

Date 31 May 2012

Subject New resource designed to break the cycle of family obesity

Childhood obesity rates continue to escalate with around 25 per cent of Australian children now overweight or obese compared to five per cent in the 1960s*. To help reverse this trend and break the cycle of family obesity, Hunter-based Home-Start Family Services and nib foundation have partnered to develop the Eat, Move, Live project for families living in New South Wales and Victoria.

The project will assist struggling families in the region by increasing their knowledge and practical skills to provide healthy and affordable food, and easy, fun, physical exercise for the whole family.

Home-Start Family Services CEO, Marilyn Barnes, said the project arose following demand from families for practical help and resources to allow them to make changes in their eating and exercise habits.

"The project will feature a printed and online resource full of simple, healthy, affordable ideas for meals, snacks and good nutrition. It will also include straight-forward, entertaining ways to increase physical movement for both children and adults," Ms Barnes said.

"In addition, Home-Start's network of 400 volunteers will visit families weekly to provide hands-on assistance and demonstrate how to implement the ideas in the home," she added.

Group cooking sessions and Eat, Move, Live days will also be held in 20 communities throughout New South Wales and Victoria, helping to increase awareness of good nutrition, a balanced diet and regular activity in the broader community.

nib foundation Chairman, Terry Lawler, said providing families with better education and awareness of good nutrition and activity habits will help them to make positive decisions regarding their health leading to improved emotional and physical outcomes.

"Many parents find it difficult to make affordable and nutritional meals for their families. This resource will help provide easy to follow recipes that won't break the family budget," Mr Lawler said.

"By making these resources available free-of-charge we are providing families the opportunity to make simple changes in their lifestyles that will significantly improve their health."

The *Eat, Move Live* resource will be available at www.homestartaustralia.org from July.

-ENDS-

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*Figure obtained from the Federal Department of Health and Ageing website: <http://www.yourhealth.gov.au>