

Mr Ride says The Cancer Council Tasmania has taken up the challenge and in collaboration with the education department and community groups is trialling the Wicked Vegies program to make fruit and vegetables more attractive to Tasmanian students.

**For comment please call Lawson Ride on 0418 129 757**

**ENDS**

The ASSAD *Prevalence of diet-related behaviours among Tasmanian secondary school students in 2005 and trends over time* survey is available at [www.cancertas.org.au/pages/healthyeating.php](http://www.cancertas.org.au/pages/healthyeating.php)

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## **It's more Mars than little green men – and women**

A recent survey of Tasmanian secondary students confirms that most young people still prefer confectionary and fast food to fruit and vegetables.

The Australian Secondary Students' Alcohol and Drug Survey 2005 shows a negligible improvement in vegetable consumption in the past three years with few students eating the recommended daily portions of fruit, vegetables or grain foods.

Rather, nearly all secondary students say they snack on ice cream, cake or chocolate bars weekly with nearly a fifth eating these seven or more times each week. Eight out of 10 also have at least one fast food meal a week and one in five eat these meals three or more times every week.

The Cancer Council Tasmania survey shows a similar story with sugar-rich drinks; most students fess to drinking these up to four times a week.

Less than a quarter of Tasmanian secondary school students say they usually eat the recommended four serves of vegetables each day while about two thirds munch less than three serves of fruit a day.

Consumption of grain foods is also very low among Tasmanian secondary students in 2005.

The Cancer Council Tasmania CEO Lawson Ride says these results are worrying because 11% of cancers in Australia result from inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption.

"The eating habits of Tasmania's young people are feeding the overweight and obesity epidemic, which will cost individuals and society so dearly in the next decade," Mr Ride says.

"Government and schools are clearly not doing anywhere near enough to overcome this crisis.

"Other stakeholders also need to take the initiative. The struggling Tasmanian vegetable industry, for example, could massively grow its market if it promotes its products attractively to young people."