

# SHIRE OF DOWERIN

## Swap It Up For Health in Dowerin

### Project Date

September – October 2012

### Project Location

Dowerin, 150km north east of Perth in the Central Wheatbelt. The Shire population consists of more than 600, with 300 in town.

### Target Group

People from rural and regional communities local to this area.

### Objectives

- Increase incidental physical activity amongst people aged 25 – 50.
- Increase awareness of parents on how to make healthy food choices.

### Method

- Outdoor stickers were distributed around town to publicise events.
- Emails, Facebook, school newsletters and text messages were also used to stimulate interest, as was word of mouth.

### What Happened?

- One hundred and sixty Swap It fridge magnets were given out, encouraging people to make healthy simple swaps.
- A Move Your Balloon community walk was held, attracting 39 people.
- A BBQ followed with information on healthy eating.
- Four Swap It cooking demonstrations/Master Classes were held, led by a local caterer. Each attracted between 6 and 11 people.
- An online survey program was set up to elicit feedback.

### Results

- The level of awareness of the Swap It, Don't Stop It message was extremely high.
- 80% could identify five Swap It ideas and 86% reported making at least two Swap It changes to their diet.
- 71% reported increasing the amount of exercise, mainly increased walking, triggered by the Swap It message.
- Approximately half the participants reported using recipes provided at the cooking classes
- Three bought quinoa, polenta and/or burghal for the first time to use in recipes provided.

### Tips

- Advertising the events was the key to success.
- Timing is crucial in country towns. Junior cricket began the same way as the community walk, restricting attendance. Avoid school holidays as many residents go away.

### Where to from here?

The Shire would like the opportunity to run more cooking classes, which were found to be especially beneficial.

### Contact

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