

## Media Release - Monday November 18

### Dr Sophie Scamps re-introduces bill to protect our kids from harmful junk food advertising

In March 2023 Dr Sophie Scamps introduced her Healthy Kids Advertising Bill 2023 to limit harmful junk food advertising to children. Since then, the Standing Parliamentary Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport conducted an inquiry into the State of Diabetes Mellitus in Australia handing down its report earlier this year. A key recommendation of the Committee was that the Australian Government consider regulating the marketing and advertising of unhealthy food to children.

Therefore, Dr Sophie Scamps is today reintroducing her **Healthy Kids Advertising Bill 2024** today.

The **Healthy Kids Advertising Bill 2024** aims to protect children from junk food marketing by removing ads from TV and radio between the hours of 6am and 9.30pm. The Bill would also place an outright ban on junk food marketing on social media and other online environments. Under the regulations, substantial fines would be imposed on broadcasters, internet service providers, and food companies that fail to adhere to the guidelines.

The original Bill, which was released over a year ago, sparked widespread media interest and support from celebrity chef Jamie Oliver. Following this, the Albanese government commissioned a feasibility study by the University of Wollongong on options to limit unhealthy food marketing to children.

“At the time I thought this was a great sign of support. I have been told the study is now complete and I look forward to its release. We need to get moving on this issue for the sake of our children” said Dr Scamps MP.

For Dr Scamps, a former GP and emergency doctor, the prevalence of childhood obesity is extremely concerning as it is a major cause of so many preventable chronic diseases including type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

But this is not only an issue of concern to Dr Scamps. Research conducted by the [Australia Institute](#) in late 2022 shows strong public support for regulating unhealthy food marketing, with two-thirds (66%) backing a ban on junk food advertising.

The average Australian child is exposed to [over 800 unhealthy food advertisements](#) on television each year and at least 100 [online every week](#). Crucially there is a direct link between those ads and childhood obesity.

“We should be creating environments that support our children to thrive, not ones that condemn them to life of ill health,” said Dr Scamps.

“As a mum of two, this is a major concern for my young kids. I'm so pleased Sophie is driving this issue. During the Olympics this year, my kids were being bombarded with ads from chocolate and fast-food companies who are using healthy sporty people to promote unhealthy foods. It's incredibly misleading,” Charlotte Bonnar - Mackellar mum of two.

“This is a really important issue for my community and also nationwide. Not only is it causing a national health crisis but is an enormous financial cost to the taxpayer, with obesity estimated to cost the health system \$11.8 billion every year.”

"I have met with the Ministers on several occasions. Delaying this reform will only further harm our kids," Dr Scamps said.

"Our children deserve a healthier future, free from the constant bombardment of junk food marketing. Regulation to restrict unhealthy food marketing on TV and radio during set times and via online platforms is a critical first step towards safeguarding our children's health and wellbeing now and into the future. Our community also supports action, with seventy percent of Australians agreeing that government should protect children from the marketing of unhealthy food. It's time to put our kids' health ahead of the profits of the processed food and advertising industries," claims Jane Martin, Executive Manager – Food for Health Alliance in support of Dr Scamps' bill.

"PHAA welcome's the Bill from Dr Sophie Scamps MP to ban junk food advertising, and we urge the Albanese Government to work with her to enact this policy. The Government has options for immediate action on this very popular measure, and the ball is in its court," said Adj/Prof Terry Slevin, CEO PHAA.

The Bill will be seconded by Independent MP and former paediatrician Dr Monique Ryan, member for Kooyong.

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