

## **Introduction**

The primary prevention of obesity among children remains an international priority. Limited evidence exists regarding the effectiveness of population level interventions in increasing children's consumption of healthy food and physical activity and reducing obesity. The aim of this paper is to report on the impact of a population-level implementation intervention to improve such risks and reduce overweight and obesity among children.

## **Method**

A 5 year intervention (*Good for Kids Good for Life*) was implemented that sought to build the capacity of 7 community settings to promote healthy nutrition and physical activity among children aged 3-12 years: all schools, child care services, sports clubs, community service organisations, GPs, health services, and Aboriginal health organisations, supported by social marketing. Evaluation of the intervention was undertaken by pre-post collection of parent/self-report and anthropometric data from a random sample of 4,000 children.

## **Results**

Significant improvements in the following behaviours were observed: consumption of sweetened drinks and water, fruit and vegetables, and time spent in physical activity.

No effect was found regarding the consumption of energy dense, nutrient poor foods.

The prevalence of overweight and obesity declined by approximately 1% per year in the intervention region compared to no change in the state. A significant 7.4% reduction in prevalence of overweight and obesity was found for girls aged 5-10 years.

**Conclusion**

The findings suggest that a population-level implementation intervention has the potential to improve the prevalence of healthy nutrition and physical activity among children, and to reduce the prevalence of overweight and obesity.