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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Federation of Canteens in Schools Backs Proposed Sugary Drinks Tax to Encourage Healthier Generations**

The Federation of Canteens in Schools (FOCIS) today expressed its support for the Grattan Institute’s call for a tax on sugary drinks. This initiative aligns with the Federation's ongoing commitment to promoting healthy school environments through working with Canteen Associations and Networks across the country.

The proposed tax aims to reduce sugar consumption among Australians, particularly young children, and teenagers, who are at significant risk of developing chronic diseases. Increasing the cost of sugary drinks has been shown to reduce sugar intake in many of the countries where a tax has been introduced.

“Supporting a sugary drink tax is a natural extension of our mission to nurture healthier generations,” said Leanne Elliston, Chairperson of the Federation of Canteens in Schools.

“We have always advocated for better food options in schools. This tax is a broader step towards improving food and drink environments and complements canteen efforts across the country in offering healthy alternatives to school children.”

Canteens are doing a fantastic job and have been instrumental in transforming school food environments. Initiatives like a sugary drinks tax are crucial for turning the tide in health outcomes and further supporting canteens in promoting healthier drink choices.

In addition to supporting the tax, FOCIS will continue to work with Canteen Associations and Networks to call on Governments for more funding to ensure the continuation of grassroots initiatives that expose students and parents to healthier dietary choices.

“Providing nutritious menu options empowers choices that benefit student health, but with plummeting volunteer numbers, school canteens are struggling to survive in today’s economic conditions,” added Deanne Wooden, CEO The Queensland Association of School Tuckshops (QAST)

“We know Canteen Associations provide the right tools and resources to help canteens keep the doors open, but with Government support dwindling, our organisations are also in a fight to survive.”

The Federation of Canteens in Schools invites other stakeholders in education and health to join them in supporting these important issues. Together, we can make a significant impact on the health and well-being of our children.

***About the Federation of Canteens in Schools (FOCIS):***

The FOCIS is a non-profit organisation dedicated to improving the health and nutrition of Australian school children. Through advocacy, education, and direct action, we work with Canteen Associations and Networks to ensure healthy, nutritious meal options are available to children across Australia.

Support our initiatives by visiting our website [www.focis.com.au](http://www.focis.com.au).

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