FACT SHEET – SURVEY METHODOLOGY

What did the 2007 Australian National Children’s Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey examine?

- The 2007 Australian National Children’s Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey collected data on food and nutrient intake, physical activity levels and physical measurements (height, weight and waist measurements) of children aged 2-16 years.

- The food and nutrient intake data collected from the survey participants is compared to the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia, the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and the Nutrient Reference Values for Australia and New Zealand (NRVs).

- The physical activity levels of the children surveyed are compared to the National Physical Activity Guidelines.

- The survey participants’ height and weight measurements were used to calculate the Body Mass Index (BMI) which classifies children as underweight, healthy weight, overweight or obese.

Who was surveyed?

- Households (with a fixed line telephone) with children aged 2-16 years were randomly selected using Random Digit Dialling.

- More than 4,000 children from across Australia were involved in the survey. The South Australian Department of Health funded an extra 400 participants in that state.

- The children surveyed were grouped into 2-3, 4-8, 9-13 and 14-16 year age categories.
What was asked?

- Participants were asked to recall all food, drink and dietary supplements they had consumed in the previous 24 hours. In a follow-up telephone interview, held one to three weeks later, participants were again asked to recall food, drink and supplements consumed the previous day.
- Information on physical activity participation was collected through two physical activity recalls and a pedometer record. Children aged five years and over were fitted with a pedometer for six days. Children aged nine years and over were required to recall their physical activity for the previous 48 hours on two occasions, one to three weeks apart. Information on physical activity was not collected from children aged below five years.
- Each child's height, weight and waist measurements were also taken, along with demographic information, including age, gender, parents' work and socioeconomic status.

Who conducted the survey?

- A team led by Professor Lynne Cobiac from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) Preventative Health National Research Flagship and Professor Timothy Olds from the University of South Australia designed and implemented the survey.
- The interviews were conducted by a social research agency, I-view.
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand developed a food composition database containing the nutrient values for all of the foods consumed by the surveyed children.
- The Therapeutic Goods Administration assisted with the analysis of nutrient intake from dietary supplements.

When was the survey conducted?

- The survey was conducted between February and August 2007.
- A pilot survey took place in Queensland and South Australia in November 2006.

Who funded the survey?

- The Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, and the Australian Food and Grocery Council jointly funded the survey, contributing $1 million each.

Who can access the data?

- De-identified data from the 2007 Australian National Children's Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey will be available upon request to the Department of Health and Ageing.