



KIDS AT PLAY - ACTIVE PLAY AND EATING WELL PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The Kids at Play - Active Play and Eating Well Project is a co-ordinated response to the rising levels of overweight and obesity in the community. It focuses on promoting healthy eating and increasing active play and physical activity in young children.

Early childhood settings generally include long day care, family day care, pre-school, play school and play groups. The 2007 Report on Government Services indicates that 41.9% of ACT children from birth to 5 years attend Australian Government approved childcare services. In 2006 research was conducted to identify nutrition needs and current research on best practice programs in nutrition and physical activity in early childhood settings. To date, there has been limited focus on nutrition and physical activity within the ACT early childhood sector.

The project builds on Sport and Recreation Services *Kids at Play* physical activity program. It is a partnership between ACT Health, Sport and Recreation Services and Heart Foundation ACT.

This three year project targets children aged 0-5 years, their families/carers, early childhood sector staff and teachers. Stakeholders will be actively involved in project planning, and project monitoring via a reference committee.

The project aims to:

- Develop and market messages that promote active play and healthy eating;
- Increase families and carers knowledge on the importance of active play and healthy eating; and
- Increase early childhood staff, teachers and health professionals' knowledge and skills on the importance of promoting active play and healthy eating in early childhood.

The key deliverables of the project will be social marketing messages, training for early childhood staff and health professionals, resources on physical activity and healthy eating for young children, and resources for parents.

The key outcomes of the project will be an increased knowledge of nutrition and physical activity requirements for early childhood years by parents and early childhood sector staff and awareness of overweight and obesity as an issue in early childhood settings.

The Healthpact Research Centre for Health Promotion and Well being located at the University of Canberra has been contracted to conduct pre and post evaluations to monitor the success of the project.

For further information about the project please contact Tiffany Peddle, Kids at Play – Active Play and Eating Well Project Officer on 6269 2651 or email tiffany.peddle@heartfoundation.org.au