

Eat Well, Be Active, Healthy Kids for Life—Badu Island

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The Eat Well Be Active project aims to increase physical activity and improve food choices amongst children. The Health Promotion Council Queensland has provided two years' funding for an urban, rural and remote location in Queensland to pilot the project. Badu Island in the Torres Strait has been selected as the remote site for this project.

The goal of the project is to develop, implement and evaluate strategies that promote healthy weight in children and young people living on Badu Island. The project primarily targets children aged 0–12 years, but also includes the wider community. The Eat Well Be Active project will encourage and support community-based initiatives, strengthen community capacity and build partnerships.

Community consultations were conducted in May and August 2006. The local Interagency Group, made up of various organisations, act as the steering committee for the project. Badu Island State School is the lead agency and have employed a project coordinator. External support is provided by Education Queensland and Queensland Health.

The consultations identified four priority action areas: mums and bubs; less junk and more healthy food and drinks; budgeting (including label reading); and more organised physical activity and sport (and education on importance of physical activity).

Nine objectives with corresponding strategies have been developed to meet the goal of the project. The objectives for the project are as follows:

- decrease the consumption of high-sugar drinks in children aged up to 12 years.
- decrease the consumption of high-fat foods
- increase the consumption of fruit
- increase the consumption of vegetables (not potatoes)
- increase the consumption of water
- increase knowledge about managing finances to purchase healthy food and drink choices
- increase the knowledge of nutrition and physical activity for mothers, babies and young children
- increase the level of physical activity
- create supportive environments to increase participation in physical activity.

Corresponding strategies focus on nutrition and physical activity and include classroom and after school activities and parent and community education and activities.

To establish baseline data, a survey to collect information on current weight, height, eating and physical activity practices amongst children aged from 5 to 12 years, living on Badu Island, was conducted in July 2007. The response rate for the survey was positive and the results are currently being analysed.