



Position Statements

The following statements outline the Energize position on key issues related to healthy eating and physical activity for children.

Energize is a programme for Waikato primary and intermediate schools and is funded by the Waikato District Health Board. Energize is a children's healthy eating and physical activity programme, hence these guidelines are for 5-12 year olds. They reflect government policy and current best-evidenced practice.

For more detailed information please contact energize@sportwaikato.org.nz

OVERVIEW

- Levels of childhood obesity and its associated illnesses are increasing in New Zealand. Obesity is a major health issue; an epidemic.
- There is a strong body of evidence that childhood obesity is related to low levels of physical activity and increased intake of high energy/low nutrient foods.
- 'Eat healthy, be active, have fun' is the Energize motto. Energize is delivered to children as a health programme not an anti-obesity programme. Energize promotes healthy body image and encourages healthy kids of all shapes and sizes.
- Energize follows government policy. In particular:
 - Sport NZ's '[Activity Guidelines For Children And Young People](#)' and
 - the Ministry of Health's '[Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Healthy Children and Young People](#)'

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Children should do 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.
- Energize encourages
 - In school time: a minimum of 20 minutes quality daily physical activity at school (based on children being in school for one third of their day), and the learning fundamental movement skills.
 - Lunchtimes: physical activity at least twice a week
 - Afterschool / at home: 'home play' every day; a reduction in screen time - no more than 2 hours a day; active transport
- Energize promotes incidental activity opportunities at home and school.



Position Statements

NUTRITION

Drink

- Energize promotes water as the best drink. Drink plenty of water throughout the day.
- Other drink guidelines:
 - Milk: Include milk and other high calcium foods every day.
 - Sweet drinks: Limit drinks such as fruit juice, cordial, fruit drink, fizzy drinks, sports drinks and sports water. These are not every day drinks. There is growing evidence around the contribution of sugary drinks consumption to high levels of childhood obesity.
 - Caffeine: Tea, coffee and energy drinks is not recommended for under 13 year olds.

Food

- Energize encourages an increase in fruit and vegetable consumption and a reduction in the amount of high energy/low nutrient food. Eat a variety of foods from each of the four major food groups each day:
 - Glow: vegetables and fruit
 - Go: breads and cereals
 - Grow: milk and dairy products or suitable alternatives
 - Grow: lean meats and protein (poultry, fish, shellfish, eggs, legumes, nuts and seeds).
- Energize advocates for quality nutrient dense food to be:
 - Provided at school
 - Brought from home
 - Consumed for snacks
- Energize promotes the importance of breakfast and eating regular healthy meals each day

Lunch Boxes

- Lunchboxes should be nutritious, providing growing bodies with all the nutrients they need as well as providing energy for learning and activity.
- Base a lunchbox around go, grow and glow
 - Go with breads and cereals
 - Grow with lean meats, dairy and their alternatives
 - Glow with vegetables and fruit
- Wholemeal or wholegrain bread is a great base food for a lunchbox. It provides with body with fibre, carbohydrates and B vitamins. It can be a cheap and tasty option.
- Include a water bottle in the lunchbox to help children stay hydrated.