



# OPAL Case Study Healthy Food Options in the Supermarket

City of Playford

**Goal:** Healthy Outlets

**Theme:** Healthy Snacks

**Strategy:** Environments

## Summary

Playford OPAL worked in partnership with the store manager at the Davoren Park IGA supermarket to increase the quality and range of healthy food choices available in the supermarket and promote these to the local community.



**With the support of the OPAL initiative**

**we have been able to make some significant changes to our store and improve access to healthy food choices for the local community. This has resulted in increased turnover of fruit, vegetables and lean meat and shows that the community are looking to make healthier food choices.**

Jac Wojt, Owner IGA Davoren Park

## Our approach

The Davoren Park IGA supermarket in Adelaide's northern suburbs is used by the local community as the primary location for shopping, as many people don't have transport to travel to larger supermarkets. Historically the IGA supermarket offered a limited range of fresh fruit and vegetables (mainly potatoes and onions) while the meat offered for sale was of low nutritional quality (mainly sausages and mince).

In 2011, a new owner at the Davoren Park IGA provided an ideal opportunity for a partnership to improve the quality and range of healthy foods offered. New refrigeration units were installed and a selection of lean meats (for example chicken breasts and lean cuts of beef) and an array of fresh and well-presented fruits and vegetables were put on display.

Playford OPAL provided the information about healthier products, 'Make it a fresh snack' signage and marketing materials in the store, including recipe cards and labels indicating healthy choices. Weekly OPAL specials promoted healthy choices like baked beans and healthy snacks like fruit. The store manager and OPAL worked together to identify changes in product sales as part of the evaluation.

## Our achievements

Sales of healthy products increased following the store changes and promotions:

- fruit and vegetable sales increased by 340% (from \$500 per week to \$2200 with the greater range and improved quality of fresh produce)
- meat sales rose by 650% (sales increased from \$400 of meat per week to \$3000 per week with the leaner cuts).

This dramatic change in purchasing habits demonstrated both the underlying demand for healthy food choices and the value of the OPAL program in combining community education with an environment that made healthier choices easier.

Local businesses such as supermarkets are a key part of the Playford community. The success of this initiative increased the chances of Davoren Park IGA working with OPAL on future campaigns and OPAL gained a better understanding of the issues supermarkets face. Playford OPAL is now working with several local supermarkets to help promote the benefits of eating a healthy breakfast – the 2013 theme.

**Opal**

## Why

As part of the 2011 OPAL theme 'Make it a Fresh Snack', the OPAL team planned action to promote healthier snacking through schools and community organisations as well as for parents in their homes. The OPAL goal, 'Healthy Outlets', recognises the importance of environments that support good health and the interest shown by the IGA in working with OPAL presented an opportunity to make sure that healthy foods were available and well promoted making it easier for busy parents to choose healthier products.

## Who

The changes at the Davoren Park store benefited those in the local community who shopped at the store through the healthier choices available.

## Rationale

Evidence for effective obesity prevention supports partnerships with a range of community organisations including retailers to address barriers to the purchase of healthy foods.<sup>1</sup>

The evidence for a focus on healthy snacks is clear: a major contributor to the increase in obesity is increased energy intake through consumption of unhealthy, generally highly processed and 'non-core' foods (commonly referred to as 'treats', 'extras' or 'junk foods'). For children aged 4-16 years nearly 40% of the kilojoules they consume come from 'non-core' foods and drinks – and they eat 4.5 (4-8 year olds) to 6.5 (14-16 year olds) serves per day of junk food.<sup>2</sup>



'Junk' food and drinks also displace healthier foods from the diet. This can compromise children's overall nutritional intake at a time of rapid growth and development when a good diet is essential. The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating recommends 'extra' or discretionary foods are only eaten sometimes and in small amounts.<sup>3</sup> Healthier snacks are also cheaper – important for disadvantaged communities – and have less packaging.

## Resources

OPAL used the 'Make it a Fresh Snack' resources at the store including shelf wobblers, posters and recipe cards.

## About OPAL?

The OPAL (Obesity Prevention and Lifestyle) initiative supports children, families and their communities to eat well and be active. It is South Australia's largest ever investment in obesity prevention. OPAL uses a range of interconnected strategies to build knowledge and skills and change policies and environments in partnerships with others to support healthy behaviour. This case study is one of many linked projects that together are helping children, through their families and communities, to be healthy now and stay healthy for life.

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<sup>1</sup> Henley N, Raffin, S. Social marketing to prevent childhood obesity in Preventing childhood obesity: evidence, policy, and practice. Waters E, Swinburn B et al (Eds) London: Blackwell Publishing, 2010 Ch 28

<sup>2</sup> SA Health. OPAL summary of evidence. Make it a fresh snack. [on line]. Available from: [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/277f8c8046ca14718ed6fe2e504170d4/OPAL+Healthy+Snacks+Factsheet-sss-20110509.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=277f8c8046ca14718ed6fe2e504170d4](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/277f8c8046ca14718ed6fe2e504170d4/OPAL+Healthy+Snacks+Factsheet-sss-20110509.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=277f8c8046ca14718ed6fe2e504170d4) (accessed 8 July 2013)

<sup>3</sup> NHMRC. Australian Guide to Healthy Eating. [on line]. Available from: [www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/the\\_guidelines/n55j\\_australian\\_guide\\_to\\_healthy\\_eating.pdf](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/the_guidelines/n55j_australian_guide_to_healthy_eating.pdf). (accessed 10 July 2013)

