

SEA CHANGE PORTLAND & GENR8 CHANGE

BACKGROUND

In 2014, Southern Grampians Glenelg Primary Care Partnership (SGGPCP) acknowledged that their programmatic work towards healthy eating and physical activity was not making an impact on obesity in the community. Partners agreed a drastically different approach was required. A partnership was formed with Global Obesity Centre (GLOBE) at Deakin University and they commenced co-creating an approach towards changes at multiple levels of the system, and mobilisation of the broader community to become change makers.

There was an agreement that children need to be the primary target group for this work, whilst recognising the whole community needs to engage in taking action to provide universal benefit.

PARTNERS

- **SEA Change Portland:** Glenelg Shire Council, Portland District Health, SGGPCP and GLOBE
- **GenR8 Change,** SGGPCP, GLOBE, Western District Health Service, Southern Grampians Shire Council and Windamara Aboriginal Corporation

METHOD

GenR8 Change and SEA Change Portland aim to achieve a sustained reduction in prevalence of childhood overweight and obesity by creating an environment where healthy choices are easy, especially for children.

From the outset, Systems Thinking, Collective Impact and Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) have together guided the project's approach.

Across both communities, 230 people participated in systems mapping workshops to unpack the complexity of obesity and identify areas with the strongest leverage for action. These maps were then used in action planning workshops, with community members identifying areas of interest that they had the capacity to lead action to help make the healthier choice the easier choice.

Changes have and continue to be achieved across; retail and hospitality, sporting clubs, education settings, active transport, workplaces, breastfeeding and broader community settings/events. Some examples of action to date include:

- Changes to school canteen menus and introduction of broader school health policy
- Changes to accessibility and availability of Sugar sweetened beverages (SSB's) in health services, sporting hubs, clubs and community events
- Increased access to and promotion of drinking water
- Development of school drop off points for active transport

Community-led actions are ever evolving. Connecting community members, sharing stories of change and creating further opportunities for community members to come together and explore ideas around topics of interest, has continued to see participation and contribution grow.

SGGPCP has played a vital role in catalysing this new way of working, including forming relationships with GLOBE, facilitating partner's commitment to reorientate resources to this approach, leading and supporting the change in practice, learning from the emerging science and translating into local context and vice versa, and maintaining the connection of key community leaders into the work.

OUTCOMES

- Monitoring data indicates that the proportion of children in Portland overweight or obese decreased by 7.9% from 2016 to 2017, whilst across Southern Grampians it indicates that there was a 3.6% reduction from 2015 to 2017.
- Portland children reported increases to adherence to guidelines around consumption of; vegetables, fruit, water, sugar sweetened beverages and take-away foods, as well as increases in active transport. Slight decreases in physical activity and increases in sedentary behaviour were reported.
- Southern Grampians kids increased their consumption of vegetable, fruit, water and take-away food whilst decreasing consumption of takeaway foods and SSB's. Engagement in physical activity and active transport increased, sedentary behaviour remained stable.