



# Join Loozit to lose it

By **Natalie Oliveri**

A WEIGHT-loss program for adolescents is calling for more participants for its next round, which starts next Monday, October 13.

Loozit has been developed by The Children's Hospital at Westmead and is for those aged 13 to 16 who have weight problems.

The program gives young people the skills, knowledge and confidence to regain control of their body size, build self-esteem and set healthy lifestyle goals.

Parents attend separate sessions at the same time as the young people's groups to discuss how they can help their children make positive lifestyle changes.

Renee Jamieson of Wentworthville did the program with her son Hayden, 14.

"It was the most beneficial thing

I have ever done," Ms Jamieson said. "It's the best thing you can do for your kid, as a parent.

"There's not enough education for parents that teaches us all about good food, good nutrition and the right meal sizes."

Loozit facilitator Kristy McGregor said the program lasted nine weeks and that there was a session one afternoon a week at the hospital.

"Parents and children are split up so that they both feel comfortable and the kids really enjoy meeting other people they can relate to - others who are going through the same things," Ms McGregor said.

She said 25 per cent of school-aged children were overweight.

"We encourage them to make

small changes, such as having breakfast twice a week if they never have breakfast or to take a water bottle to school if they don't drink much water," she said.

"They get a real confidence boost when they make these changes and see that they can do it."

Ms Jamieson said Hayden's confidence and self-esteem had greatly improved.

"He was being teased at school because of his weight," she said.

"He's lost about 10 kilograms and I've lost weight too.

"I'd say to parents 'Just do it.' I'd do it all over again."

The program is free, but bookings are essential. Call Kristy McGregor on 9845 1224 or visit [www.chw.edu.au/kids/loozit](http://www.chw.edu.au/kids/loozit).



Healthy program: Loozit facilitator Vanessa Shrewsbury and co-ordinator Janice O'Connor.  
Picture: Natalie Spiteri