

Socio-demographic and risk factor profile of participants in the NSW Go4Fun[®] child obesity prevention program

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The Go4Fun[®] program is a community-based child obesity treatment program funded by the National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health and the NSW Ministry of Health, managed by the NSW Office of Preventive Health and delivered by Local Health Districts (LHD). The Program has an equity focus and is prioritised for delivery in socio economically disadvantaged communities.

Go4Fun[®] aims to improve health, fitness and self esteem in overweight and obese children, and is delivered at no cost to families. Children are eligible to participate in the program if they are:

- Aged 7-13 years;
- Have a body mass index > 85th percentile;
- No co-morbidities;
- A parent or adult carer to accompany them to each session.



Recruitment

Families self-refer via a toll-free phone number, a text message or online registration to the program and secondary referrals are accepted from health professionals, organisations and community members

Program description

Go4Fun[®] is a multidisciplinary program, involving 20 sessions, delivered bi-weekly, after school. The program engages families in the process of weight management by addressing key components for individual-level behavioural change (education, skills training, and motivational enhancement) (1), and considering the need to engage multiple, interacting systems of influence within the family context (2).

The socio-demographic profile of Go4Fun[®] participants is:

- 55% female
- Average age 10.2 years
- 6.3% Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- 78% in 3rd, 4th and 5th SEIFA quintile (most disadvantaged)
- 39% from regional and rural areas

Table 1. Age and weight status (baseline) of children enrolled in the Go4Fun[®] program

	Total	Girls	Boys
Number	2,309	1,273	1,036
Mean age (years)	10.2	10.1	10.2
Overweight (%)	27.4	27.6	27.1
Obese (%)	69.1	69.5	68.6

The Go4Fun[®] program has been successful in targeting socially disadvantaged overweight and obese children, those who are often hardest to reach and metabolically at risk.

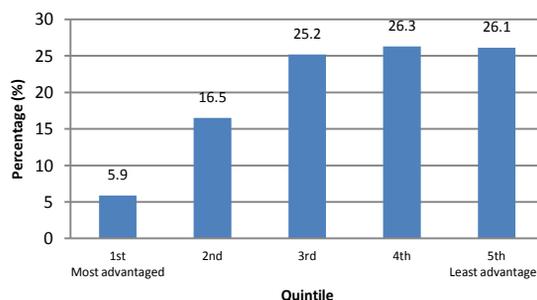


Program evaluation

Socio-demographic information is collected from the parent/carer on behalf of the child, pre-program. Anthropometric measures are taken of the child and the attending parent pre- and post-program.

Participant data collected between school term 3 2009 and school term 3 2012 has been analysed and is presented here.

Figure 1. Socio-economic status (SEIFA index) of Go4Fun[®] program participants



During the period 296 Go4Fun[®] programs were delivered across NSW. In total 2,309 children participated in the program and were primarily accompanied by their parent (94%).

Of the children attending 91.1% were considered at greater metabolic risk (weight to height ratio ≥ 0.5). Parents attending the program had high rates of overweight and obesity (80.4%).

Table 2. Socio-demographic characteristics of children enrolled in the Go4Fun[®] program

Characteristic	Percentage (%)
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	6.3
Residence:	
Major city	61.0
Inner regional	25.2
Outer regional	11.3
Remote	2.5
Single parent	28.7
Primary household earner unemployed	17.5

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References:

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