

About the Event

All Victorians are invited to attend and participate in *A Healthy Balance: Victorians Respond to Obesity*, a special two-day forum being held by the Victorian Government to address the issue of obesity and in particular the growing problem of child obesity.

Over the two days, a 13-member panel made up of Victorians from all walks of life will question and listen to the responses of over 30 speakers who have been selected from industry, peak associations, universities, government, sporting organisations, medicine, health, nutrition, education, media and the advertising sectors.

At the end of the second day, the citizens' panel will retire to write their recommendations which will be published and available to Government, industry, the media and the community.

A Healthy Balance: Victorians Respond to Obesity will examine issues such as our lifestyles, the role of physical activity, diet, nutrition and eating patterns and societal changes. As well, the role of parents, families and communities, education, government, non government and community organisations, the food sector—including producers, manufacturers and retailers, transport, travel and urban design, sport and recreation, advertising, marketing and selling to children will be addressed.

The event will provide the opportunity for all Victorians to become better educated about the issue and find out what they can do to take action to address or prevent obesity.

Who Should Attend?

Parents, families and community groups, educators, government, non-government organisations, those working in the food sector—including producers, manufacturers and retailers, those involved in transport, travel and urban design issues, sport and recreation, advertising, marketing and all other interested members of the community,—especially those wanting to find some practical solutions about what they and their friends can do to address and prevent obesity.

How Can I Get to the Forum?

Walking

If you're close enough, why not walk to the forum? If you're a bit further away, and you're coming by public transport why not walk to the station, bus stop or tram stop and get off a stop early for an extra bit of exercise.

Cycling

Why not ride to the forum? There is bicycle parking available in Swanston Street in the vicinity of the Town Hall.

Public Transport

Access to the forum by public transport couldn't be easier. Melbourne Town Hall is just five minutes walk from Flinders Street Station or Melbourne Central. Tram Routes 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 16, 22, 25, 64 and 67 stop at the Town Hall. Tram Routes 86 and 96 operate along Bourke Street, and Tram Routes 11, 12, 31, 42 and 109 operate along Collins Street. Get off at the Swanston Street stops and it's a short walk to the Town Hall.

Should I Register to Attend?

Online registration is recommended to ensure adequate seating is provided.

A Healthy Balance: Victorians Respond to Obesity is an initiative of the Victorian Government and will be chaired by Professor John Catford, Dean of Health and Behavioural Sciences at Deakin University and Victoria's former Chief Health Officer.

A Healthy Balance
Victorians Respond to Obesity
Melbourne Town Hall
23–24 October 2002

Admission Free

For further information please contact Jude Bourguignon on 03 9349 1099 or visit our website www.dhs.vic.gov.au/phd/obesityforum/

A Healthy Balance

Victorians Respond to Obesity

Melbourne Town Hall
23–24 October 2002

Admission Free

A forum to find out what the people and organisations of Victoria can do to promote healthy weight and prevent obesity in childhood.

Why are We Holding this Event?

Obesity, particularly in children, is emerging as one of Victoria's most serious health problems. In Victoria in 2001, one in five (20%) children aged 5–6 were overweight or obese, and 23% of children aged 10–12 were overweight or obese with 10% being obese.

In addition, levels of obese adults rose to 22% in 2000, with approximately 60% of the Victorian population now identified as being either overweight or obese. The situation is likely to be as serious as that in the United States of America.

The increasing rates of obesity are a major public health concern and it is time to address the fundamental changes to social, cultural, physical and economic conditions that are required to facilitate healthy weight for all. It is clear that the greatest opportunity for obesity prevention is in childhood.

Obesity is a complex issue. It requires a comprehensive and sustained response with input from government, non-government, private and community sectors.

Program

Wednesday 23 October

9.00 Opening by the Hon John Thwaites, Minister for Health

9.20 Introductions and Process

9.30 Childhood Obesity

Why is the issue important to the Victorian community?

What are the health implications?

What is the current 'state of play' with respect to childhood obesity?

What are the factors that are influencing the increase in childhood obesity?

Questions

10.30 Break (30 Minutes)

11.00 Social and Environmental Change

What social trends and environmental changes contribute to increasing overweight and obesity in children?

Questions

12.00 What works?

What interventions do we know will work in getting people, particularly children, to engage in physical activity and healthy eating?

Questions

12.20 Health and Health Promotion

What role do health services and the health sector have to play in preventing increasing rates of overweight/obesity?

Questions

1.00 Lunch (60 Minutes)

2.00 Education

What opportunities are there for school communities (from curriculum to school council to parents) to overcome the barriers that exist now and make changes that will help students in establishing and maintaining healthier life choices?

Questions

3.00 Break (30 Minutes)

3.30 Communities, Family, Parents

How can communities and families provide supportive environments for families and children to make healthier life choices?

Questions

4.50 Close

Thursday 24 October

9.00 Physical Environment

What changes need to occur in the physical environment/urban planning to support and encourage the general population towards participation in regular physical activity? What can local government do to make sure that facilities are available to the community, and local neighbourhoods are built in a way that encourages healthier life choices?

Questions

9.40 Sport and Recreation

What needs to be done to enable more people (including children) to participate in active recreation or other forms of incidental physical activity in their everyday life?

How can sporting organisations motivate young people who are not going to be top athletes and their families to continue participation in sport?

Questions

10.20 Break (30 Minutes)

10.50 Media

How can the media and advertisers influence children and families to participate in physical activity and healthy eating?

How can we use the media and marketing to promote healthy weight?

Questions

12.30 Lunch (60 Minutes)

1.30 Food Consumption & Healthy Eating

How does the way we talk about, present and use food contribute to current levels of overweight and obesity and what do we need to do to change this?

How can parents be supported to create and maintain a healthy culture about enjoying food and eating in balance?

Questions

2.50 Break (30 Minutes)

3.20 Producing and Selling Food

How can food labelling help people to make informed choices about the food they purchase? What about non-packaged and takeaway foods?

What regulatory controls could be used to control the energy content of foods or does this have to be left up to the manufacturer determine this?

What can the food industry do to increase the availability, accessibility and demand for healthy food?

How are the content and preparation methods of foods (including sugar and fat content) decided?

What role can the food industry play in making information about healthy eating more easily available?

4.20 Closing Comments

4.30 Close