier foods which may encourage children to taste new foods and foster lifelong healthy eating behaviours.^{5;7;8}

Important issues to consider:

- In some regions of Australia, local shops are an integral part of the school environment and provide the only source of food for many students.
- In some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, children leave school grounds to access food at either external outlets or private homes of relatives. Restricting access to off-school food outlets could mean these children miss out altogether.
- Schools are encouraged to manage the impact such school policies have on these children by working with their community eg negotiate with the local shop owner to ensure healthy foods are available and that students are encouraged to purchase such foods.

FACT SHEET 2.5

Encourage and provide opportunities for active play at recess and lunch including the provision of adequate supervision in the playground

What is the research showing?

- Children and young people aged 5-18 years are recommended to participate in at least one hour of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.²⁰
- Children do not appear to be meeting this recommendation, with research indicating up to 87% of school aged children undertake less than one hour of physical activity a day.^{1;4}
- Children only spend between 40-60% of their school break time involved in moderate to vigorous physical activity. This indicates there is potential for increased physical activity during this time.²⁸

Benefits of encouraging and providing opportunities for active play

- Educational
 - Physical activity can improve students' self-esteem, confidence and well-being, as well as decreasing stress, anxiety and depression.²¹
 - It provides an opportunity for positive social interactions amongst peers, which can improve a student's sense of school connectedness and social cohesion.^{19;21-23}
 - Short-term academic performance may increase due to increased blood flow to the brain, increasing children's concentration, mental alertness and energy levels for learning.^{19;21;23}
 - If structured activities are available at recess and lunch, the incidents of anti-social behaviour may decrease.²¹
 - The school playground reflects out-of-school recreational pursuits, so activity in this environment may successfully encourage engagement in lifelong physical activity.²⁸
- Health
 - Active play can assist students to meet the recommended physical activity levels whilst also providing the health benefits of participating in regular physical activity i.e. maintenance of healthy weight, reduced risks of heart disease and diabetes, increased energy and improved bone health.²⁴⁻²⁶
 - Research suggests that encouraging students to be more active during recess and lunch may actually increase their level of physical activity after school.³⁷

FACT SHEET 2.6

Limit, as much as possible, non-educational (out of lesson time) small screen and sedentary activity at school

What is the research showing?

- Children and young people should limit the time spent in sedentary recreational activities to less than two hours per day.²⁰
- Data indicates that up to 75% of secondary school boys and 66% of secondary school girls are exceeding this recommendation.¹
- Children who spend more than two hours per day in small screen sedentary activity have low energy expenditure, and if coupled with excess energy intake, are significantly more likely to become overweight or obese.^{1;30}
- Research suggests that children who move less at school tend to be less active after school.³⁷

Benefits of limiting non-educational small screen and sedentary activity

- Educational
 - It may encourage students to participate in social activities, providing opportunities for positive peer interactions. This can improve a student's sense of school connectedness and social cohesion.^{19;21-23}
 - Replacing sedentary behaviour with physical activity can provide students with all the benefits of physical activity i.e. improved self-esteem, confidence and well-being, as well as decreased stress, anxiety and depression.²¹ It may also improve academic performance due to increased blood flow to the brain, increasing children's concentration, mental alertness and energy levels for learning.^{19;21;23}
- Health
 - Replacing sedentary behaviour with physical activity assists students to meet the recommended physical activity levels whilst also providing the health benefits of participating in regular physical activity i.e. maintenance of healthy weight, reduced risks of heart disease and diabetes, increased energy and improved bone health.²⁴⁻²⁶
 - Research suggests that students who are more active at school may actually increase their level of physical activity after school. This can help lead to life-long physical activity.³⁷
 - If teachers provide students with creative, non-small screen activities during periods of wet-weather, it can not only reduce the small screen and sedentary behaviours in school, but may have a flow-on effect to activities in the home.

FACT SHEET 2.7

Ensure the physical environment is appropriate for promoting physical activity through access to equipment and facilities during school hours

What is the research showing?

- Children and young people aged 5-18 years are recommended to participate in at least one hour of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.²⁰
- Children do not appear to be meeting this recommendation, with research revealing up to 87% of school aged children undertake less than one hour of physical activity a day.^{1;4}
- The school's physical environment can significantly impact a student's interest and motivation to be physically active.²⁸ Children are more likely to engage in physical activity during breaks if there are allocated playground areas, playground designs/markings, and access to facilities/equipment including a sufficient quantity of balls and other apparatus.^{28;30}

Benefits of ensuring students have access to equipment and facilities during school hours

- Educational
 - Playground markings could assist schools to manage their space more effectively as they have been shown to effectively distribute children around the playground.³⁸
 - If structured activities are available at recess and lunch the incidents of anti-social behaviour may decrease.²¹
 - Students may increase their physical activity and hence receive the benefits of participating in physical activity i.e. improved self-esteem, confidence and well-being as well as decreased stress, anxiety and depression.²¹ It may also improve short-term academic performance due to increased blood flow to the brain, increasing children's concentration, mental alertness and energy levels for learning.^{19;21;23}
- Health
 - If children are active during recess and lunch it can assist students in meeting the recommended physical activity levels whilst also providing the health benefits of participating in regular physical activity i.e. maintenance of healthy weight, reduced risks of heart disease and diabetes, increased energy and improved bone health.²⁴⁻²⁶
 - Research suggests that encouraging students to be more active during recess and lunch may actually increase their level of physical activity after school.³⁷

FACT SHEET 2.8

Encourage student participation in extra-curricular sport, and active weekly school sport

What is the research showing?

- Students from Kindergarten - Year 11 are required to undertake compulsory school sport each week.³⁹ School sport is an essential part of the curriculum, fundamental to children's development.³⁹
- Children and young people aged 5-18 years are recommended to participate in at least one hour of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.²⁰
- Extra-curricular physical activity programs which meet the needs and interests of students should be made available within the school environment.¹⁸

Benefits of encouraging student participation in extra-curricular and active weekly sport

- Educational
 - Involvement in school and extra curricular sport can provide students with an opportunity for positive social interactions amongst peers. This may improve a student's sense of school and community connectedness and social cohesion.^{19;21-23}
 - Involvement in sport during high school years has a particularly protective effect in regards to participation in risky behaviour.^{40;41}
 - Short-term academic performance may increase due to increased blood flow to the brain, increasing children's concentration, mental alertness and energy levels for learning.^{19;21;23}
 - Addresses equity issues as it provides physical activity to those students who have limited opportunities to participate in such activities out of school.
 - Physical activity can improve students' self-esteem, confidence and well-being, as well decreasing stress, anxiety and depression.²¹
- Health
 - Can help students meet their recommended physical activity levels.²⁰
 - Physical activity can promote healthy growth and development, maintain healthy weight, reduce the risk of heart disease and diabetes, increase energy and improve bone health.²⁴⁻²⁶
 - Frequent participation in sports after school hours during adolescence has been associated with increased physical activity during adulthood.^{39;42}

3. Actions within the broader school community

FACT SHEET 3.1

Involve parents and carers in both school and home-based nutrition and physical activity programs/activities

What is the research showing?

- A health-promoting school links education in the curriculum with the wider school community and home.¹² Therefore, nutrition and physical activity messages delivered in the classroom and school environment need to be further endorsed by the messages being delivered at home.
- Evidence shows that programs that involve and educate parents can result in greater benefits for children, as the more informed parents become, the more supportive of these messages they can be at home.¹²

Benefits of involving parents and carers in nutrition programs

- Educational
 - It may assist the engagement of parents in other aspects of the school community.
 - Involving parents and carers in a school programs is an effective way to directly access the home by educating parents on key nutrition and physical activity messages. This can then positively influence children's practices at home and at school.⁴³
- Health
 - Research has shown that parents who are informed of key healthy eating messages, such as the effects of having breakfast, eating regular meals, eating with the family, and minimising fast food, are more likely to have children who eat the recommended serves of fruit, vegetables and dairy.¹
 - The nutrition behaviours of the parents and other family members could potentially be influenced.

Important issues to consider:

- When promoting healthy eating and physical activity programs to parents, either directly or through their children in the schools setting, the following existing Aboriginal education resources should be utilised to ensure optimal exposure for Aboriginal parents/community:
 - Aboriginal Education Assistants.
 - Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers.
 - Home School Liaison/Aboriginal School Liaison Officers.
 - Regional Aboriginal Education Advisory Groups.
 - Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups.

FACT SHEET 3.2 Encourage healthy lunchboxes and lunchbox programs for all students

What is the research showing?

- Children consume about a third of their daily energy intake whilst at school.⁴⁴
- A study of school children's lunchboxes in 2005 found:
 - One third of children had a fruit juice or cordial drink provided.⁴⁵
 - Only one third of children had water in their lunchbox.⁴⁵
 - 90% of children had snack or “extra” food items (eg chocolates, lollies, biscuits) with an average of three servings of such foods per child.⁴⁵ “Extra” foods contain large amounts of fat and/or sugar, which can significantly impact on a child's weight status. These foods are recommended to only be eaten sometimes, in small amounts, or not at all.¹

Benefits of encouraging the packing of healthy lunchboxes and lunchbox programs

- Educational
 - If nutritious foods replace these “extra” foods, classroom behaviour and academic outcomes are likely to improve as blood sugar levels are maintained, thus increasing students' energy levels, mental alertness and ability to concentrate.^{2;5}
 - It could support and reinforce the healthy nutrition messages within the curriculum and the healthy school canteen.¹²
 - It may be an effective way to engage and inform parents and to potentially positively influence nutrition practices at home.⁴⁵
- Health
 - It may decrease the consumption of “extra” foods and drinks associated with weight gain that are commonly seen in children's lunchboxes.⁴⁶
 - Specific advice can be given to parents regarding the limiting of “extra” foods and drinks, whilst increasing the amount of vegetable, fruit and water within school lunchboxes.⁴⁷

Important issues to consider:

- In some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, children may leave the school grounds to access food from food outlets or private homes of relatives, rather than bringing food to school.
- Children from low SES families are more likely to consume foods which are high in sugar and fat.^{1;48-50}
- Therefore schools are encouraged to consider the impact a healthy lunchbox program may have on these students and their families and provide support and information as to how families can provide healthy lunchboxes or meals at home.

FACT SHEET 3.3

Promote initiatives and principles of active transport to and from school to parents and students

What is the research showing?

- Active transport is defined as physical activity as a means of transport, including walking, cycling or using public transport.⁵¹ It is an effective way of increasing the physical activity level of children and their parents.³⁰
- The 2004 NSW *School Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey (SPANS)* found:
 - Only 30% of Year 6 students walked to school everyday, 20% used public transport, and 30% travelled by car.¹
 - Only 20% of secondary students walked to school, more than 50% used public transport, and 20% travelled by car.¹

Benefits of promoting the principles of active transport

- Educational
 - Student road safety knowledge and skills may increase as students become familiar with their local community.⁵²
 - Traffic may be reduced in the local area, improving students' safety around the school.⁵²
 - Short-term academic performance may increase due to increased blood flow to the brain, increasing children's concentration, mental alertness and energy levels for learning.^{19;21;23}
 - Addresses equity issues, as it provides physical activity to those students who have limited opportunities to participate in such activities out of school.
 - Children and parents may engage with other students and families, increasing social networks within the school. This may increase the likelihood that these families will take part in other activities within the school.⁵²
- Health
 - Can help students meet their recommended physical activity levels.²⁰
 - Physical activity can promote healthy growth and development, maintain healthy weight, reduce the risk of heart disease and diabetes, increase energy and improve bone health.²⁴⁻²⁶
 - A number of initiatives currently exist that can be implemented within schools to help increase the number of students and parents utilising active transport to travel to and from school eg the Walking School Bus Program, International walk to school month, Walk Safely to School Day.

FACT SHEET 3.4

Where available and appropriate, establish an Active After-School Program

What is the research showing?

- Children and young people aged 5-18 years are recommended to participate in at least one hour of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.
- Children do not appear to be meeting this recommendation, with research indicating up to 87% of school aged children undertake less than one hour of physical activity a day.^{1;4}
- Evidence indicates that children are most sedentary in the hours between school and bed time.^{1;53} This physical inactivity results in low energy expenditure, and when coupled with excess energy intake, can significantly increase a child's likelihood of becoming overweight or obese.^{1;30}

Benefits of establishing an Active After School Program:

- Educational
 - An Active After-School Program addresses equity issues, as it provides physical activity to those students who have limited opportunities to participate in such activities out of school.
 - Activities may be run by externally trained facilitators, reducing any additional burden to current teaching staff.⁵⁴
 - Physical activity can improve student self-esteem, confidence and well-being, as well as decreasing stress, anxiety and depression.²¹
 - It provides an opportunity for positive social interactions amongst peers which can improve a student's sense of school connectedness and social cohesion.^{19;21-23}
- Health
 - Can help students meet their recommended physical activity levels.²⁰
 - Physical activity can promote healthy growth and development, maintain healthy weight, reduce the risk of heart disease and diabetes, increase energy and improve bone health.²⁴⁻²⁶
 - Participation in an Active After-School Program provides children with the opportunity to enhance their skill development, increasing the likelihood of long term physical activity.

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