

5 June 2017

Australian parents back reducing soft drink consumption

A report published in *Medical Journal of Australia* today has revealed that the total glucose concentration in Australian soft drinks is 22 per cent higher than in similar beverages in the United States of America.

Australian parents are concerned about overconsumption of sugar sweetened drinks by children. A recent survey of parents by advocacy group Parents' Voice found that 89 per cent supported water being the standard drink offered to children by food outlets.

In April, Parents' Voice launched an Australian first campaign: #waterwiththat. The campaign urges all signatories to the *Quick Service Restaurant Initiative for Responsible Advertising and Marketing to Children* to include water with their kids' meals.

Alice Pryor, Campaigns Manager for Parents' Voice, said: "Almost every second Australian child (47 per cent) is consuming at least one sugary drink every day. It is the largest source of added sugar in the Australian diet. We believe that all children should be given a head start on a healthy life. Water should be the number one drink of choice for all children.

Along with overweight and obesity concerns, tooth decay is a growing worry for Australian children and teenagers. Ms Pryor added: "Alarmingly, one in two Australian children aged 12 years will have decay in their adult teeth, with added sugar being a major factor."

Children are particularly vulnerable to the persuasive powers of food marketing, influencing their food preferences and consumption. They are surrounded by food marketing online, while watching TV, using apps and playing games, supermarket shopping and playing sport.

Alice Pryor added "We need to address the burden that sugary drink consumption is placing on our children. Australia needs to ban junk food advertising to children and introduce a health levy on sugar sweetened beverages."

-Ends-

Media contacts:

Luke Daley: M: 0466 471 136 E: luke@parentsvoice.org.au

Alice Pryor: M: 0416 219 261 E: alice@parentsvoice.org.au

Note to editors:

Parents' Voice is an online network of parents who are interested in improving the food and activity environments of Australian children. Formerly known as The Parents' Jury, Parents' Voice was formed in 2004 and represents thousands of Australian parents. Parents' Voice is supported by Cancer Council Australia, Diabetes Victoria, VicHealth, YMCA Australia and the Bluearth Foundation.

Parents' Voice is supported by:

