

New book to combat obesity



Alex Brown and Jack Henharen.

by louise fisher

AUTHOR Sandy Tasker hopes her new book will help combat one of the most critical emerging health concerns in western society – childhood obesity.

Diary of a Fit Kid outlines practical strategies for students and families to use at home, at school and in the community to reduce the risk of childhood obesity.

The book, written from the perspective of a 10-year-old, follows Zac's life in a diary form, showing how

he went from being overweight to being a fitter, healthier, happier child.

The diary contains useful information on nutrition and exercise.

"The content is written in a humorous style that is bound to appeal to all children aged eight years and over," Tasker said.

The book is closely aligned with current Australian healthy eating guidelines and recommendations for increasing physical activity.

Local schools are also taking heed of child obesity warnings, with Scotch College taking active steps in an attempt to counter obesity.

While the senior school canteen

has been running an Australia-wide Healthy Eating Canteen program for the past few years, recent changes mean the menu now offers about 85 per cent healthy food.

The junior school canteen is introducing the WA Health Department's Crunch and Sip program.

Scotch College catering manager Brett Barrett said serving healthy food to the boarders and day students, was not just about keeping to a program.

"It is more a self-driven desire to make sure these kids are eating properly," he said.

Mr Barrett said a major change to this year's boarding menu had been

the move from processed food to homemade styles of food.

He said there was a lot less deep fried food and there had been a substantial reduction in salt, fat and sugar in all menu items. Many of the catering staff are qualified chefs and the school does not have a catering contractor.

Mr Barrett said it was vital to teach young children about the benefits of eating healthy, nutritious foods.

"It is absolutely critical to start teaching them this message early, as it will set trends they will follow for the rest of their lives," he said.

Diary of a Fit Kid is available from Ready-Ed Publications.