



# **Childhood Obesity Prevention: Seizing the opportunity**

Eastern Region Obesity Prevention Summit  
Wednesday 11 December 2019



# VicHealth Healthy Eating Strategy 2019-2023

*To support and promote fair and sustainable changes across the food system to make healthier eating easier for all Victorians:*

- Food environments (including sports settings)
- Promotion of fruit and vegetables
- Food cultures
- **Childhood obesity prevention**



Health Equity



Research



Arts



## Why now? Why call it out?

- Ministerial commitment
- A changing policy landscape – national and state
- International movements – UNICEF, WHO, London, Amsterdam
- Converging agendas – Climate Change, Equity, Planning and Health
- Stakeholder momentum – HEAL, Victorian research

# The groundwork

## Action to prevent obesity in Victoria



### 1. Engage and support local communities to develop and lead their own healthy eating and physical activity initiatives

These should be community-based and focus on local areas or population groups with the highest rates of overweight and obesity.



### 2. Protect children from unhealthy food and drink marketing

This includes prohibiting advertising, promotion and sponsorship in publicly owned and managed places. Priority should be given to areas around schools, children's sporting events and activities, and public transport.



### 3. Implement a statewide public education campaign to encourage healthy eating

This should focus on population groups with the highest rates of overweight and obesity.



### 4. Implement initiatives to improve family diets, particularly in children's early years

This should focus on increasing food literacy and prioritising specific population groups including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



### 5. Support schools to increase students' physical activity and physical literacy

This should take a whole-of-school approach, be reflected in the curriculum and be supported by training and professional development.



### 6. Increase the scope of and strengthen compliance with the existing School Canteens and Other School Food Services Policy

This should take a whole-of-school approach, be reflected in the curriculum and be backed by a monitoring and enforcement framework.



### 7. Develop a whole-of-government policy that requires healthy food procurement

This should incorporate the *Healthy Choices* guidelines and apply to all publicly owned and managed facilities and settings.



### 8. Develop and implement a strategy to get Victorians walking more

This should emphasise the need for walking infrastructure and urban design to make it safer and easier for people to walk to local destinations like shops, public transport, and schools.

Healthy Eating  
and Active Living  
Roundtable



P-HE-699 | July 2019



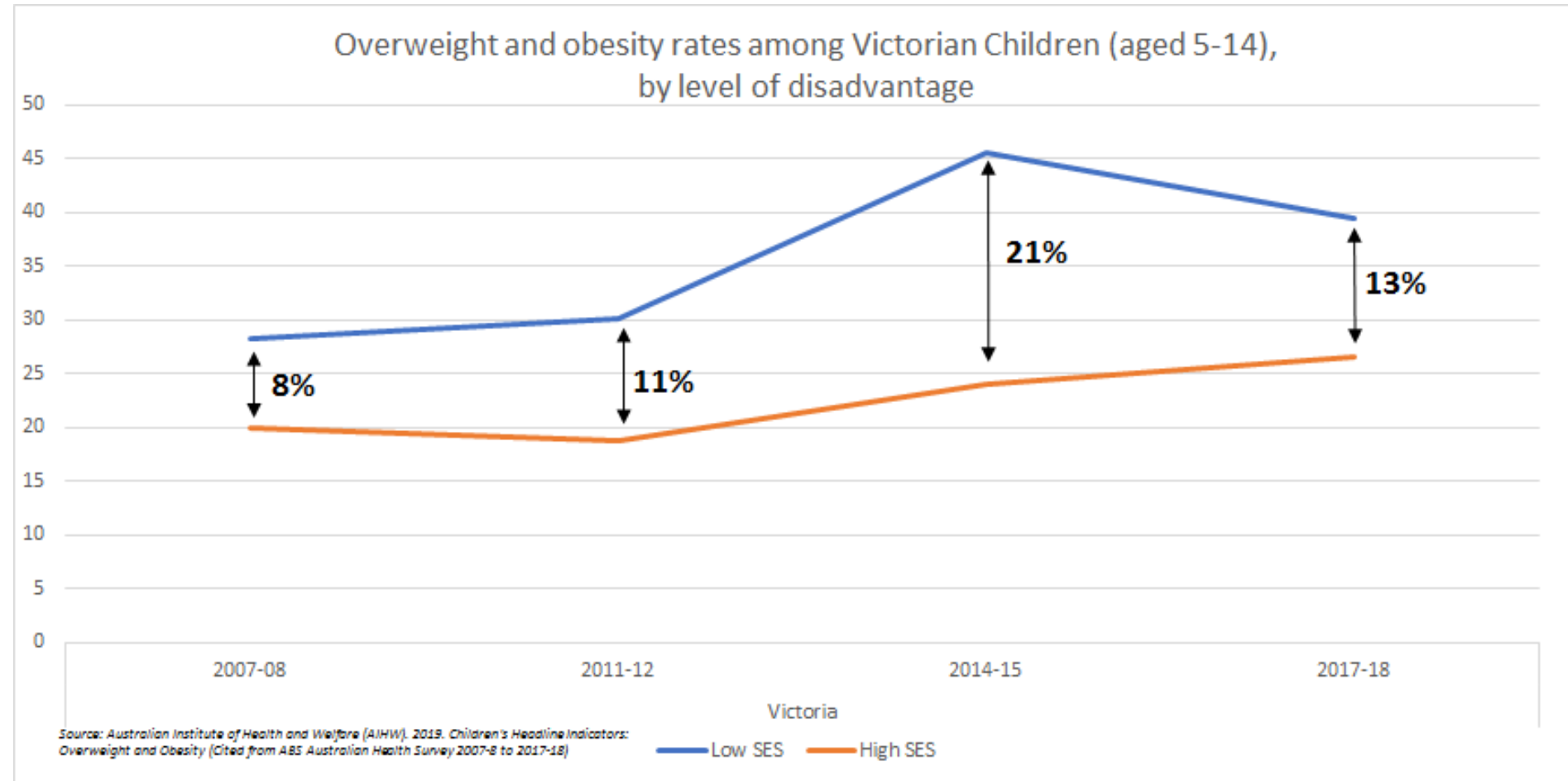


## Guiding principles

- First 1000 days
- Equity
- Reducing stigma
- Rights-based
- Child-led/participatory
- Partnerships

Proportion of childhood overweight and obesity by State/Territory						
	Age group (years)					
	2–4	5–7	8–11	12–15	16–17	TOTAL
VIC	27.9	27.1	21.0	18.5	#26.8	22.6
NSW	27.0	31.0	23.0	18.5	#29.2	25.7
QLD	19.9	23.4	29.2	22.1	#24.8	24.5
SA	#19.8	#23.4	#24.6	#28.2	#31.5	25.6
WA	#17.1	#28.4	#30.8	22.2	#25.8	24.7
TAS	#27.9	#27.0	#26.4	#42.6	#22.1	28.7
NT	12.8	#23.0	#30.7	#37.6	#42.4	26.4
ACT	#36.9	#20.2	#25.0	#26.1	#40.2	28.6
AUSTRALIA	24.6	27.5	25.2	20.8	28.1	24.9

# Widening inequities in childhood obesity rates in Victoria





## **Level of action: State and Federal**

- National Obesity Prevention Strategy
- Ministerial Roundtable on Childhood Obesity Prevention
- VicHealth Childhood Obesity Taskforce
- Aboriginal-led policy consensus
- Mobilising the community – OPC and Parents Voice
- Collective and consistent voice – Values-based framing



# Roundtable on Childhood Obesity Prevention



Jenny Mikakos MP

22 October at 5:30 pm · 🌐

Obesity is a significant challenge with over a quarter of our children now either overweight or obese. This is among the highest rates in the world- and it is continuing to trend upwards. That's why today VicHealth hosted a roundtable of childhood obesity prevention on my behalf. See more



Minister for Health Facebook post, 22 October 2019

*Obesity is a significant challenge with over a quarter of our children now either overweight or obese. This is among the highest rates in the world- and it is continuing to trend upwards. That's why today VicHealth hosted a roundtable of childhood obesity prevention on my behalf.*

*Without further action, around 7,000 children will be added to the childhood overweight and obesity toll in Victoria each year – an additional child every 75 minutes.*

*And that's why I invited VicHealth to form a taskforce on obesity prevention.*

*We know we need to see change- sooner rather than later and that's why we are working with leaders in health promotion to come up with new ideas to tackle this crisis.*



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# A collective and powerful voice: Values Based Messaging

## Healthy persuasion

A message guide for health  
promotion practitioners



COMMON  
CAUSE

VicHealth  
vichealth.vic.gov.au

A new resource  
from VicHealth

[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/valuesbasedmessaging](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/valuesbasedmessaging)

# Values Based Messaging

The following are specific words to use or lose in messaging around healthy eating.

Words to use	Words to lose
Healthy options	Healthy choices
Unhealthy food	Junk food, fast food
Health levy	Sugar tax
Honest food labelling	Appropriate / improved / clear food labelling
Set higher standards / free from	Ban, force, stricter laws, etc.
Food packed with cheap ingredients like salt, sugar and fat	Food high in salt, sugar and fat
Processed food industry	Food industry

# Community level

- First 1000 days – INFANT program
- A focus on settings: Museum Victoria flagship announcement
- Funding of 8 LGAs to remove sugary drinks in LGA owned or managed sport centres
- Unhealthy food sponsorship in children's sport
- Community-led, place-based approaches
- VH funded initiatives: This Girl Can, Victoria Walks, Walk to School
- Partnership Grants

<https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/funding/partnership-grants>

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## Watch this space...

- Changing the norm – food and drink availability
- Unhealthy sponsorship
- Young people involvement
- Mobilising support
- More to come!



# Thank you

Jane Potter  
Principal Program Officer (Healthy Eating)  
[jpotter@vichealth.vic.gov.au](mailto:jpotter@vichealth.vic.gov.au)  
vichealth.vic.gov.au