



Stop Caries NOW for a Cavity-Free Future

ACFF ANZ CHAPTER COMMUNITY GRANTS

2021

TITLE: Making water “cool” for school

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ORGANISATION: West Moreton Oral Health

DISCUSSION: Encouraging school students to substitute sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) for water is an important strategy to improve both oral and general health outcomes. Students are more likely to drink water if they have access to chilled water, a water bottle, and support from their school routine. This project aimed to develop a prototype for water promotion in primary schools facing significant socioeconomic disadvantage. The project used the NESTA prototyping framework to co-design, implement and evaluate culturally appropriate hydration stations with the Leichhardt State School (LSS) community.

Through this project, we co-designed with LSS a prototype to promote consumption of water in schools facing significant socio-economic disadvantage. We refined the prototype through focus groups and determined the ideal location and distribution of chilled water fountains throughout the school to maximise accessibility and minimise the risk of misuse and accidental damage. We workshopped with staff different options to incorporate regular water breaks into the daily school routine and identified opportunities for water promotion messages to support the school curriculum.

We installed four chilled water fountains at LSS, one for each class block, ready for the new school year. The Leichhardt school community now has reliable, easy access to chilled water throughout the school day. We will continue to work with LSS to see whether the new chilled bubblers have increased water consumption and how we can continue to encourage children to choose water over SSBs.