



Megan lunges into Loozit

By **Natalie Oliveri**

MEGAN Bonaccorso's confidence has soared since she was involved in the Loozit program last year.

The healthy eating and weight loss program run by The Children's Hospital at Westmead is free to eligible young people aged 13 to 16.

The program aims to empower young people with skills, knowledge and confidence to regain control of their body size, build self-esteem, manage stress, and set healthy lifestyle goals around good nutrition and physical activity.

"I'd absolutely encourage anyone to do it. It definitely helped me," Megan, 15, said.

"It really helped with my food management because that was my big dilemma before.

"I still buy my lunch at school but now instead of buying chips I get sushi or salad rolls.

"The sessions on how to fit exercise into your day, like doing lunges during commercial breaks, was good and how to swap certain snacks for healthier options and what fast food to choose, if any, that is better for you."

Megan, who is in year 10 at St Patrick's Marist College Dundas, attends check-ups every six months or so.



Weight-loss success: Megan Bonaccorso is one of 140 teenagers to have done the Loozit program. **Picture: Wolter Peeters**

Participants can also receive encouraging support via phone coaching and SMS or emails.

Megan said one of the best things about Loozit was having her friends notice a change.

"I kept it to myself, that I was doing the program, but then my friend said there was something different about me and I said I'd lost about seven kilograms. They were really happy for me."

Loozit runs one afternoon a week, for nine weeks, from

5pm to 6.15pm. Young people continue to be supported by a reunion of their group once a school term for two years. Parents attend separate sessions to discuss how they can support their young person.

The next Loozit program starts at the hospital on May 11.

Details: Phone Binh Nguyen on 9845 1224, visit www.chw.edu.au/kids/loozit or email loozit@chw.edu.au.