



Background Information

The Mission-On Package

- Mission-On is a broad-based package of initiatives to give young New Zealanders and their families the tools to improve their nutrition and increase physical activity. It is aimed at children and young people from birth to 24 years.
- As a result of these initiatives, New Zealand will be much better placed to prevent obesity and reverse the declining levels of physical activity among young Kiwis.
- More than 50 per cent of New Zealanders are now either overweight or obese, and more than 30 per cent of New Zealand children can be classified the same.
- The package contains ten key initiatives aimed at improving nutrition and reversing the declining levels of physical activity among young Kiwis.
- The investment in this programme will be \$67 million over four years.
- Mission-On builds on the existing cross-government programmes within schools, early childhood education services, and communities around New Zealand. These include Push Play, Active Schools, Fruit in Schools, Active Movement (in early childhood), and Active Communities.

The Mission-On Initiatives

1. *Improving nutrition within schools and Early Childhood Education (ECE) environments.*

- Approximately 30 per cent of children's daily food intake is consumed at school (during term time).
- Nutrition guidelines will be introduced to help schools and early childhood education services provide healthy food options, based on a food and drink classification system that can be readily adopted by schools and early childhood services.

These will identify foods and beverages which are:

- not recommended for provision by schools or early childhood education services during the school day;
 - for limited provision by schools or early childhood education services during the school day or the operation of early childhood education services (e.g. restricted serving size); and
 - appropriate for every day consumption and to be promoted.
- There will be changes to the National Administration Guidelines, requiring school boards to develop policies that promote and achieve healthy nutrition, and reduce the consumption of unhealthy foods and drinks.
 - A regional nutrition fund will be available to early childhood education services and schools to support the implementation of guidelines (this initiative is part of an agreement with the Green Party).
 - Professional development support will be available for teachers to strengthen and improve food and nutrition education, including food and nutrition advisers available to support schools.
 - Existing services that currently support schools in efforts to promote healthy eating will be strengthened.
 - A social marketing campaign will include material for schools and early childhood education services to use, national and local advertising and research to assess the effectiveness of the campaign.
 - The programme will also include the establishment of a youth forum to ensure young people have a voice in shaping work to improve nutrition in schools.

2. Student health promotion

- A programme of high-profile events to encourage students to lead, and get involved in, learning about nutrition.
- Options include awards for effective health promotion initiatives in schools and school communities, a national competition focusing on local and Kiwi ingredients/flavours and the importance of good nutrition; and student-led health promotions such as fundraising with healthy food, and preparing healthy school recipe books.

3. Lifestyle Ambassadors

- SPARC (Sport and Recreation New Zealand) will develop a network of high-profile ambassadors to promote healthy choices, and to model healthy positive lifestyles.
- There are likely to be four to six 'youth-relevant' personalities from music, television, film and sport.
- Proposed activities include ambassadors visiting schools, acting as 'virtual' buddies offering advice through the youth websites, fronting a text messaging campaign, and featuring in SPARC's Push Play campaign.

4. New guidelines on advertising food to children

- The Ministry of Health will work with the Food Industry Accord, Advertising Standards Authority, the New Zealand Television Broadcasters' Council and other relevant agencies to look at ways of decreasing children's exposure to advertising of unhealthy foods.

5. Youth focussed websites

- SPARC will develop interactive, dynamic and technologically savvy websites that 'push kid's buttons' to engage them in active learning (through fun) about healthy nutrition choices, physical activities, and related healthy lifestyles.
- Sites will be established for specific ages (e.g. 5-8 years; 9-13 years; 14-17 years; and 18-24 years). The websites will offer a range of interactive features such as: pod casting; regular mass competitions e.g. using 'Eye Toys'; and access to coaches, trainers and virtual buddies.
- Youth forums will be used in the design and ongoing management of the sites.

6. Use of television and radio to encourage change

Television and radio will be used as a medium to encourage children and young people to think about their lifestyles, discuss the issues confronting them, and make healthy food and physical activity choices.

This will be achieved by:

- Sponsoring a segment on a daily after-school show aimed at 8-13 year olds to promote healthy nutrition and physical activity in their daily lives; sponsoring radio shows to promote good nutrition and physical activity.
- Supporting a current affairs show for children and young people to explore the issues confronting them, and discuss possible solutions.
- It will also involve a review of existing programmes targeting the 14-17 and 18-24 age groups that promote healthy food and physical activity choices, and the funding of new programmes where gaps exist.

7. Screen-Free Time

- SPARC will lead a campaign promoting 'screen-free' time for children and young people that will be launched in association with SPARC's Push Play social marketing campaign.
- The screen-free campaign, aimed at getting children and young people away from television and computer screens, will be developed for launch prior to the end of the 2006 school year. The campaign will challenge children and young people and their families to increase screen-free time from hours, to evenings, to days, to weekends.
- Campaign ideas, competitions and products will be promoted through the youth branded websites and through the Lifestyle Ambassadors, schools, families, Regional Sports Trusts and local authorities.

8. Government 'Getting Active'

- SPARC will work with the Ministry of Health to encourage the state sector to make responsible decisions about the work environment and conditions of employment to encourage healthy nutrition and physical activity choices amongst employees.
- Lead officials will encourage departments/agencies to develop healthy nutrition and physical activity plans and provide resources, ideas and support to help them design programmes that will work for them.

9. Expand Green Prescription Programme

- SPARC's Green Prescription programme (GRx) provides general practitioners and practice nurses with the option of prescribing physical activity where it may be considered beneficial in long-term health care.
- The programme will be expanded to allow more New Zealanders, especially children and young people and their families, to access the service.
- The aim is to expand it from the small 'boutique' programme to one that has the infrastructure and capacity to service up to 50,000 patients by 2010. This would include a component specifically targeting families.

10. Health Impact Assessments

- The Ministry of Health will develop the framework for this initiative which will assess the potential health impacts of proposed policies and proposed legislation and inform policy development in government departments like the Ministry of Transport, or local territorial authorities.