"Be Active, Eat Well" (BAEW) is a ‘whole-of-community’ demonstration project in Colac, Victoria that aims to improve the health and well-being of children aged 2 to 12 years through strengthening the local community and promoting healthy eating and physical activity.

The 3-year project, funded by the Department of Human Services in 2002, is the first of its kind in Australia to bring a comprehensive approach to promoting physical activity and healthy eating and it is built on a number of innovative ideas designed to enhance sustainability.

A 10-objective Action Plan was subsequently developed, and baseline evaluation data were collected by Deakin University.

**Action Plan**

Aim: To improve the health and well-being of individuals and strengthen the Colac Community through healthy eating and physical activity promotion.

**Objective 1:** To achieve a high awareness of "Be Active Eat Well" messages among parents and children. (see social marketing below)

**Objective 2:** To build Colac community capacity to promote physical activity and healthy eating.

**Objective 3:** To evaluate the process, impact and outcomes of the "Be Active Eat Well" project.
Objective 4: To significantly decrease the time spent watching TV and playing on computers or electronic games.

Objective 5: To significantly decrease the consumption of high sugar drinks and to promote the consumption of water. (see school nutrition below)

Objective 6: To significantly decrease the consumption of energy dense snacks and significantly increase the consumption of fruit. (see school nutrition below)

Objective 7: To significantly increase the proportion of primary school children living within 1.5km who walk/cycle to and from school. (see active transport below)

Objective 8: To significantly increase the amount of active play after schools and on weekends. (see active play below)

Objective 9:

- To investigate the potential for improving the quality (fat content and type of fat) of deep fried chips.
- To improve the quality of deep fried takeaway chips. (see choice chips below)

Objective 10:

- To provide a service to improve the food and physical activity choices for children with or at risk of overweight.
- To pilot a healthy lifestyle program for parents and carers of children aged 2-12 years, focusing on healthy eating, physical activity and parenting skills. (happy healthy families)

School Nutrition

Following a school nutrition workshop a local School Nutrition Network was established which meets on a tri-monthly basis. The purpose of the network is to share information and ideas about promoting healthy eating in schools and receive support from local dieticians. The network is comprised of the 7 primary schools and 4 high schools within Colac. Each school has access to $500 BAEW funding support healthy eating initiatives in school. At the first network meeting, the schools decided that they need to "apply" for the funding by writing to the BAEW coordinator outlining their plans for spending the money. In addition, each primary school in the network has received BAEW water bottles to support their school water policies.

School Activities

A number of schools have initiated a number of strategies for promoting healthy eating in school, and with $500 available from BAEW, other strategies are on the agenda.

St Mary's Primary School
• Current Activities: School water policy; Fruit Break; Healthy eating curriculum.
• Proposed Activities: Resource; guest speakers; cooking workshops for parents.

Colac East Primary School

• Current Activities: School water policy; Fruit Friday; Food wrapper in school yard policy.
• Proposed Activities: Fruit break.

Colac West Primary School

• Current Activities: Appointment of a full-time PE/Health staff member; healthy eating curriculum.
• Proposed Activities: Vegetable garden; food tasting; guest speakers; resources.

Colac Specialist School

• Current Activities: School water policy
• Proposed Activities: School cooking classes.

Sacred Heart Primary School

• Current Activities: Fruit Break;

Colac South West Primary School

• Current Activities: Establishment of a school health team; house points for fruit; healthy food days; school water policy.

Elliminyt Primary School

• Current Activities: Grade 5&6 Fruit Break; water encouraged.

Active Transport

The Colac Otway Shire, with funding from Vic Health, is coordinating the Walking School Bus program in Colac.

Active Play

After School Activity Program

ASAP was designed to equip local sport and recreation clubs and organisations with the contacts, skills, training, resources, and equipment necessary to provide after school physical activity programs to children in the Colac area. The emphasis of ASAP was for clubs to recognise that they were
able to provide a service to a broader range of people than simply to those who wanted to participate in competitive competitions. Rather, clubs were encouraged to provide fun activities that taught the fundamental skills of their sports in a safe, fun, and non-threatening manner. Additionally, ASAP was designed to show the community health and education sector that with a relatively small investment in community sporting clubs, great things could be achieved.

Highlights of ASAP to date include:

- Low cost ($2 per session) participation
- Participation by over 400 children in a variety of activities across 3 terms.
- Training and equipment for local clubs
- Increased membership to local clubs

For more information about ASAP contact Leisure Networks.

**Be Active Arts**

Be Active Eat Well was the theme for the 2004 Kana Festival in Colac. A series of art and drama workshops were held over 5 weeks with local primary school students to design and participate in the leading float for the festival parade.

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