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26 April 2024

§ 9(2)(a)

Ref: H2024039332

Tēnā koe § 9(2)

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Ministry of Health – Manatū Hauora (the Ministry) on 10 April 2024 for information regarding childhood obesity. You requested:

I'm currently studying a degree in Occupational Therapy at AUT and one of my assignment topics is on Childhood Obesity. I'm researching this at the moment. I've come across details of the New Zealand Childhood Obesity Programme which compiled 22 initiatives in 2015/16.

I'm just wondering, if it's still in place and if so what have the results been since 2016. I can't find anything regarding the results of this programme. How many schools adopted this approach? how successful was it etc.

The New Zealand Childhood Obesity Programme (the Programme) concluded in 2018. A number of the individual actions related to the Programme are either ongoing or have been completed. As there was no comprehensive evaluation of the Programme, it is not possible to comment on how successful it was.

Please note that the Government is taking a broad population approach to achieving healthy weight, with a focus on improved nutrition and increased physical activity. The approach is designed to help address the significant health losses associated with non-communicable diseases in New Zealand.

Ongoing actions to reduce childhood obesity rates include:

- Healthy Families NZ: www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/for-new-zealanders/support-for-families-and-children/healthy-families-nz/
- Working with Health New Zealand – Te Whatu Ora to implement the National Healthy Food and Drink Policy: www.health.govt.nz/publication/national-healthy-food-and-drink-policy

Actions that have been completed include:

- Sit Less, Move More, Sleep Well: Active play guidelines for under-fives: www.health.govt.nz/publication/sit-less-move-more-sleep-well-active-play-guidelines-under-fives

- Eating and Activity Guidelines for New Zealand Adults:
www.health.govt.nz/publication/eating-and-activity-guidelines-new-zealand-adults

Reducing childhood obesity rates in New Zealand requires an interagency approach, with agencies including the Ministry, Health New Zealand, Sport New Zealand, and the Ministry of Education. Interagency initiatives include:

- Healthy Active Learning, which is an initiative that promotes and improves healthy eating and physical activity in all schools across New Zealand. This initiative, jointly implemented by Health New Zealand (previously by the Ministry), the Ministry of Education and Sport New Zealand, has provided schools and early learning services with new health and physical education curriculum resources, as well as health promotion staff to support healthy food and water-only policies. Physical activity advisors also work with selected primary and intermediate schools to help develop environments that encourage play, sport and physical education: <https://sportnz.org.nz/get-active/ways-to-get-active/physical-education/healthy-active-learning/>
- A joint response by the Ministry and Sport New Zealand to the World Health Organization's Global Action Plan on Physical Activity:
<https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/272722>

The most recent childhood obesity data is available from the Health Survey Annual Data Explorer at: https://minhealthnz.shinyapps.io/nz-health-survey-2022-23-annual-data-explorer/_w_08b8c9f5/#/explore-indicators. You can view this by age groups 2-4 years, 5-9 years and 10-14 years, for each year from 2011/12 to 2022/23.

I trust this information fulfils your request. If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request with us, including this decision, please feel free to contact the OIA Services Team on: oiagr@health.govt.nz.

Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Manatū Hauora website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā



Tagaloa Dr Junior Ulu
Acting Deputy Director-General
Public Health Agency | Te Pou Hauora Tūmatanui