



Aussies back Disney's junk food ad boycott



Mark O'Brien

AUSTRALIAN obesity campaigners have welcomed a decision to ban junk food advertising during children's programs on Walt Disney television networks.

Obesity Policy Coalition executive manager Jane Martin said the announcement acknowledged the powerful role that television advertising can play in influencing children's behaviour.

"For so long we've heard the junk food industry talk about how ineffectual TV advertising is – despite sinking millions of dollars into it," Ms Martin said. "Now we see a major US network acknowledge the impact TV can have on children's diets. and

therefore, childhood obesity."

Ms Martin said the Disney Channel ban was a "positive step" but, with a quarter of Australian children either overweight or obese, it was time for the government to act.

"In light of the current childhood obesity crisis, these practices are unethical and the Australian government needs to shift from its current support for ineffectual self-regulation by the industry to the stronger statutory regulations that parents are calling for," she said "It's now time for government to step in and restrict junk food marketing to children."

The coalition includes Diabetes Australia (Vic), Cancer Council Victoria, the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation and the World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention at Deakin University.