

Media Release

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What the public thinks

Budget agenda? Support for sugary drink tax and free preschool year

On the eve of the Federal Budget, new research shows Australians overwhelmingly support government intervention to provide fulltime childcare or kindergarten for four-year olds, and a tax on sugary drinks.

Preliminary data from the latest [Australian Child Health Poll](#) reveals that almost 70 per cent of Australians support government funded fulltime kinder or childcare for four-year-olds, while 60 per cent support the introduction of a tax on sugary drinks.

The Director of the poll, paediatrician Dr Anthea Rhodes, said the national survey showed the Australian public was a step ahead of the political agenda on important child health issues.

“Our governments have historically intervened in family and community life to achieve important public health outcomes such as smoking bans and mandatory seatbelt use,” Dr Rhodes.

“These results tell us that even though public discussion about these two very important policy areas is still in its infancy, many Australians have already made up their minds.

“We hope that these findings give our political leaders the confidence to know that they have public support for what might seem like radical policy interventions.”

Dr Rhodes said support for a sugary drink tax was strong across all demographics, including at lower levels of education and household income; while most people across the country support funded fulltime kindergarten or childcare for four-year-old kids regardless of whether or not they had young children.

The third Australian Child Health Poll, which explores the links between political preferences and child health priorities, will be released on June 1.

www.childhealthpoll.org.au