

Advocacy targets for overweight and obesity

Evidence shows that Australia's overweight and obesity problem requires a comprehensive approach focusing on the entire life-course. Success will require a significantly increased and long-term commitment from governments, health and related agencies, the community and relevant industries.

These advocacy targets are seen as components of a comprehensive approach, and are not set out in priority order. It is important to appreciate that no one strategy in isolation is likely to resolve the challenge of overweight and obesity, but all are seen as vital components of the overall approach most likely to succeed over time.

1. Programs and policies across all levels of government to ensure that all people have access to an adequate and sustainable supply of affordable, healthy, nutritious food.
2. Phase out advertising and promotion of unhealthy* foods and beverages, underpinned by legislated controls.
3. Clear, accessible information on the nutritional content of all food products; front of pack "traffic lights" labelling.
4. Regulations and planning codes that require provision of a built environment that supports accessible daily recreational physical activity, sport and active transport (e.g. walking and cycling).
5. Reorientation of transport and planning priorities to enable expansion of an affordable and accessible public transport network.
6. Rules, policies programs and infrastructure in schools and workplaces that support regular physical activity and healthy eating.
7. Sustained adequately funded public education programs on physical activity and healthy eating.
8. Programs, policies and infrastructure to inform and support parents and carers to maximise health, physical activity and good nutrition in the early years.
9. Policies and structures in all relevant agencies at all levels of government that prioritise the reduction of overweight and obesity.
10. Tax incentives and subsidies that encourage physical activity and healthy eating and policy and financial disincentives that discourage inactivity and unhealthy eating.
11. Specific and culturally appropriate programs to meet the needs of disadvantaged and at risk communities.
12. Adequately funded and sustained population monitoring, research and evaluation.

*Unhealthy foods are those high in kilojoules but lacking in vitamins, minerals, fibre and other nutrients required for a healthy diet. These can also be described as High in Fat, Sugar and Salt (HFSS) or Energy Dense Nutrient Poor (EDNP).