

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Concern about what kids eat at sport venues

University of Tasmania researchers have heeded the concerns of parents about what their kids are eating at sporting venues and launched research into the area.

Associate Professor Sue Kilpatrick today (August 24) announced that the university's Department of Rural Health will research what kids consume at sport venues and who influences their food decisions.

With co-researcher Dr Nick Towle from the North-West Regional Hospital, she is calling for parent volunteers to hand out surveys at children's sporting events.

"Parents and dieticians involved in Eat Well Tasmania have concerns about what is available at sport venues," she said.

"They want fewer pies and soft drink and more sandwiches, water and fruit juice.

"We decided to find out exactly what is available and whether children's decisions are affected by coaches, the availability of vending machines or peer pressure.

"Then Eat Well Tasmania will be in a position to influence sporting clubs and associations who might remedy the situation."

As part of the project, Dr Towle will be funded to learn how to conduct this sort of research, as there are an insufficient number of people qualified to carry out this sort of work, Prof. Kilpatrick said.

“There is plenty of research about children and school canteens, but very little on sporting venues.

“Eat Well Tasmania is not only concerned about the food that’s available, but that the rewards for good sporting performance are often vouchers for fast food venues.”

Prof. Kilpatrick said that the literature in this area showed that if children linked sport with junk food, this unhealthy attitude could carry on into adulthood.

Parents who are interested in being involved in the project should contact Dr Nick Towle, email njtowle@postoffice.utas.edu.au or Assoc. Prof. Sue Kilpatrick, ph. 6324 4000; email Sue.Kilpatrick@utas.edu.au

For more information or to arrange interviews, please contact Dept of Rural Health marketing and communications coordinator Cecilia Chiu: ph. 6324 4028 or 0400 045 649

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