

MEDIA STATEMENT

Tuesday 22 March 2022

VicHealth welcomes *Food Fight* campaign to protect our kids from unhealthy food and drink advertising

Health promotion foundation VicHealth supports Cancer Council Victoria's campaign, *Food Fight*, launched last week and urges the prioritising of health and wellbeing of our kids before food industry profits.

The *Food Fight* campaign aims to protect Victorian kids. It shines a spotlight on unhealthy food and drink advertising in everyday places, calling for a ban where kids see this advertising most, including public transport and around schools.

Millions of dollars are spent on unhealthy food and drink advertising, with kids bombarded by at least 25 ads per day. Evidence shows this exposure will likely coerce kids into consuming more of these unhealthy products – with their consumption associated with an increased risk of a range of chronic conditions.

Government action is needed.

VicHealth CEO, Dr. Sandro Demaio said it's concerning to see unhealthy food and drink advertising where kids commute, learn and play and strongly encourages Victorians to get behind this campaign.

"We all want to see our kids grow up in a healthy environment and enjoy a healthy childhood. The predatory advertising tactics used by the processed food industry undermine our children's efforts to achieve a healthier future," Dr. Demaio said.

"We support Cancer Council Victoria's *Food Fight* campaign and call on our leaders in government to do the right thing by our kids, working together to remove this type of advertising around public transport, its infrastructure, and particularly schools.

"It's time to put the health and wellbeing of our kids first."

While places like Amsterdam, New York and Canberra have removed unhealthy food and drink advertising from their public transport, Victoria should follow suit and go further to protect our children with a 500m ban around schools.

By removing unhealthy food and drink advertising from these key areas, we're in a better position to create supportive environments.

Creating supportive environments for healthy eating and active living is consistent with the Victorian Government's *Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures* five-year action plan to support children and young people to be healthy, active and well, in addition to the recently released *National Obesity Strategy*.

We know that by working together, we can support our kids and provide the right environment where they can live and be healthy.

You can support Cancer Council Victoria's *Food Fight* campaign by signing their statement, www.cancervic.org.au/foodfight

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