



ChocHealth for kids! Update

Many of Ruyton and Trinity's Grades 5 and 6 students participated in the *ChocHealth for Kids!* study in Term 4 2011. *ChocHealth for Kids!* was a randomised-controlled study that aimed to find out:

- If students, teachers and families were happy with a school program giving 7 grams of dark chocolate to students before lunch on school days.
- If there were beneficial or unwanted health effects associated with eating dark chocolate regularly over one school term.

Overall, 194 students from two schools participated. Their parents provided consent and completed a baseline questionnaire. We also visited the schools to measure students' blood pressure and overall growth. We were able to meet with about 98% of all participating students over a week.

Classes were randomly allocated to either the 'Chocolate' or 'No chocolate' group. Participating students in 'Chocolate' classes received 2 buttons of dark chocolate from their teacher every school day if they were at school. Those not at school or in 'No chocolate' classes received no extra chocolate.

At the end of Term 4, we visited the schools again and were able to measure 93% of participating students. We also asked both students and teachers about their experiences being part of the study.

There were similar blood pressures in students of both groups. Importantly, there were no harmful effects found.

Students generally enjoyed being part of the study. More than 95% would participate again and 88% would recommend it to their friends.

64% of teachers would recommend the study to other schools. 36% found the final measurement sessions fairly disruptive to class.



This study has been important, being the first to look at the health effects of regular dark chocolate in children. We will use this information towards the planning of a larger, definitive study.

Please find attached further details of the study. This information was presented at the Royal Australasian College of Physicians' Congress earlier this year.

Information about the study can also be found at our website:
http://www.rch.org.au/ccch/research.cfm?doc_id=10631

**Thank you to all students, teachers and families
for taking part.**