



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
(SOUTH AUSTRALIA) INC**

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Parents urged to 'hold the line' on school junk food ban: AMA(SA)

As South Australian families commence the return for the new school year, the AMA(SA) has urged parents to opt for healthy snacks and sandwiches in their children's lunchboxes.

AMA(SA) President Dr Peter Ford says that with the ban on junk-foods in public school canteens from the start of this year, there is an increased onus on parents to get with the program and provide their children with healthy eating choices in the food brought to school each day.

The ban on junk-foods in canteens is an excellent start, but all of this will be of little value if parents don't encourage their children with the food now brought from home, said Dr Ford.

What's in a lunchbox can make a huge difference to a child's immediate, and long term wellbeing. The right foods can make a significant difference to a student's behaviour, concentration in class, performance on the sporting field and even attitude to homework. It means healthier bodies and less sick days.

Fresh fruit, carrot sticks and foods like yoghurt are a simple, healthy alternative to chips, pastries and chocolate, and provide children with the nutrition and energy they need to get through the day.

And importantly, it's teaching children good eating habits for the long term, which is an absolutely necessary investment in our future.

80 per cent of overweight kids become overweight adults. A nutritious diet and daily exercise is the best way for children and adults to maintain a healthy weight.

Dr Ford also said that excessive consumption of soft drinks had the capacity to undo a lot of otherwise healthy eating for children. Here, moderation is the key, he said.

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