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Global study shows Australian children are overweight

A new study released yesterday shows Australia is in the top ten of a global study tracking progress on health yet face challenges in alcohol consumption and overweight children says Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) Michael Moore.

“Australia has an obesity problem and what’s even more is that our children are suffering. We need to invest in preventative measures targeting obesity and alcohol so our children can have a healthy future.

The study published in the Lancet, [*Measuring the health-related Sustainable Development Goals in 188 countries: a baseline analysis from the Global Burden of Disease Study 2015*](#) by the international Global Burden of Disease collaboration, analyses the progress of 188 countries, over a 15-year period.

“This is another in a long line of research confirming we have an obesity problem and the Government continues to decrease funding for prevention. Prevention initiatives for children will help them develop good eating and exercise habits for the rest of their lives,” says Mr Moore also President of the World Federation of Public Health Associations.

“Soft drinks provide no nutritional value yet some children are drinking them every day. A sugar tax on soft drinks will encourage parents and children to choose healthier beverage options and improve overall health,” continues Mr Moore.

“Sugar is a big contributor to obesity yet we still need to consider consumables high in sodium and fat. A National Nutrition Plan needs to be developed so all the factors can be addressed to the rise in obesity over the past two decades,” said Mr Moore.

“There has been a 35% rise in obesity in the last twenty-five years. This increase should be completely unacceptable to anyone who takes the health of our children seriously. The only way to stop this number from growing at this exponential rate is to invest in prevention. Australia’s ageing population is also on the rise so the risk of a majority of elderly people with chronic conditions relying on primary health and hospital services is high,” said Mr Moore.

“Prevention is better than cure. If prevention isn’t funded more funding will need to be pumped into hospitals to manage chronic diseases. Fund prevention, save lives. It’s that simple. By doing this we can give future generations the best start in life and role models who live by example,” concluded Mr Moore.

For further information/comment:

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