

**Embargoed until 12.01am Sunday 21 August 2016.**

## **Supermarket Toddler Meals Judged To Be Too Salty**

Many Australian toddlers are consuming their recommended daily salt intake in just one sitting, an examination of supermarket toddler meals has found. Salty foods accustom the tastebuds to salt and excess sodium intake from salt is linked to high blood pressure and increased risk of stroke and heart attacks in adulthood.

A range of prepared toddler meals investigated by nutritionist Dr Rosemary Stanton and advocacy group Parents' Voice, have failed the Food Detectives' test with products found to contain too much sodium for young children.

Dr Stanton questioned the use of added salt in *Only Organic Vegetable Macaroni Cheese*, *Only Organic Beef Bolognese Pasta* and *Heinz Little Kids Ravioli Bolognese*.

"Latest health advice discourages parents from adding salt when they're cooking at home for toddlers. Adding salt to products marketed to children is unwise and unnecessary."

Dr Stanton was also concerned with the sodium content in foods marketed for toddlers such as *Only Organic Vegetable Macaroni Cheese* (273mg), *Annabel Karmel Cheeky Chicken & Pumpkin Risotto* (230mg) *Heinz Little Kids Ravioli Bolognese* (220mg) and *Annabel Karmel Beautiful Bolognese Pasta Bake* (202mg) per serve

"The Nutrient Reference Value for sodium consumption for Australian children aged 1 to 3 years is 200-400mg per day. It would be hard for parents to keep their children's sodium consumption to recommended levels if these types of products are consumed regularly.

"These meals are not difficult to prepare and could feature as regular family meals. The Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend that by the age of 12 months, toddlers should be consuming a wide variety of nutritious food as enjoyed by the rest of the family. It is not a good idea to encourage parents/carers, or children themselves, to consume food that's different to the family's normal diet. This can result in the development of poor eating habits."

Another concerning addition was the use of apple juice concentrate and apple juice in the *Annabel Karmel* meals examined. "These add sugar and accustom young palates to a sweeter taste, but won't add any significant nutrient content," Dr Stanton added.

Alice Pryor, Campaigns Manager for Parents' Voice is concerned that the availability of these products, which are not healthier choices, will reinforce the message that toddlers need special food.

"Parents want to give their children the best start to life, and these products lead parents to believe they are healthy and nutritional meals for their children when many of them are actual laden with hidden salt and sugar. In particular, both *Annabel Karmel* meals proudly proclaim 'low in sodium' on the front of the pack, a claim we think is misleading.

"Most parents of toddlers would struggle to find time in the supermarket to read and compare the small print on the backs of these products. Parents' Voice is calling on *Only Organic*, *Heinz*, and *Annabel Karmel* to reformulate these products and ensure that their marketing claims are more closely matched to the reality."

**-Ends-**

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### **Notes to Editor**

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:**



# MEDIA RELEASE

Products were purchased at a Melbourne metro supermarkets on 03/08/2016

<b>Product</b>	<b>Serving Size</b>	<b>Sodium Per Serve</b>	<b>Sodium Per 100g</b>
RAFFERTY'S GARDEN Moroccan Lamb	170g	34mg	20mg
HEINZ Little Kids Spaghetti Bolognaise	220g	95mg	45mg
HEINZ Little Kids Savoury Rice & Beef	220g	100mg	45mg
ONLY ORGANIC Beef Bolognese Pasta	220g	114mg	52mg
ANNABEL KARMELO Beautiful Bolognese Pasta Bake	200g	202mg	101mg
HEINZ Little Kids Ravioli Bolognaise	200g	220mg	110mg
ANNABEL KARMELO Cheeky Chicken & Pumpkin Risotto	200g	230mg	115mg
ONLY ORGANIC Vegetable Macaroni Cheese	220g	273mg	126mg

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