

Dear School Principal,

As you may be aware, childhood obesity is becoming an increasingly important issue in our local communities. Obesity is currently one of the world's largest health and social problems and latest estimates put the worldwide figure of overweight or obese school-age children at 155 million, or one in ten children. Currently in Australia, 25% of our children are overweight or obese.

The Better Health Program is a **FREE** community placed, evidence based program for children aged between 7-13 who are above their healthy weight and their families. The multi-disciplinary program combines all the elements known to be vital in treating and preventing overweight or obesity in children, including family involvement, practical education in nutrition and diet, increasing physical activity and behavioural change. With an emphasis on practical, fun learning the Better Health program is designed to deliver *sustained* improvements in families' diets, fitness levels and overall health. By following the program principles, participants will lose weight naturally and thereby build a foundation for healthy living – for life.

The program has been extensively researched and a peer reviewed publication of the Randomised Controlled Trial was published in the Obesity journal (*Obesity Vol 18 Feb 2010*). The program has been delivered across Australia and NZ since 2007 with State and Federal Government support. The program was developed by experts in paediatric dietetics and behavioural psychology and our evidence base show significant and sustained improvements post program including reduction of BMI, reduction of waist circumference, improved nutritional intake, lower resting heart rate, improved fitness, increased time spent in physical activity and improved self-esteem.

Funding provided by the Western Australian Department of Health will enable the Better Health Program to be delivered in your local area. We are asking for your help to deliver information directly to local children and families by distributing flyers to students in Years 2 to 6 at your school, including newsletter insert in your weekly newsletter or allowing a Better Health Program representative come out and present at a school assembly. We hope that this promotion will encourage families to refer themselves to the program, encourage personal responsibility and heightened motivation. By promoting the program to all children and families we avoid the risk of stigmatizing children who are overweight and obese.

We sincerely hope that you will support our joint initiative to provide healthy lifestyle programs to overweight and obese children in your local area. We can provide an electronic newsletter or website insert, or flyers with information about the program and would ask you to please distribute this information to all children in your school newsletter or to individual children (as appropriate) via school nurses.

Families can register directly onto the program by calling 1300 822 953 or emailing program@betterhealthcompany.org

Should you require any additional information about the Better Health Program you can contact me directly on 0410 784 788 or email hayley@betterhealthcompany.org

We appreciate your support and offer our thanks in advance.

Yours sincerely,

Hayley Robertson,
Better Health Program Manager



Evidence based obesity prevention program for children and families

The Better Health Program is a multi-component healthy lifestyle program for overweight and obese children aged 7-13 years and their families. It is specifically designed to be based in local communities and is FREE for families to attend.

The Better Health Program has been fully adapted to meet all current Australian guidelines and meets NHMRC recommendations for the Management of Overweight and Obesity in Children. Children and their families become fitter, healthier and happier as they have fun, meet new friends and learn new skills to establish and maintain healthier lifestyles.

THE PROGRAM

The Better Health Program was designed by leading health experts in the field of childhood obesity management. The program delivers fun, interactive sessions supporting children and families to adopt healthy attitudes to food and nutrition, to encourage regular exercise, make informed food choices and learn essential health skills and knowledge.

The Better Health Program consists of family skills development in the areas of nutrition, behaviour change and physical activity over a 10 week term. The program offers two delivery models - attending two hour sessions either once or twice per each week. Parents/carers attend each session with their children to encourage a whole family approach.

EVIDENCE BASED APPROACH

Developed by specialist dietitians and psychologists, the program has been researched extensively. A successful RCT was completed and published, (*Obesity, Vol 18, Supp 2, Feb 2010.*) showing statistically significant improvements at 12 months including:

- reduction of sedentary behaviour
- improved nutritional intake
- reduction in recovery heart rate
- improved self esteem
- reduction of children's BMI
- waist circumference reduction
- increased time spent in sports



Quick Facts:

Over 10,000 participants have attended a program in Australia or New Zealand

Extensive implementation across multiple states and regions

86% program attendance rate

12 year evidence base including a published RCT

Post program results indicate significant and sustained health

Fax or Email back to:

Attention: The Better Health Company

Fax number: 1300 325 301

Email: hayley@betterhealthcompany.org

Please send:

☐

Better Health Program flyer, number of copies _____

☐

Better Health Program posters (A3), number of copies _____

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An electronic version of the Better Health Program advertisements

School Details:

School name: _____

Contact name: _____

Postal Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Email: _____

