



HEALTHY FOOD AND DRINK POLICY



POLICY STATEMENT

Food and drinks provided in Western Australian public schools are required to support the development of healthy eating in students.

BACKGROUND

Childhood obesity is now recognised as a world wide epidemic. In Western Australian the number of children and young people who are overweight or obese has tripled since 1985, with almost a quarter of boys and a third of girls aged 7-15 years now being overweight or obese. Young people who carry excess weight or are obese have a greater risk of a number of immediate and long-term health and behavioural problems.

In March 2006 the Premier and the Minister for Education and Training announced a review of the nutritional value of food sold in Western Australian school canteens. The purpose of the review was to gain an accurate understanding of what was being sold in school canteens and to develop a policy and strategies to ensure all food and drinks provided by a school support the development of healthy eating by students. The review made recommendations for a policy and standards for healthy food and drinks in Western Australian public schools.

Regulation 72(1) of the *School Education Regulations 2000* provides the Principal with the power to give permission for the school's premises or part of the school's premises to be used for an activity not directly related to the purposes of school education including the provision of the canteen facilities. Implementation of this policy by the canteen is a condition upon which permission will be given.

PRINCIPLES

The policy will be underpinned by a whole school approach and a recognition that:

- a variety of foods are to be enjoyed every day; and
- the primary role of a school canteen/food service is to provide a healthy and nutritious food service to students and staff.

STAR CHOICE BUYERS' GUIDE

The Star Choice Buyers' Guide was produced by the Western Australian School Canteen Association (WASCA) in conjunction with The Federation of Canteens in Schools (FOCiS) national registration program. FOCiS represents canteens nationally. Its goal is to promote and facilitate the provision of nutritious foods that promote health in school canteens throughout Australia. In order to achieve this, FOCiS has developed nutrient criteria to assess food products. The WASCA is working closely with the Department of Education to support schools to implement and maintain the Healthy Food and Drinks Policy.

TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM

The policy and standards for healthy food and drinks is based on:

- The National Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia and the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating (AGTHE).
- A whole school approach which includes canteen workers, principals, teachers, students and parents/carers
- A 'traffic light system' for rating the suitability of food and drinks:
 - GREEN – fill the menu
 - AMBER – select carefully
 - RED – off the menu

Green food and drinks are good sources of nutrients, contain less saturated fat and/or added sugar and/or salt and help to avoid an intake of excess energy (kJ).

Amber food and drinks have some nutritional value, contain moderate levels of saturated fat and/or added sugar and/or salt and can, in large serves, contribute excess energy (kJ).

Red food and drinks lack adequate nutritional value, are high in saturated fat and/or added sugar and/or salt and can contribute excess energy (kJ).

Procedures

Scope of the Policy

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Department's *Student Health Care Policy* and *Anaphylaxis Advice Paper* for information on how to address the issue of known allergies and allergic reactions.

This policy applies to all operators of a canteen or tuckshop on public school sites including Parents and Citizens' Associations (P & Cs), external contractors and local caterers/shops that provide a food service to students.

The policy also extends to areas where the Principal is directly responsible for the supply of food and drinks, eg classroom rewards and cooking activities, school camps, excursions.

Guidelines

The role of the school canteen/food service is to provide a food service to students and staff that is part of a whole school approach that supports healthy eating, is affordable and financially sustainable. Financial profit is a secondary objective for school canteens and must be achieved through the sale of healthy foods.

The policy does not apply to areas where the Principal is not directly responsible, for example fundraising by the P & Cs or birthday cake supplied by a parent. For those areas the Principal should consult with the school community in deciding the policy for healthy food and drinks.

The school curriculum is an ideal place for teachers to model healthy eating practices and demonstrate how healthy foods can be introduced into the diet.

Teachers can engage students in curriculum activities that promote the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating (AGTHE). A powerful way to do this is to involve students in preparing and tasting nutritious foods that are also appealing in taste and presentation.

'Red' foods should only be included as part of the curriculum in line with the ATGHE, that is, on limited occasions and in small amounts across the course of study. Including the preparation and presentation of 'red' foods can indirectly promote consumption of these foods and should be avoided where possible.

Where student engagement with 'red' foods is essential, consideration should be given to the connection to other learning outcomes of the Curriculum Framework and the importance of students' learning to make healthy food choices, (refer to Appendix A).

In recognition of the 'home environment' provided by public schools and colleges that have boarding facilities, the 'traffic light' system need not apply to all situations in which food and drinks are supplied. For example, the policy will apply during school hours, that is from 8:30-3:30pm. Food and drinks available after school hours such as dinner, vending machines and the canteen/kiosk do not need to adhere to the policy.

CANTEEN/food service MENU

Schools must support healthy eating by students in accordance with the 'traffic light' system and the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating* (refer to Appendix B). The menu must:

- Have available every day and promote a wide range of the foods that comprise the majority of a healthy diet ('green').
- Have available only sometimes, use healthier alternatives and avoid large serving sizes of foods that should be eaten in moderation ('amber'). Savoury commercial products in the 'amber' category of foods must only be offered twice per week.
- Not include foods that do not meet specified minimum nutrient criteria ('red').

All menus must promote 'green' food and drinks and ensure they are available every day. The minimum standard required for compliance with the policy is a menu made up of 60% 'green' and 40% 'amber' food and drinks according to the 'traffic light' system in 3.2. Schools are encouraged to exceed this minimum standard.

Canteen/food service managers are required to use the *What's on the menu* (refer to Appendix C) as a resource when menu planning.

Schools must familiarise themselves with the Common Use Arrangement (CUA) 39404 for the purchase of bulk groceries and food related products.

Guidelines

The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating (AGTHE) and the national Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia (2003) establish the basis for a healthy eating approach. A key message of the AGTHE is to enjoy a variety of foods every day.

The guidelines provide recommendations for healthy eating not only to reduce the risk of diet-related disease, but also to improve the community's health and wellbeing. For overall good health, school-aged children need to drink plenty of water and eat plenty of fruit, vegetables, legumes and cereals; adequate amounts of lean meat and low fat milk products; and importantly, choose foods containing less fat, less saturated fat, less sugar and less salt.

The AGTHE specifically identifies a number of 'extra' foods that are recommended to be eaten only sometimes or in small amounts. These foods are not essential to provide the body's nutrients and/or contain too much fat, salt and sugars (eg. fizzy drinks, high fat items such as crisps, pies, pasties, sausage rolls and high sugar items such as lollies).

Food and drinks that are lower in fat, sugar and salt (and higher in fibre and calcium where relevant) should be used in preference to other products of that food type available in the market.

There are no limitations on the fruits, vegetables and whole grain foods used. It is these foods that should be promoted and encouraged on primary and high school menus.

When combined with 'green' foods such as salad, savoury commercial products may be offered more than twice per week. This type of 'meal deal' would then be categorised as a 'green' menu item.

The Star Choice Buyers' Guide should be used as a resource for planning menus and making decisions about serving sizes. All foods that are registered in the Star Choice Buyers' Guide or capable of being registered, i.e. meet the FOCiS minimum nutrient criteria, are recommended for inclusion in the school setting. Foods that are registered are lower in fat, sugar, salt (and higher in fibre and calcium where relevant) than other products of that food type available in the market.

The Western Australian School Canteen Association (WASCA) and local health professionals can provide advice to canteen/food service managers on recipes and sourcing local products that meet the FOCiS minimum nutrient criteria.

FOOD SAFETY AND HYGIENE

The *Food Act 2008 (WA)* and the *Food Regulations 2009* legislate that:

- All food services must apply for registration with the local council as a food business. A fee may be applicable.
- Schools must notify the local council prior to conducting a charitable or community event involving food (i.e. a cake stall or sausage sizzle).

All canteen/food service staff must:

- complete the FoodSafe Food Handler Training program or its equivalent. The training must be completed in a timely manner, preferably prior to commencement.
- wear hats, hairnets and aprons which will be provided by the canteen/food service;
- not sell foods made at home through the canteen food service; and
- must prepare, cook, transport and serve food in such a way as to retain nutrients and to minimise bacterial contamination and growth.

All schools will be required to reach at least the minimum level on a rating system (refer to Appendix D) which includes criteria such as menu, policy, skills and knowledge, food safety and hygiene and school community involvement.

Guidelines

The rating system allows schools to make continuous improvement across a series of levels of achievement.

The Food Unit at www.public.health.wa.gov.au can be contacted for further advice on the *Food Act 2008* and the *Food Regulations 2009*.

Web: www.waschoolcanteens.org.au

APPENDIX A 'RED' FOODS AND THE CURRICULUM

The school curriculum is an ideal place for teachers to model healthy eating practices and demonstrate how healthy foods can be introduced into the diet.

Teachers can engage students in curriculum activities that promote the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating* (AGTHE). A powerful way to do this is to involve students in preparing and tasting nutritious foods that are also appealing in taste and presentation.

'Red' foods should only be included as part of the curriculum in line with the AGTHE, that is, on limited occasions and in small amounts across the course of study. Including the preparation and presentation of 'red' foods can indirectly promote consumption of these foods and should be avoided where possible.

Where student engagement with 'red' foods is essential, consideration should be given to the connection to other learning outcomes of the *Curriculum Framework* and the importance of students' learning to make healthy food choices. This means that:

- In any food preparation activity, all categories of food such as appetisers, main course, dessert, should reflect a focus on healthy foods, recognising that in order for students to prepare and serve a range of foods and use a range of techniques, they may, on limited occasions, be preparing and serving 'red' foods and/or preparing foods in such a way that renders them 'red' foods.
- Making and tasting small quantities of 'red' foods can increase students' understanding of the properties of food and the related food science. This understanding should be used to justify that only small amounts of 'red' foods should be eaten.
- In instances where it is necessary for students to engage in comparative food studies that involve 'red' foods, and there is a need to taste these foods, then it should be in small taste-testing experiences. The focus of the curriculum is on students developing an understanding of the reasons for national differences in food behaviours due to, for example, food availability, social, economic, cultural, environmental, political and technological factors.
- Food is often used to reflect a particular cultural context such as Oktoberfest or Bastille Day. It is acknowledged that some of these foods may be 'red' foods, however, these occasions should be limited, and the 'red' foods should be kept to small amounts.
- Food preparation techniques such as deep frying and pastry making are essential competencies of the vocational curriculum. The technique should only be practised until the required level of competency has been achieved.
- In meal preparation activities where a variety of techniques are necessary, those that are associated with 'red' foods, such as deep frying, should be balanced by a focus on techniques that encourage the use of 'green' and 'amber' foods.

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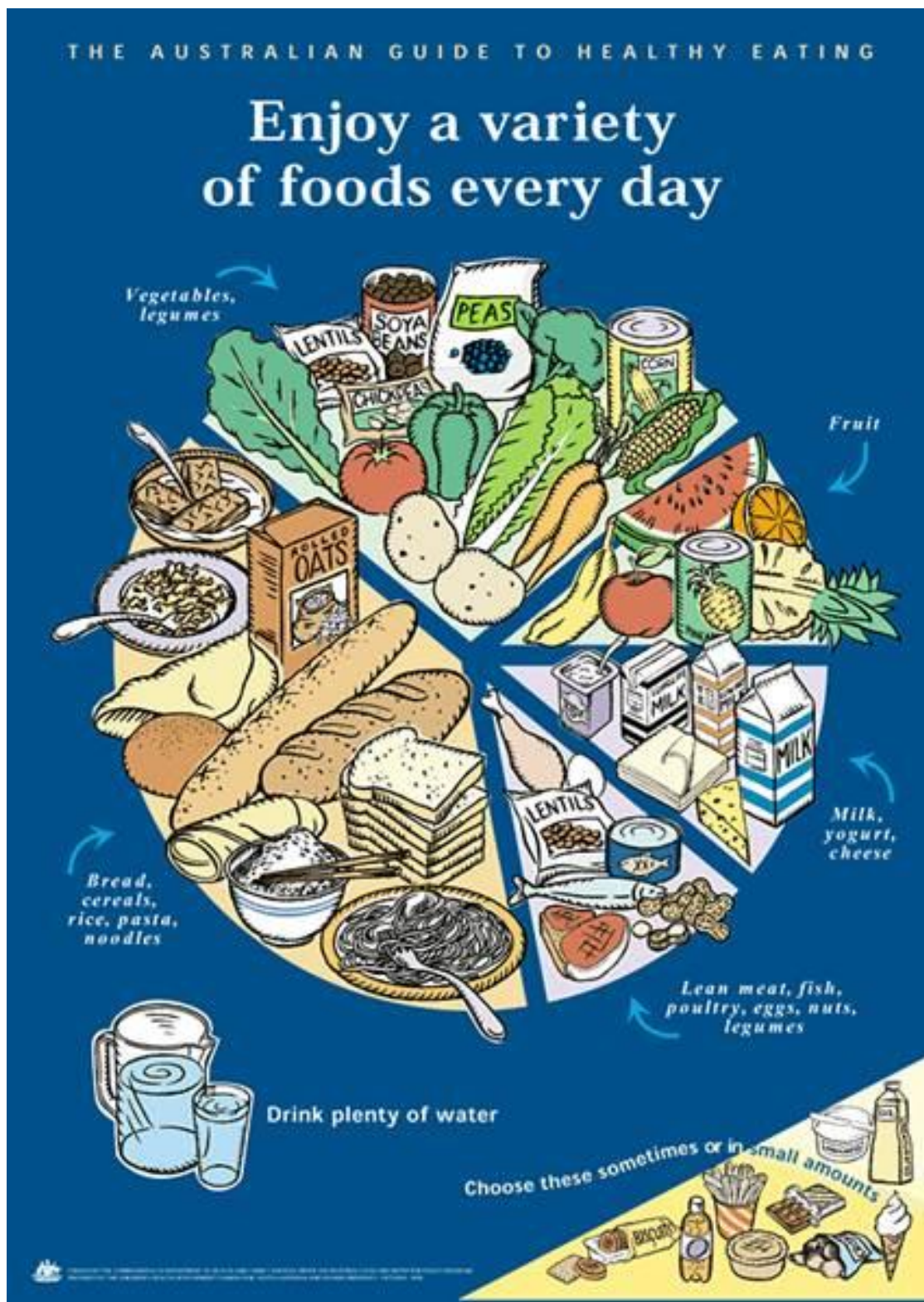
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APPENDIX A AUSTRALIAN GUIDE TO HEALTHY EATING



From: Smith A, Smith B, Kellett E & Schmerlaib Y (1998) *The Australian guide to healthy eating: Background information for nutrition educators*. Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, Canberra. Accessed at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/Publishing.nsf/Content/health-pubhlth-publicat-document-fdeduc-cnt.htm> on 17.08.06.

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What's on the menu for WA public schools

The table below provides examples of GREEN, AMBER and RED foods under the 'traffic light' system for public schools. This is not the entire list of available food or drinks.

Nuts and nut spreads do not appear in the table. Schools are advised to refer to the Department's *Student Health Care* policy and the *Anaphylaxis Management Guidelines for Schools* from the Department of Health before deciding whether or not to include nuts and nut spreads on the canteen/food service menu.

- Meets the criteria for StarChoice registration.

<p>GREEN : Fill the menu</p> <p>Breads A variety of bread types</p> <p>Cereal foods Wholegrain cereals, pasta, noodles, rice</p> <p>Vegetables Vegetables and salads (reduced fat dressing only), all salad mixtures</p> <p>Fruit Fresh, frozen and tinned (in natural juices)</p> <p>Legumes Tinned (e.g. bean mix, kidney beans), cooked</p> <p>Reduced fat dairy products Reduced fat: milk (plain and flavoured), yoghurt (fresh, frozen, plain or fruit), cheese</p> <p>Lean meat, fish, poultry and alternatives</p> <p>All lean meats, chicken (no skin) or registered meats,* fish (e.g. tuna, salmon, sardines), and egg</p> <p>Sandwich fillings All lean meats, lean chicken, fish, creamed corn/corn kernels, egg, canned spaghetti (reduced salt), salads, baked beans, low fat cheese, hommos, vegemite, yeast spreads and fish spreads*</p> <p>Hot food Jaffles/hot rolls/toasted sandwiches (fillings as for sandwich fillings), baked potatoes, rice, soups, toast, English muffins, crumpets (wholemeal), raisin toast and meals meeting the criteria for registration such as curry and rice and pasta dishes</p> <p>Snacks Reduced fat yoghurt and cheese sticks, scones, raisin or fruit bread, pikelets, bread sticks bruschetta, water crackers, rice cakes, rice crackers, popcorn (plain/low fat/flavoured), dried fruit, seed packs, trail mix based on breakfast cereals, registered snacks</p> <p>Drinks Water, plain mineral water, reduced fat milk, fresh fruit milkshakes, soy and 100% fruit juice (small size)</p>
<p>AMBER: Select carefully and limit</p> <p>Breakfast cereals Refined cereals with added sugar</p> <p>Full fat dairy foods Milk, yoghurt, custard, low fat dairy desserts and cheese</p> <p>Savoury commercial products#</p> <p>Registered products such as ovenable fish/chicken/potato portions should be chosen because they are lower in fat/salt*</p> <p>Snack food bars Registered products such as breakfast bars, cereal bars and fruit bars*</p> <p>Savoury snacks Registered products such as oven baked vege chips, garlic or herb bread (lightly spread)*</p> <p>Cakes, muffins and sweet biscuits</p> <p>Registered products such as cakes, muffins and biscuits (reduced fat and/or sugar and based on wholemeal flour)*</p> <p>Ice-creams, ice blocks, fruit based ice poles, slushies</p> <p>Registered ice-creams, milk based ice confectionery, frozen yoghurts and rice cream*</p> <p>Drinks Fruit drinks, mineral waters flavoured with fruit juice, low joule cordials</p>
<p>RED: Off the menu</p> <p>Sugar and artificiallysweetened drinks</p> <p>Soft drinks, artificially sweetened soft drinks, energy drinks, cordials, sports drinks and mineral waters flavoured with sugar, high caffeine drinks (e.g. drinks containing guarana)</p> <p>Confectionery All types, caramelised popcorn</p> <p>Pastry items All types that do not meet the criteria for registration</p> <p>Sandwich meats High fat sandwich meats including polony (devon) and salami</p> <p>Deep fried foods All types</p> <p>Savoury snacks Crisps, chips and other similar products that do not meet the criteria for registration</p> <p>Ice-creams Chocolate coated and premium ice-creams</p> <p>Sandwich fillings Honey, jam, chocolate spreads, confectionery sprinkles</p> <p>Cakes, muffins and sweet pastries Croissants, doughnuts. Cream filled buns/cakes, sweet pastries, slices</p>

- # To be offered a maximum of two occasions per week